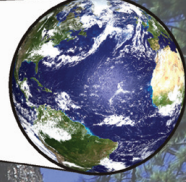


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Ye shall kindle no fire throughout
your habitations upon the
sabbath day, Ex 35:3

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Mail:
 Y AIY
 2963 Co. Rd. 233
 Kingdom City, MO
 65262



Phone:
 573-642-4100
 Toll free:
 1-877-642-4101



Fax:
 573-642-4104



Email:
 beacon@yaiy.org

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Background of Sabbath Fire

Kindle No Fire Upon the Sabbath Day

The seriousness given to this one verse by dedicated Bible students has generated many discussions and varied ramifications of understanding. A careful study and examination should help us gain a deeper perspective and help us to comprehend why the proscription against kindling a fire on the Sabbath is made here, in Exodus 35:3, the only place we could find this prohibition.

Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day.

Let us trace events that led up to this enigma.

Leaving Egypt

Israel became a nation Passover night when Pharaoh separated both Moses and his people from the Egyptians. For the first time Pharaoh recognized the Israelites when he told Moses to take the people and their cattle with all their belongings and leave Egypt:

And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, [and] get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve [Yahweh], as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also. (Ex 12:31-32 AV)

We all know the account of Israel passing through the sea where they were freed of Egypt, and joyfully sang the song of Moses telling of Yahweh's great victory over Pharaoh and his army. Israel then was promised manna each morning and quail in the evening at twilight, as we see in Exodus chapter 16. The manna and the quail continued for 40 years as Yahweh faithfully guided Israel toward the Promised

Land. Those 20 years of age or more died off leaving a generation of younger Israelites to cross over the Jordan and settle in their homeland.

Humankind learns spiritual lessons from physical acts. In Exodus chapter 16 we read that Yahweh will deliver manna in the morning and quail in the evening. Nothing is said so far that the seventh day is to be kept as a Sabbath of rest. The point was made, however, there would be no deliveries of bread or birds on the weekly Sabbaths.

The experiences that follow are a part of the education and training needed by Israel to become the model nation for the world. Note the synopsis of the following chapters:

Exodus 17 tells of Israelites murmuring over lack of water which came when Moses struck a rock, plus Israel's victory over the Amalekites by Joshua, the son of Nun. Yahweh demonstrates He is protecting and guiding faithless Israel while providing for their needs.

Chapter 18: Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, urges Moses to select capable men to serve as judges except in difficult cases. Yahweh apparently approved of organizing judges and chiefs to maintain order and settle disputes.

A Kingdom of Priests

Israel arrived at Mount Sinai in chapter 19 and camped in the nearby desert. Here Yahweh reminded them of their deliverance, and offered to make Israel a kingdom of priests and be His treasured nation, to which Israel readily agreed.

It is important to note the events that transpired as
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Moses led the people toward the Promised Land. Yahweh provided protection, manna, water, everything they needed. Thus, when Yahweh proposed a covenant with Israel, these freed slaves simply could not refuse:

And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which [Yahweh] commanded him. (Ex 19:7 AV)

Yahweh speaks the Ten Commandments in chapter 20 from the smoking, dreadful, fiery, dark, tremulous Mount Sinai. It was a chilling experience and the display of awesome power frightened the gathered Israelites:

And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw [it], they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not [Yahweh] speak with us, lest we die. (Exo 20:18-19 AV)

It is here at the mount that Israel is told of the sanctity of the Sabbath. No work is to be done, for it is a sanctified time. There must be a reason that the Sabbath is mentioned more often than any other commandment. Was it because as slaves they were surrounded by many pagan deities that were a part of Egypt's culture and the heathen customs were hard for Israel to overcome?

A Day of Rest

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work But the seventh day [is] the Sabbath of Yahweh [in it] thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy

manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that [is] within thy gates: For [in] six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them [is], and rested the seventh day: wherefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it. (Ex 20:8-11 AV)

Chapters 21 to 23 of Exodus show various applications of the "Ten Words" such as the relationship with servants, personal injuries, property and social responsibility, justice and mercy and the annual Feast days as well as the weekly Sabbath. Here we learn of expected relationships and attitudes the people of Yahweh are to develop to be in accord with Yahweh's will.

Yahweh's Covenant Ratified

It is in Exodus 24 that Yahweh's proposed covenant was ratified by Israel. All the people had to do was to obey, and to this they readily agreed. Moses wrote the foregoing readings in a book, then read it to the people who joyfully agreed to abide by the Covenant.

Moses then sprinkled blood on the "Book of the Covenant," on the altar and on the people, who again said they would obey

and then voluntarily added they would be obedient to whatever else Yahweh would ask. This was the first Pentecost, the ratifying of the Covenant. In the New Testament we read that the Holy (Set-apart) Spirit came to earth to remain here at Pentecost (Acts 2) to enable humankind to keep the Covenant.

Exodus 25 opens with a calling for offerings to begin construction of Yahweh's Tabernacle. For 40 years the Tabernacle would be the center of Israel's life. As you remember, much wealth was given to the departing Israelites by the Egyptians who wanted them to leave post haste. Now Israel was asked to donate a part of their booty for construction of a house to worship Yahweh. Specific instructions on how to worship Yahweh were given as well as His expectations of Israel as He promised to dwell among them:

And they shall know that I [am] [Yahweh their Elohim] that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I [am] Yahweh their Elohim. (Ex 29:46 AV)

Keep the Sabbath

The following chapter (30) details the needed items for the Tabernacle,

such as the laver, the ark, table, utensils, lampstand, anointing oil, perfume, furniture with Bezalel and Oholiab given a special spirit of comprehension and skill. Then follows a lengthy explanation about the importance of the Sabbath, that it is a sign between Yahweh and His people:

Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, [for] a perpetu-



Mount Sinai, where Moses received the 10 commandments

al covenant. It [is] a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for [in] six days [Yahweh] made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed. (Ex 31:16-17 AV)

Chapter 31 of Exodus ends with Yahweh's giving Moses the two tables of stone upon which Yahweh Himself had written the Ten Commandments.

But now we see something is rotten in the camp of Israel! Chapter 31 is but 18 verses with emphasis on construction and making specialty items for the Tabernacle and specific attention to making of the ark of the covenant. Special mention is made here concerning the importance of the Sabbaths:

And [Yahweh] spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it [is] a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that [ye] may know that I [am] Yahweh that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it [is] holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth [any] work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. (Ex 31:12-14 AV)

Time and Space

The JPS Torah Commentary, commenting on the above verses, states:

"The Tabernacle enshrines the concept of the holiness of space; the Sabbath embodies the concept of the holiness of time. The latter takes precedence over the former, and the work of the Tabernacle must yield each week to the Sabbath rest."

The JPS Torah Commentary points out that observing the Sabbath is considered even more binding than building a Tabernacle in which Yahweh meets with His people! Yahweh dwells in that

spirit realm and can see the end from the beginning. We should observe the Sabbath rest fully even when occupied in a task that will glorify Yahweh such as building a Tabernacle for His worship. Keep your mind on spiritual thoughts. Make full use of the Sabbath, for time soon slips away and the time thereof is lost. Don't allow other activities to steal time from the Sabbath for it is a sign for all time between Yahweh and His people. Make the Sabbath a delight.

Yahweh's Presence Withdrawn

When the children of Israel realized that Moses had not returned from the Mount, they went to Aaron demanding he make them a golden calf, which violated the

covenant, chapter 32. Construction of the Tabernacle and ancillary items was apparently halted. The Levites rallied with Moses. Moses prays for the people and dissuades Yahweh from destroying Israel, Exo.32:11-14, and repeats again in verses 30-34. Yahweh is angry and a plague follows.

Tent of Meeting is set up outside the camp. Chapter 33 Moses sees only the backside of Yahweh. No wearing of finery from Mount Horeb onward.

Moses prepares new stone tablets for re-writing the 10 Words of the Covenant in chapter 34:28, reaffirming the Covenant, with emphasis on work six days, and rest on the Seventh day, and annual Sabbaths, and Jubilees. When returning down the mount the face of Moses was radiant. Chapters 32, 33, and 34 now bring us back on track by emphasizing that progress was interrupted in building the Tabernacle, but it will now proceed.

Kindling a Fire

The second set of stone tablets evidently indicate a renewal of the Covenant in chapter 35 and the construction of the Tabernacle can again proceed:

And Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said unto them, These [are] the words which Yahweh hath commanded, that [ye] should do them. Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a Sabbath of rest to Yahweh: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day. (Ex 35:1-3 AV)

Note the following verse from chapter 31:15 is practically verbatim with the above verses, specifically the underlined verse 35:2. This shows a resumption of the

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Mini - Study



Man Can't Choose His Own Day of Worship

A look at the meaning behind Romans 14:5. Does it allow us to make our own decision about which day to keep holy?

IN REJECTING THE OBSERVANCE of the weekly (Saturday) Sabbath, a number of groups rely heavily upon Romans 14 as a "proof text."

Indeed, verse 5 certainly has the appearance of allowing each individual the liberty to choose whatever day he wishes to worship:

"One man esteems one day above another: another esteems every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

If this verse really teaches that man may ignore the law and select any day he wishes in worship of Almighty Yahweh, then it runs counter to the other teachings of Paul in this same letter. Note that he quoted the Tenth Commandment, which is against coveting, Romans 7:7. And in verse 12 Paul writes that the law is holy and the commandment "holy, and just, and good."

Paul Kept and Taught the Law

In Romans 7:22 Paul says that he delights in the law of Elohim after the inward man. Paul held the law in high regard and admits that he was taught according to the perfect manner of the law, Acts 22:3. He further states:

"This I confess unto you, that after the way

Tabernacle construction. Thus, we see that chapters from 31, including 32, 33, and 34, until chapter 35, construction had apparently stopped. The builders likely were eager to get back to work again. Yahweh, knowing this cautioned Israel not to kindle a fire while it was still the Sabbath, verse 3.

Six days may work be done; but in the seventh [is] the Sabbath of rest, holy to Yahweh: whosoever doeth [any] work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. (Ex 31:15 AV)

There is an added message that we want to examine which was not in the first command from Yahweh, namely verse 3:

You shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day!

This statement has been studied and discussed through the ages. Because it says Israel was not to kindle a fire, some Rabbis taught one could add fuel to an already burning flame. Others felt a new fire, henceforth, was not to be started under any circumstances. Some Bible readers comply by shutting off all their electricity for the 24 hours of the Sabbath. They have frozen ice made for the refrigerator. Some go so far to ban driving an automobile because spark plugs ignite the gasoline. The list goes on. What is the answer? Does this verse apply to us today?

The construction of the Tabernacle was in full swing. The Egyptians had loaded them down with materials, gold and silver, as well as cloth and coverings for their journey. Master craftsmen Bezalel and Oholiab, guided by Yahweh's Spirit, were in a league of attainment by themselves. All Israel was consumed with having Yahweh's Tabernacle completed and Yahweh Himself would be among them. They looked for the day when everything would be ready and in place. Already excitement

was contagious.

Hot Fire Needed—The Key to the Puzzle

In His wisdom Yahweh emphasized the necessity of keeping the Sabbath as a complete rest for man and beast. It was only natural the people wanted to get the construction of the Tabernacle up and running. Surely the thought came to the people to get the fire started late on the Sabbath for the smelting of metals. When the sun did set a few hours later, the fires would be hot and the smelting of gold, silver and copper could begin.

A fire hotter than usual was needed for smelting the metals of the copper, silver and gold for making rings, gold and silver sockets, copper clasps, and the gold sockets for the Tabernacle. In addition, the ark was made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold, inside and out, with two gold rings on each side and the cover was of pure gold as were the two cherubim. The bowls, ladles, jugs and jars were all made of pure gold including the menorah (lampstand). By now they would be aware of the wood that gave the hottest fire.

Kindling a fire late on the Sabbath, a short time before sunset to get Yahweh's Tabernacle completed, would be a natural thing to do. Kindling a fire on a late Sabbath afternoon would give a hot fire ready to start smelting metal as soon as the Sabbath ended. This is likely the reason for the command against starting a fire on the Sabbath.

The Interpreter's Bible note (page 1082) says, "For all the work you have planned you shall kindle no fire...on the Sabbath day," making the fires refer to those needed for the work in metals (Beer, Exodus p.164).

As pointed out earlier, Yahweh is more concerned with the

worship time we spend with Him than He is with having a special space for His worship. Having a beautiful meeting hall is appealing to humankind. People are impressed with crystal cathedrals, lofty spires and carpeted floors and artisan windows. This is so true of many places where people gather to worship.

Yahweh wants His called out ones to keep their thoughts on things above. Time is fleeting and steals away and cannot be recalled, but the project or space is still there. Some Bible examples are given us of encroaching on the day Yahweh has sanctified and set aside for His worship:

- HARVESTING: "*Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest.*" (Ex 34:21 AV)
- TREADING WINEPRESS, CARRYING GOODS: "*In those days saw I in Judah [some] treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all [manner of] burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; and I testified [against them] in the day wherein they sold victuals.*" (Ne 13:15 AV)
- BEARING BURDENS: "*Thus saith Yahweh; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring [it] in by the gates of Jerusalem.*" (Jer 17:21 AV)
- BUYING & SELLING: "*Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?"*

<Fire see page 9>

Comparisons

All down through the annals of time, history records for us certain comparisons of good versus bad, of law abiding versus law abusing, of righteousness versus unrighteousness. Present-day man has not yet discovered how to use these records to educate himself because the heart of man is always at odds with his Creator and Sustainer. He fails to recognize the fact that he should use these records to his benefit. Man, seemingly, wants to play the part of the reader to benefit himself only; while, in fact, he should play the part of the follower and follow in the footsteps of Yahshua, thereby edifying the Body of the Messiah. Since the book of Proverbs is full of such comparisons, let us learn from them.

Preservation

Following the Babylonian captivity, a large number of believers remained in the land of their captivity. A brief historical event concerning these people is recorded for us in the book of Esther. The book of Esther itself is a drama about a certain crisis in the history of Yahweh's People. The first five chapters of the book lead up to the crisis point in the drama. With providential preservation, we shall see how quickly the table is turned and dark clouds give way to bright sunshine.

While the king had gathered the princes of his provinces together for a great feast, he ordered his queen to come to the festive occasion to show off her beauty to the group:

On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king, To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on. But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him, Est 1:10-12.

By refusing, the queen made a large breach of etiquette by this public rebuff of an absolute monarch. This action led to her being disposed of as the queen (*"If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered, That Vashti come no more before king Aha-*

suerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she," Est 1:19) and the selection of Esther as her successor after a beauty contest was held (Est 2:2-17).

Esther was a ward, and cousin, of Mordecai, who was employed in the service of the royal court (2:5). Mordecai gained favor in the king's eyes when he uncovered a plot to kill the king (Est 2:21-25). But the real culprit of this drama is Haman, a high executive officer to the king. Haman had extracted from the king a command that all should show Haman reverence by bowing to him (Est 3:1-2). Mordecai, refusing to show such reverence to a man, was placed on Haman's "black list." When Haman learned that Mordecai was a Jew, he entreated the king to have all the Jews destroyed (Est 3:12-13), where the high point was to be the public hanging of Mordecai on the gallows which Haman constructed in his own courtyard.

The stage is now set for the climax, but the expected climax does not come. Through a petition to the king on behalf of her people to spare her life, since Esther was a Jewess, Esther persuades the king to reverse his earlier command and to execute the real enemy, Haman, upon the very gallows which had been built for Mordecai.

Yes, as Haman's riches were gained by lawlessness, so they profited him nothing. As Jer. 17:11 says,

As the partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days and his end shall be a fool.

Thus, Haman exemplifies the first part of Prov. 10:2, *"Treasures of lawlessness profit nothing."* One can also see how Mordecai exemplifies the latter part of the same verse: *"But righteousness delivereth from death."* The same thought is brought out in Prov. 11:4-6:

Riches profit not in the day of wrath: But righteousness delivereth from death. The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: But the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness. The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: But transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.

One can also note that the story of Noah and the worldliness which existed at his time exemplifies this same scripture from Proverbs. Yes, Yahweh promises deliverance, where tragedy is turned to triumph,

if we endure to the end.

Fill 'Er Up

Too many people in this world are most concerned with filling their stomach with all kinds of food to sustain their physical life. Certainly this is a necessity, but in a very short time the energy derived from the food is used up and the body needs more food. As Matt. 6:33 says,

Seek ye first the Kingdom of Yahweh, and His righteousness; and all these things [the necessities of life] shall be added unto you.

If we feel we should fill ourselves with something more profitable to us in the long run, we should fill up on those things that endure. We should fill ourselves with praise and thankfulness to Yahweh for what He has done for us in the past and what He promises to do for us in the future.

By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to Yahweh continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices Yahweh is well pleased, Heb. 13:15-16.

The prophet Habakkuk offered such praise in chapter 3 of the book that bears his name. The underlying theme of the book of Habakkuk is faith:

Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith, Hab 2:4.

In chapter 3 we find Habakkuk's faith glorying in assurance, as he praises Yahweh for the events in the history of His People (Hab 3:3-15) and he praises Yahweh for his confidence for the future of His People (verse 18).

Even as Habakkuk's days seemed dark to him, so do ours at times; as he resolved himself to wait patiently, so should we. By doing so the dark clouds shall

be removed to let the bright sunshine come through. Then we shall surely have good reason to cry aloud with joy as Habakkuk did in chapter 3, where in verse 1 "Shigionoth" means to cry aloud, either in pain as Habakkuk did in verse 16, or in joy as he did in verses 18 and 19. If we remain true to His Word, then Yahweh has promised us that we will not grow hungry as we read in Prov. 10:3, first part:

Yahweh will not suffer the righteous to famish.

One can take this food not only to mean physical food but also spiritual food, for if we have faith as Habakkuk did, then Yahweh will certainly provide a table in the wilderness. In the last part of Prov. 10:3, Yahweh makes another promise - if we seek worldly pleasure in this life, as did the rich fool in Luke 12:16-21, then we shall be cast aside. Don't let this happen to you. Place your trust and faith in those things which can neither be corrupted by moths and rust nor stolen, for as Matt. 6:21 reads, "*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*"

Physically speaking, we must, of necessity, periodically sleep so that our body can rebuild. Without physical rest we would become totally exhausted and soon have a physical breakdown. But, speaking spiritually, we must never rest. If we do, then we will have a spiritual breakdown. One can never build up one's spiritual foundation through inactivity. If we do this, Satan will more than likely gain a toehold in our lives, and after a toehold comes a foothold, then a leghold and finally a bodyhold, where he would have complete control over our lives.

In Romans, chapter 7, Paul tells about the two laws that coexist within our body - the law of the mind and the law of the flesh:

For I delight in the law of Yah-

weh after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank Yahweh through Yahshua Messiah our Master. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of Yahweh; but with the flesh the law of sin, Rom 7:22-25.

Paul tells us that he delights in the Law of Yahweh which he serves with his mind. This we must do also if we are to build up a strong spiritual foundation which cannot be impregnated by the wiles of Satan.

Paul traveled extensively in the known world of his day, preaching Yahshua and gathering new believers into Yahshua's Body. Paul truly was a wise son as Prov. 10:5, first part, says,

He that gathereth in summer is a wise son.

However, one of Paul's fellow-laborers, Demas (see Col 4:14 and Philemon 24), did not weather the storm, as he loved the physical part of this world too much,

For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia, 2 Tim 4:10

Demas is an example of one who sleeps in the time of harvest and is as a son who causeth shame. See Prov. 10:5, last part.

We who profess to be members of Yahshua's Body must take heed to the warning given to us in Prov. 10:5. We must not fall asleep on the job; we must not neglect our duty and our commission of preparing the inhabitants of this world for the soon-coming Kingdom of Yahweh. The person who sleeps during this time of harvesting will certainly suffer shame and loss when he comes face-to-face with his Judge.

Hatred - Love

In I Samuel, beginning with chapter 7, we read of the life of Saul, Israel's first earthly king. We read of his physical characteristics and his military victories. In chapter 15 we find that he disobeyed Yahweh when he failed to completely annihilate the Amalekites, verses 1-9. As a result he is told by Samuel that Yahweh will take his kingdom away from him and give it to David, verses 25-28. In the next few chapters we see how Saul becomes jealous of David, 18:1-9, and pursues him to kill him, 20:33, because Yahweh was with David now and no longer with Saul.

Saul ordered all of his men, including his son Jonathan, to kill David. But David and Jonathan were very good friends, as they loved each other, so Jonathan told David of Saul's plan to kill him.

Fleeing from Saul, David came to Nob and requested bread and Goliath's sword from Ahimelech the priest, I Sam. 21:1-9. The chief herdsman of Saul, Doeg, the Edomite, observed this meeting, verse 7, and told Saul. Believing that Ahimelech was conspiring against him, Saul had Ahimelech and his family killed, save one, Abiathar, one of Ahimelech's sons.

The above episode is an example of how hatred for a person, Doeg's feelings toward David, caused strife between Saul and Ahimelech, and is surely an example of Prov. 10:12, first part, which says that "*Hatred stirreth up strifes.*"

Another example of this is the strife between Abraham and Hagar caused by Sarah's feelings toward Ishmael. See Gen. 21:9-14. To exemplify the last part of Prov. 10:12, "*But love covereth all sins,*" one can look at another event in David's life and how he obtained Bathsheba as his wife.

David desired Bathsheba to

be his wife, but she was already the wife of Uriah the Hittite. David then conceived a plan by which he would send Uriah to lead the army into a battle in which Uriah would surely die. This occurred as we find that Uriah was killed, II Sam 11:24. In II Sam 12 Nathan told a parable to David in which David answered that the guilty person should be put to death, verse 5. When Nathan explained to David that he was the guilty person, David recognized his sin, verse 13, and fasted and prayed the prayer found in Psalm 51. Here we see how Nathan's love toward David helped show David his guilt. The love which covers all sins, as written in Prov. 10:12, is not our love but the love that others feel toward us which causes us to recognize our guilt for which we ask Yahweh for forgiveness. See also I Pet. 4:8.

Another illustration of the love which Nathan felt for David is the feeling that each of us, as members of Yahshua's Body, have toward the other members. We are to love our brethren ("*Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear Yahweh. Honour the king,*" I Pet. 2:17), and we are to have this same spontaneous love for each one ("*That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another,*" I Cor. 12:25). Truly this is wisdom that we can all apply to ourselves, both young and old alike.

Elder Roger G. Meyer

<Fire from page 6>

(Am 8:5 AV)

- COLLECTING WOOD: "*And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath*

day." (Nu 15:32 AV)

Does this proscription concerning kindling a fire have any further precautions? Probably not, for this prohibition appears only here in Exodus 35. Had there been more to be said than the caution to observe the Sabbath, we would have ancillary instructions given us. So far we have only one witness. We need one or two more witnesses according to the following:

In the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; [but] at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. (De 17:6 AV)

This [is] the third [time] I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. (2Co 13:1 AV)

He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. (Heb 10:28 AV)

But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. (Mat 18:16)

The question often raised is how does the proscription of kindling a fire affect us? It is obvious that we should not short change Yahweh on Sabbath time. He expects us to commune with Him and the brethren. It is to be a day of rest and revitalization. Enjoy the Sabbath and do not allow carnal things to interfere with this special day of spiritual refreshing. It was a one-time command to Israelites to keep their mind on heavenly things. Let us keep our thoughts on things of the Spirit as well.

Elder Donald R. Mansager

Eternally Secure?

(Note: Except where otherwise stated, Bible references are taken from the New King James Version – NKJV with the Holy Names inserted.)

Introduction

Many denominations and ministries teach that since salvation is the free gift of Yahweh, anyone who repents and accepts this free gift cannot lose their salvation. This doctrine of “eternal security” is often summarized as “once saved, always saved.”

Such adherents put great emphasis on Paul’s statement *“that if you confess with your mouth [that Yahshua is the Messiah] and believe in your heart that Yahweh has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved,”* Rom 10:9. For such persons this is the passport to salvation. They suppose that by simply taking a public stance, such as coming to an altar and asking “Jesus” Yahshua into your heart, you would have fulfilled the criterion of confessing with your mouth and believing in your heart, and that by so doing you would be saved eternally. From that moment you will have joined the select number of persons who are assured of their place in heaven the kingdom, and nothing you do subsequently will change that.

Based exclusively on the writings of Paul, they assume that grace has replaced the requirements of keeping the law. They take this a step further, by adding that at repentance, not only past, but also present and future sins are forgiven, so that you are on a direct and irreversible route to glory. What does the Bible teach? Is entry into the kingdom permanently guaranteed to everyone who prays the sinner’s prayer, and asks Yahshua into their lives, irrespective of what they may do subsequently? Taking this a step further, is asking Yahshua into your heart the Biblical method to repent?

Getting the correct answers to these questions is most important, since they relate to your eternal destiny. It is far better to find out the truth here and now than to discover when it is too late that you had placed confidence in an erroneous teaching.

There can be no doubt that the salvation Yahshua provides was done once, for all times and is always available. The priestly sacrifices of the Old Testament had to be repeated, *“But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of Yahweh,”* Heb 10:12. His work, the gift of salvation made freely available to all, is finished, but does it follow that your work is also finished and that unlike any other gift, it is impossible to lose it?

“Once Saved Always Saved” Doctrine

The following extract from a website that promotes the “eternal security” theory is typical of many like-minded persons in Christendom.

It states: “The Bible teaches ‘once saved, always saved’ -- that we can be saved once and for all only through a repentant, saving faith in [Yahshua the Messiah]. Once a person has accepted [the Messiah] as Savior, they may wonder if it is possible to lose that salvation. What if they commit a sin? What if they commit a lot of sins? What if they do something very, very wrong? Is it possible to be saved, and then lose that salvation? Fortunately, the answer is a resounding ‘no.’ Once a person has accepted [Yahshua the Messiah] as Savior, he/she is forever saved...”

That website sees the method of salvation as being purely dependent on believing. For them grace has done it all. Apart from the initial repentance, there is nothing else you need to do. Your seat in the kingdom is guaranteed irrespective of what you may do or fail to do. It cannot be rescinded.

Contrary to that view, James in his epistle makes it abundantly clear that belief in Yahweh cannot be enough. He states, *“You believe that there is one Elohim. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble!”* (James 2:19) If believing were the only prerequisite for salvation, then the demons would be saved, for their belief in Yahweh is so great that it even causes them to shudder. However, their kind of belief does not lead them to loving, submitting to and obeying Him. Instead, it leads them to hatred, rebellion and disobedience. James concluded this chapter by saying that *“As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also,”* James 2:26.

To claim a belief in Yahshua without doing what He says is a contradiction. As Yahshua Himself said, *“why do you call Me ‘Rabbi, Rabbi,’ and do not do the things which I say?”* (Luke 6:46)

Yahshua defined His true followers as those who obeyed Him. He said, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments,”* John 14:15.

Genuine faith in Yahshua’s gift of salvation ought to lead to love and gratitude towards Him, which can only be effectively expressed in obeying Him. This is what will separate a true convert and follower of Yahshua from the teaching and attitudes of demons.

It is futile to isolate faith in Yahshua's finished work from your responsibility to "walk in all His ways," Deut 10:12.

At the end of the Bible, the book of Revelation leaves no room to doubt who are the ones who will have eternal life. It says "Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city," Rev 22:14. The Bible began in the book of Genesis with Adam and Eve forfeiting that right to everlasting life when they disobeyed Yahweh in the Garden of Eden; it ends with believers obtaining eternal life by obeying Him. Yahshua signed the Book of Revelation when He said: "I, Yahshua, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star," Rev 22:16. There is no higher authority on earth. Since He who is our passport or door to eternal life has said we must believe in Him and keep the commandments in order to have eternal life, there is no other credible doctrine. Be not deceived!

Biblical Way to Repent

False teachings about salvation begin with Christendom's accepted method of repentance. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that if any sinner desires to have eternal life he/she must ask Yahshua (Jesus) to come into their heart. There is not even one occasion where Yahshua or any of His disciples taught this. Nevertheless, this is popularly taught as the way one must be saved. The nearest thing to this we find in the whole Bible is in Revelation: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me," Rev 3:20.

Chapters 2 and 3 of Revela-

tion are addressed to the assemblies. To each of them Yahshua gave specific advice and commendation. In chapter 3:14-21, His message is to the Laodecian assembly that had become lukewarm. He said to them, "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see," Rev 3:18. He continued in verse 20, "Behold I stand at the door and knock..." Yahshua was poised, knocking and patiently waiting to give that assembly the things they lacked, so that they could restore their relationship with Him. The Nelson Study Bible remarks, "I stand at the door and knock pictures [the Saviour Yahshua] seeking entrance into His own [assembly] (v. 14) for the purpose of renewed fellowship. Though it is often understood as [the Messiah] knocking at the door of an individual unbeliever's heart, the context makes that improbable."

The Companion Bible commenting on this verse states, "The popular belief that [Yahshua] is ever knocking at the hearts of sinners is a distortion of Scripture."

It is incorrect to take a verse out of its context and use it as the only basis for an important doctrine.

Repentance is generally understood to mean a genuine sorrow for having strayed from Yahweh's ways and a pledge to change direction and submit to Yahweh's authority.

Yahshua, in His parable of the prodigal son, gave an example of true repentance. Read Luke 15:9-32.

Prior to the prodigal son leaving his father's house, he had lived securely there and enjoyed all the privileges of a son. That however did not satisfy his

restless urge to be on his own. Equipped with his inheritance, he left his father's house for a distant country, to do things his way, hoping to enjoy a great life in the big wide world of freedom. The beginning of his independence was sparked with excitement in which he probably thought, "This is the life!" But when the fuel (money) for maintaining his profligate lifestyle was exhausted and a famine occurred in the land, the tables turned. With the bursting of the short-lived bubble, he came face to face with reality. He needed a job, and (assuming he was a Jew), took the most degrading occupation of feeding swine. In desperation he even ate the swine's food. He had plummeted to the rock-hard bottom. From that position his thoughts returned to the abundance in his father's house. He mused, "How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 'I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants,'" Luke 15:17-21.

While he had been in the distant country, asking his father to come into his life or his heart would have been futile and meaningless. He had to do something. He journeyed all the way back to his father's house, penitent and willing to serve his father in any way his father would have desired. In other words, from then onwards he would obey his father. He recognised that his way was not the right way. He needed the security of home and knew he could be assured of that when he placed himself under his father's jurisdiction. Roaming days were over. On arriving at his father's house, he confessed: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer

worthy to be called your son," Luke 15:21. That in a nutshell is true repentance. It is going all the way to the Father, however long or painful the journey may be, admitting to Him that you have been sinning against Him, asking His forgiveness, and submitting yourself from then onwards in total surrender to His will and to His ways. The prodigal son had never lost his father's love when he had strayed but he had to return home and continue to stay there in order to be secure (safe and saved) in his father's care.

Yahweh so loved the whole world, that He gave His only son to die in our place, but we do not avail ourselves of that love while we are away from Him. We are only safe (saved) when we accept and treasure His gift, by staying with Him and being obedient to Him, throughout the course of our lives.

Is It possible to Stray After Repentance?

There is a good lesson to be learned from marriage. When a couple marries, they go at the front of a hall and make a sincere pledge before all those present to love and stay together as long as they live. In spite of this many marriages end precipitately, suggesting that a solemn public pledge is inadequate to guarantee a life-long relationship. The wedding day is but a first step on a journey that should last for one's lifetime. Each person must continue to walk in love with a genuine desire to please each other. When no effort is made to preserve the bond, love wanes and eventually dies. The wedding-day promise is incapable of welding together two hearts that are falling apart. When a marriage breaks down, the partners separate and each is denied the rights of wedlock.

Yahweh has repeatedly drawn

a parallel between His relationship with the children of Israel and a marriage. Through His prophet Jeremiah, He said "*Surely, as a wife treacherously departs from her husband, so have you dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel, says Yahweh,*" Jer 3:20.

Ezekiel said of Israel, "*You are an adulterous wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband,*" Ezek 16:32.

Yahweh said to Hosea: "*Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry And children of harlotry, for the land has committed great harlotry by departing from Yahweh,*" Hos 1:2.

These verses suggest that in the same way a spouse can leave his/her partner, so too a former believer can go away from Yahweh. Yahweh does not move away from His people, but they sometimes move from Him, just as that the prodigal son left his father's house. Through Isaiah He said, "*Your iniquities have separated you from your Elohim; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear,*" Isa 59:2. If your sins separate you from Yahweh, it is false confidence to believe that because you made a public declaration to follow Him that that commitment will continue to hold in spite of whatever you may do. "*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of Yahweh?*" (1 Cor 6:9)

When Adam and Eve disobeyed Yahweh by heeding the voice of Satan, they had set in motion a tendency to stray from Yahweh and to disobey Him. Rebellion crept into the heart of man. As Eve naively thought she could have eternal life while disobeying Yahweh, so today many have false hopes of inheriting Yahweh's kingdom without the necessity of obeying Him. They are straying from the clear teachings of the Bible, just as Eve did by listening to

the smooth-talking serpent. This endemic Adamic nature does not automatically cease when one makes a commitment to follow Yahshua. Judas was chosen by Yahshua and walked and talked with Him but finally betrayed Him. Even Peter, who had so enthusiastically and demonstratively followed Yahshua, denied Him.

The winner of a race is not the one who began well, but he/she who completed the race according to the rules. Until the race is over many things can go wrong, that will disqualify the runner from winning. Repentance is like a toddler taking the first step or the athlete at the start of a race. The beginning, though it may be filled with excitement, great expectations and hope is not also the end.

Until, like Paul, you have "finished the course" many things can go wrong that will deny you the crown of everlasting life.

The Bible expressly warns that many who began the race will fall away. "*Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first,*" 2 Thess 2:3.

Paul said to Timothy, "*Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,*" 1 Tim 4:1.

Yahshua said that in the last days, "*Many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold,*" Matt 24:11-12.

Jude wrote: "*Certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, [wicked] men, who turn the grace of our Elohim into lewdness and deny the only Elohim and our Saviour Yahshua the Messiah,*" Jude 1:4.

If the doctrine of "eternal security" were true, then someone

who had repented then afterwards became a homosexual for example, could be confident that they were still saved, and would enter the kingdom of Yahweh. But such reasoning is clearly at variance with the teachings of the Bible that says, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of Yahweh? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of Yahweh," 1 Cor 6:9-10.

"Once saved" does not signify you are always saved or safe from the pernicious onslaughts of the enemy and his demons. Satan did not hesitate to recruit one third of the angels and to create open rebellion in heaven. He had the audacity to enter the most holy place on earth when he entered the Garden of Eden. Thousands of years later he was still at his old tricks when he tempted Yahshua, the Son Yahweh, in the wilderness. He is not about to give up trying. He wants to "sift you as wheat" (Luke 22:31) and to shake out from you every shred of truth, and your determination to make it into the kingdom. This is why Yahshua repeatedly told His disciples to be on guard. The apostle Peter, who himself experienced first-hand how easily one might stray from the Saviour, wrote, "Be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Pet 5:8. He will make a meal of you if you let him.

You, too, can stray at any time during your pilgrimage. "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall," 1 Cor 10:12.

To rebellious backsliding Israel, Yahweh said through His prophet Jeremiah, "Obey My voice, and I will be your Elohim, and you shall be My people. And walk

in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.' Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but followed the counsels and the dictates of their evil hearts, and went backward and not forward," Jer 7:23, 24. As long as man follows his evil heart he will stray from Yahweh, but he cannot stray from Yahweh into His kingdom! Obey Him and "walk in all His ways", and then you will not stray. But "if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Yahshua the Messiah the righteous [One]," 1 John 2:1; and "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John 1:9.

You must be always on guard to ensure that your sins are forgiven and that you are striving to walk in obedience to Yahweh. Only then you will be heading for His kingdom. Yahweh does not forgive in order that you can keep on sinning, for no sin will enter into His kingdom.

Except a backslider returns to Yahweh, his/her only hope is not everlasting life but death.

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of Yahweh underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? (Heb 10:26-29)

The Bible does not suggest that a convert cannot turn back to their old ways. The Scripture explicitly states, "When the righteous turns from his righteousness and com-

mits iniquity, he shall die because of it," Ezek 33:18. Do not be duped by the wishful theologians. Live by the word of Yahweh, and not the word of some serpent-like preacher who claims, "you will not surely die!" (Gen 3:4)

Yahshua's Teaching

What did Yahshua say are the requirements for entering the kingdom? He made it clear that the form of righteousness taught by the Pharisees was ineffective as a means of earning salvation and as a gateway into the kingdom. The Pharisees missed their intended goal by failing to recognise the only One who is the way the truth and the life because they thought they knew the way. Today, others choosing not to go the route of the Pharisees preach that your entry into the kingdom is guaranteed without adhering to the law, because the free gift of Yahweh's Son does it all. They say that when you "give your heart to [Yahshua]", there is nothing else you have to do. Is this consistent with Yahshua's teaching?

Yahshua supported the keeping of the law. He said, "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven," Matt 5:19, 20. The meticulous outward show of observing the law as practiced by the Pharisees is inadequate to gain entry into the kingdom. Yahshua made it clear that a veneer of piety is not enough, but that He favoured an application of the law, which begins in the heart and works its way outward. Those who will enter the kingdom must

surpass the Pharisees by demonstrating a deeper and more meaningful adherence to the law.

When the rich young ruler asked Yahshua *"what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"* (Matt 19:16), Yahshua did not say to him "there is nothing you need to do", or "you need only to invite Me into your heart". Instead Yahshua replied: *"if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments,"* Matt 19:17. The young man thought he had met this criterion, so Yahshua went deeper, and told him of other things he should do that would demonstrate his full compliance with the intent of the law. The ruler went away sorrowful, thinking Yahshua was asking more of him than he was prepared to do. On another occasion Yahshua said to His followers, *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Rabbi, Rabbi,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven,"* Matt 7:21.

In John 15:1-10 Yahshua taught His disciples the necessity to stay continually connected to Him. He likened our relationship with Him to that between a vine and its branches. *"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned,"* John 15:4-6. A branch that was once connected to its source of supply but becomes severed will not survive. A believer who strays from Yahshua has only the prospect of death – not everlasting security!

Obeying Yahweh's commands is an essential requirement for entering His kingdom. But the

keeping of the law alone is insufficient. Obedience must be combined with faith in Yahshua. *"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life,"* John 5:24. *"For Yahweh so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life,"* John 3:16.

On the one hand He said. *"I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture,"* John 10:9. On the other hand He said, *"narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it,"* Matt 7:14.

Obtaining eternal life will not come easy. It requires effort to continually do what is right and shun the wrong. The easy alternative leads to death –not life! Salvation comes by believing in the Son of Yahweh, and doing what He says. This means that one must continually believe, and continually obey. Surrendering one's life to Yahshua is much more than an emotional event. It involves walking continually in His ways. When one ceases to do that, the relationship with Yahshua is broken, and until that is restored in the way that the prodigal son had done, one is forfeiting one's inheritance. Yahshua never taught that one solitary step of faith would take you straight into the kingdom. On the contrary He said, *"He who endures to the end shall be saved,"* Matt 24:13, Mark 13:13.

The inference is that whoever does not hold out or press on in spite of all the hindrances that come in the way, will not be saved.

The foolish virgins had made a good start but a poor finish. Yah-

shua repeatedly cautioned His followers to "watch". It is clear from His repeated emphases that He was driving home the message that a good beginning could be nullified by later action. You have not made it until your life has ended. Be vigilant. There is no room for complacency.

Yahweh's Requirements

"Who may ascend into the hill of Yahweh? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from Yahweh, And righteousness from the Elohim of his salvation," Psa 24:3-5.

"Yahweh, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, And works righteousness, And speaks the truth in his heart," Psa 15:1, 2.

"What does Yahweh your Elohim require of you, but to fear Yahweh your Elohim, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul," Deut 10:12.

Those who fail to meet Yahweh's requirements will not be rewarded with inherent eternal life. Claiming to have known Him will be of no avail. *"When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Master, Master, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity,'"* Luke 13:25-27.

A Journey Not an Event

Salvation begins by making a

definite decision and continues by making a series of decisions in which one chooses Yahweh's way rather than the way of the world, the flesh or the devil. One seldom gains success in any area by merely one act or step or from one event. Success is usually the product of a series of steps targeted towards a particular goal. The beginning counts for little except it is followed through to the end. To the assembly at Ephesus Yahshua said, "I have this against you, that you have left your first love," Rev 2:4. Samson had a supernatural strength from Yahweh but then violated Yahweh's instructions and allowed his hair to be cut. When he awoke he thought his strength would have prevailed as before but "he did not know that Yahweh had departed from him," Judg 16:20.

Disobedience always brings punishment, and the believer is no exception. If a believer sins and does not repent, he will incur the wrath of Yahweh even more than one who had never believed. "And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more," Luke 12:47, 48.

This is why Paul wrote: "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away," 1 Cor 9:27 KJV. Paul was much aware that in spite of having made a good start, he could lose it all and become a spiritual reject.

Yahshua, telling His hearers what will happen at the end, said, "because lawlessness will

abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved," Matt 24:12, 13. Salvation is not guaranteed to anyone who is effortlessly drifting along in the ocean of grace.

To the Philippian assembly, Paul wrote: "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of Yahweh in Yahshua the Messiah," Philip 3:13,14. It takes effort to "press forward". Yahshua said, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able," Luke 13:24. Matthew records Yahshua's words that "from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force," Matt 11:12.

Entry into the kingdom is reserved for those who are willing to do whatever it takes to get there. In determining who will enter His kingdom Yahshua has no favourites except those who believe in Him, repent and do what He and the Father have commanded.

"Take up the whole armor of Elohim, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness," Eph 6:13-14. By ensuring that you live in obedience to Yahweh's truth and walk in righteousness, you will be able to stand and to be approved by Yahshua. "Therefore ... let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance ["to the end" – writer's insertion for emphasis] the race that is set before us, looking unto Yahshua, the author and finisher of our faith," Heb 12:1-2.

Conclusion

As he neared the end of his life, Paul said, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which Yahshua, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing," 2 Tim 4:7-8a.

Until we have "finished the race" there is no guarantee that we will inherit eternal life and obtain "the crown of righteousness." Wearing a label of "being saved" will not cause Yahshua to overlook your disobedience. The foolish virgins had been waiting for the bridegroom in the company of other virgins, but when the bridegroom arrived they were elsewhere trying to rectify their mistake. It was too late. From the bridegroom they heard the stern and final words: "I do not know you," Matt 25:12. Until the bridegroom arrived they thought they were ready to meet him. They were wrong. This is proof that you can hardly do too much but you can certainly do too little.

Since creation, Yahweh has punished and will continue to the end to punish sins that have not been confessed to Him for cleansing and forgiveness. There is no "once-for-all" repentance. Like the prodigal son, we can lose the safety of being in our Father's fold when we wander away from Him (sin). Those who intend to enter Yahweh's kingdom, must not be in the habit of sinning; but if they sin, they must, like the prodigal son, return to Yahweh in penitence, asking His forgiveness, and show a willingness to submit to His authority. Except this is done your sins will remain, and you will have no hope of eternal life. To believe the false assurances of an effortless easy route into the Kingdom,

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Discovering the Sabbath

Whichever day you keep as a day of rest and worship, the chances are it's a continuation of your parent's beliefs and practices. On the other hand, there are many who consider every day alike (Rom 14:15), and work even on weekends to earn a living.

My widowed mother raised me a Sunday keeper. Then I got married to a Baptist seminary graduate. The more Sunday keeping became a way of life for me and my family. We do so to honor what the mainstream Christianity calls the "Lord's Day", in the (mistaken) belief that the Savior's resurrection occurred Sunday morning.

Before I met my wife, she was employed by a Baptist Foreign Mission under the Youth Evangelism Program. But as a matter of church policy, when she got married her monthly salary was eventually cut off--relegating her down to volunteer church worker.

Having a degree in Elementary Education, in the year 1965 my wife accepted a teaching position in a little town in the province of Sorsogon, Philippines. She was assigned to teach in a remote village accessible only by motorized or paddle canoe.

The lack of regular transportation required her to stay there and come back to town only to get her salary, submit monthly reports and procure supplies. Worried by the thought of staying in such a semi-primitive place away from me and our two little daughters, she pleaded with me to quit (temporarily) my insurance selling job, and that we settle down in her place of work until she qualified for assignment to other schools along regular transport route.

A week before the opening of classes, the Head Teacher accompanied and helped us find accommodation near her school. We adjusted quite fast to the simplest of living. No appliances---not even a radio receiver. But health wise, we were gainers. The pesticide free and organically grown produce plus the wild varieties in the area was more conducive to health. The network of pristine rivers teemed with several species of fish, and a teen-age boy taught me fishing with a hook and line (minus a fishing rod). Seated in the canoe, we just held the line with our bare hands, wait for a tug and then quickly pull the fish out of the water. Thus my family's protein needs were met, along with native chickens we raised. And surprisingly, serious crime was unheard of in the area. We learned to love and enjoy living in the place.

Spiritual Dilemma

But then one problem surfaced. We missed the Sunday service and fellowship with brethren.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: as so much the more, as ye see the day approaching, Heb. 10:25.

My wife and I discussed the matter. Solution. There is a protestant church in the town proper, and we decided to affiliate. Delightedly, the Pastor (an old bachelor) and his members welcomed us with open arms. So, I bought a small canoe. Thenceforth, every Saturday after lunch, I sweated it out paddling my canoe along the network of rivers to town with my family. Exhausting---but I thought it to be good exercise. We'd spend the night at the Parsonage. It became a weekly family routine.

Three years later, I accidentally got hold of a little book---the U.S. and British Commonwealth in Prophecy. The main topic of the book is about Sabbath keeping as the identifying SIGN of [Yahweh's] people, and concerns the "lost ten tribes" of Israel. It's about how and why they lost their identity.

Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, "Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am [Yahweh] that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy unto [Yahweh]: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath Day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days [Yahweh] made the heavens and earth, and in the seventh day he rested and was refreshed, Ex. 13-17.

Accordingly, the ten tribes lost their identifying sign---the Sabbath---subsequently losing their identity. After reading the book, I was overwhelmed with emotions. Shocked. Stunned. Bewildered. Then I was angry with the author Herbert W. Armstrong, and muttered, "Does he mean that because we are not Sabbath keepers, we are not G-d's people? Why---the Sabbath is only for the Jews and Sunday is now the L-rd's Day."

I tried and tried again to brush aside and forget what I read in that book. Still, an uneasy feeling kept bothering me. What if what Mr. Armstrong wrote were true? Meanwhile, my wife enjoys her job, teaching grade I and II and oblivious of the emotional and mental dilemma besetting me. More still, I began to have a strange feeling, i.e. as if my family is on board a sinking ship.

Back to my senses, I found myself angry again with Mr. Armstrong. I said to myself, "I will prove him wrong." It was then I decided to look deeper into the Scriptures.

Quest For Sunday Keeping Texts

During my wife's studies in the seminary, the American Missionaries gifted their students with books. Among these are Thomson's Chain Reference Bible, a Bible Dictionary and Cruden's Concordance. Ah---with Cruden's I thought, I can easily find lots of New Testament texts that will uphold our Sunday keeping.

So, one morning I began my diligent research. Back home by noontime, my wife finds me engrossed in biblical study. She attended to our little girls and instructed our house help to set food on the table.

"Aren't you hungry?" she asked, "Come, let's have lunch."

"Go ahead," I replied, "I'll eat later."

Unknown to my wife, at the moment food was the least of my concerns. You see, I've got a problem. For the first time in my life, I found in the concordance that there are only eight verses in the New Testament that refers to the first day (Sunday) of the week. And, unlike the Sabbath, not one of these verses enjoins believers the keeping of Sunday for rest and worship. Still determined to defend our Sunday keeping, I de-

cide to analyze the 8 passages.

Analyzing the 8 Texts

1.) *"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre,"* Matt. 28:1.

2.) *"And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun,"* Mark 16:2. It's the same event as in Mat. 28:1. No hint of Sunday becoming a day of rest and worship.

3.) *"Now when (Yahshua) was risen, early the first day of the week He appeared to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils,"* Mark 16:9. Still no Sunday observance here. The Savior's appearance to Mary Magdalene doesn't in any way transform Sunday into a set-apart day in lieu of the Sabbath.

4.) *"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them,"* Luke 24:1. Luke's account of the women's visit to the tomb neither indicates rest or worship. They came purposely to anoint the body of (Yahshua) with spices, thinking it is still in the tomb.

5.) *"The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre,"* John 20:1. The same event as recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke and irrelevant to Sunday keeping.

6.) *"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came (Yahshua) and stood on the midst, and saith unto them, 'Peace be unto you,'"* John 20:19. The disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews---not for worship.

Note that the doors were shut (probably barricaded).

7.) *"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight,"* Acts 20:7. This is not a Sunday morning worship service. The disciples were gathered together to eat a common meal. Compare Acts 2: 44 & 46. Note that in the Jewish reckoning of the day, the event happened early on our Saturday evening. And there were many lights, verse 8. The fact that Paul was ready to depart on the morrow (a Sunday), shows that he has no regard for the first day of the week. Paul is a Sabbath keeper, Acts 17:2.

8.) *"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as (Elohim) hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come,"* 1 Corinth. 16:2. I used to take this verse as a typical example of Sunday worship service. However, considering that the entire New Testament is devoid of a command to observe Sunday, I began to see that Sunday keeping based on 1 Corinth. 16:2 rests on mere conjecture.

The question is: Did Paul and the apostolic Assemblies do a turnaround, i.e, embracing Sunday in lieu of the Sabbath? I decided to find out more, beginning with Paul.

a.) *"As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures,"* Acts 17:2.

b.) *"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the (Elohim) of my fathers, believing all things written in the law and in the prophets,"* Acts 24.14. Evidently, Paul remained steadfast and true to his convictions. The same is true with the other believers, as

Luke, who was with Paul in his travels, put on record details of their activities in the book of Acts. There is nothing at all in Luke's writings to suggest that the early assemblies changed their day of worship to Sunday.

Paul's Writings Misunderstood

Sunday keepers have taken the writings of Paul as an intimation of Sunday having become the (new) Sabbath of NT believers. But the book of Acts and historical records disproves this as evidence by the severe persecutions of Sabbath keepers during the Roman Empire.

The word "collection" in 1 Corinth. 16:1 is from the Greek word *logia* (#3048 of Strong's Dict.), which also means contribution, gathering. It should not be equated with the collection "purse" that is passed around during a Sunday service in the Christian church.

Rather, this collection was a special Fund intended to alleviate the hardship and sufferings of the Judean brethren, where each one must set aside by himself until Paul comes to collect it.

And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea: which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul, Acts 11:27-30.

Obviously, the famine was more severe in Judea, and the brethren there came to be in dire need, especially in Jerusalem. So, this prompted Paul to solicit assistance from the other Assem-

blies least affected as in Corinth, Galatia and Macedonia, 2 Corinth. 8:3-4, 9:1-5.

And considering the Agricultural economy, maybe part of these collections could be farm produce such as grains. But why on Sunday? Well, Sunday is an ordinary working day. As regards to Paul's writings, the apostle Peter explains and admonishes, "...*even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction,*" 2 Pet. 3:15-16

The Pastor's Animosity

Considering my wife's seminary training and deep-seated beliefs, I deemed it best not to discuss the matter with her yet. Meanwhile, I decided to continue with my research and find out more. Come Saturday, off we go to town again. At the Parsonage that evening, the Pastor showed me a magazine.

"Beware of this magazine, brother," he warns, "It has already led many astray, especially young people. And it is being sent free."

As I turned the front cover to see the contents, I was surprised to see that name again---Herbert W. Armstrong. Why---he is the same man who wrote that book about the lost tribes of Israel. What a coincidence! The more I became curious.

During the service, we had as our guest speaker a high ranking church official---the district superintendent. At the pulpit, the eminent Pastor waved the magazine and thundered, "Brothers and Sisters, you'd better be aware of and avoid reading this publication, etc.,etc."

The animosity of the pastors

toward the magazine intrigued me more. So, instead of complying with the warning, I decided to write and requested for a subscription. Eventually, I enrolled in the publisher's Bible Correspondence Course. Thus I learned of the origin and true nature of Sunday observance---essentially an outgrowth of sun worship---well documented and makes interesting reading in encyclopedias.

Sabbath in the New Testament

Having failed to find a command in the New Testament relative to the sanctification of Sunday, my object of interest turned to the Sabbath. What day did (Yahshua) and His followers keep? How extensive or consistent is Sabbath keeping in the New Testament?

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

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

* *"and He said unto them, 'the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath,'"* Mark 2:27

* *"But when they (Paul & Co.) departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down,"* Acts 13:14.

* *"And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath,"* Acts 13:42

* *"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,"* Acts 17:2. Clearly, the Savior and Paul showed that Sabbath

observance, the 4th in the ten commandments, remains binding on man and inviolable. After the death of (Yahshua), the book of Acts bears witness that the apostolic Assemblies were steadfast in keeping the Sabbath.

The OT Sabbath on Focus

During his sojourn on earth, it is apparent that the Savior attended public worship regularly in the synagogue. In like manner, going to the synagogue on the Sabbath day was a way of life for Paul, Acts 17:2. So, to know more of the Sabbath, I have to go to the source---the Old Testament. The fact is, most so-called Bible based religions take the Old Testament only for its historical as well as literary value.

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

Of course I have read these passages many times, but then it didn't make sense to me. But now, as I sincerely seek for the truth, the darkness gives way to light.

The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple, Ps. 119:130.

And in that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness, Isaiah 29:18.

The significance of the seventh day begins to unfold before my eyes. I noted that there are three distinct features of the seventh day that makes it really unique and different from day one to day six.

It is the only day that was 1)

blessed, 2) sanctified (set apart), and 3) honored by the Creator Himself by resting on this day from all His work of creation.

Note also that in the Decalogue, the 4th commandment is superseded only by the preeminence of the Almighty and His Name.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all they work: But the seventh is the Sabbath of (Yahweh) thy (Elohim): in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days (Yahweh) made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day: wherefore (Yahweh) blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, Ex. 20:8-11.

The pastors say the Sabbath is only for the Jews---calling it "Jewish Sabbath." But verse 10 says it is the Sabbath of Yahweh. Interestingly, the Sabbath is also for the stranger or gentile.

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

And remarkably, even the beast of burden (cattle) should be rested too on the Sabbath.

It's Truth That Matters

I begun my research purposely to demolish Sabbath observance--hoping to uphold my Sunday keeping. Ironically, my research ended up two ways i.e., defeat

and victory. Absurd? Not quite. Here's why. It is true that my endeavor to uphold Sunday keeping ended in defeat. But at the same time, such defeat led to my discovery of the truth of Yahweh's Sabbath. What happened was a triumph of the truth.

And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free, John 8:32.

With all the evidence I have gathered and compiled, my wife's Baptist training was no match for the truth. She, too, saw the light and accepted the Sabbath. For a time we were in a dilemma. We had forged a close and beautiful friendship with several hard core protestant families. Now, because of the Sabbath, the prospects of losing their friendship loomed ahead.

Nonetheless, we decided to uphold and keep the Sabbath. We value the truth more than we love friends. It really hurts to lose our friends, but we can not be a friend to the world, James 4:4.

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? (2 Corinth. 6:14)

Now, my wife and I knew better. This brings us to the heart of the matter. Why on earth have we relied on blind guides to lead us in our spiritual life?

Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch, Matt. 15:14.

...let (Yahweh) be true, but every man a liar, as it is written, "That though mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged," Rom. 3:4.

Neither is there a compromise, nor a substitute, for truth. And the truth of the Sabbath stands forever.

<Discover see page 22>

QUESTION & ANSWER

Q If it's what's inside that counts, why does Yahweh exclude those with disability?

A He wants those to represent His benevolent side so that we might remember His goodness and tender mercies. In preferring good physical specimens, we can easily recognize spiritual qualifications are also part of the equation Yahweh expects from us. We are to strive for spiritual perfection, for we are to be holy as He is holy, 1Peter 1:16. Those born with disabilities will be rewarded according to their deeds and our merciful Judge.

Q I'm curious why you render the Messiah's name Yahshua vs. Yahushua (or Yahoshua). It is scripturally evident that the messenger Gabriel imparted the Hebrew name Yahushua (vs. the Aramaic transliteration Yeshua) to Yosef and Miryam. The Hebrew name explicitly conveys the message that resounds from Genesis to Revelations i.e. "YHWH is Salvation." Both Yahushua (rendered Joshua in most English translations) and Yeshua (Jeshua) are found in the TANAK. Yahushua is found throughout the TANAK beginning from the time Moses renamed his disciple Hosea (Numbers 13:16). Due to his close relationship with YHWH, Moses had a keen understanding that YHWH was, is, and will always be Salvation. The plenary spelling of the Messiah's name is YUD HEH WAU SHIN WAU AYIN. I have found this spelling only at Deuteronomy 3:21 and Judges 2:7. This spelling includes all of the consonants and vowels necessary to correctly pronounce the name. The more common spelling (also called the defective spelling) is YUD HEH WAU SHIN AYIN. Both spellings begin YUD HEH WAU pronounced YAHU the same as the suffixes in Nehemyahu, Obadyahu, and Yeshayahu.

Yeshua is found outside of the Torah beginning around the time of the exile due to the influence of Aramaic speaking peoples. The Aramaic Yeshua is found in the post exilic prophets

Ezra and Nehemiah. Conversely, the post exilic prophets Haggai and Zechariah render Yahushua in the original Hebrew, most notably in the Messianic prophecy in Zechariah, chapter 3. I have not found a spelling corresponding to YAHshua (i.e. YUD HEH SHIN AYIN or YUD HEH SHIN WAU AYIN) anywhere in the TANAK.

Technically such a rendering may even be plausible. The Creator's name when used as part of a person's given name can be abbreviated YUD HEH (YAH) or YUD HEH WAU (YAHU or YAHU). Regarding YAHshua, I have not found that rendering anywhere in the TANAK. I've observed that many who prefer YAHshua are unaware that the Hebrew letter wau, in both scriptural spellings of the name Yahushua, is a vowel that is pronounced. Is there a scriptural precedent for "Yahshua" that I am unaware of?

A Thanks for contacting us and inquiring further about the Savior's name. I must say that it is good to correspond with someone from Judah knowing the prophesies about the two houses of Israel, and that they will be brought together in the hand of our Almighty Father, Ezek 37:19.

When we look at both the Aramaic and Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, we find some obvious problems when looking at the Sacred Names. Yahweh's name, for example, is brought over to the Aramaic in the Eastern Peshitta as MarYah, which is obviously incorrect with some sort of bias attached. Those manuscripts are not the original autographs, but rather translations written after the fact. MarYah is not a transliteration of Yud Heh Wau Heh, but rather a contraction of two different words, in which one is a proper noun, the Yud and the Heh. This is written in the Aramaic (estrangela script) on some Syrian synagogues today. It is not written or pronounced as Yud Heh Wau.

The spelling of Yahshua is sometimes written as Y'shua in English. Andrew Gabriel Roth, author of Ruach Qadim, writes and speaks both fluent Hebrew and Aramaic, besides knowing English and Greek. He has written that the Savior's name means, Yahweh's Salvation. He didn't write, Yahu-

weh's Salvation, nor does he write Yahushua, but rather Y'shua. I'm assuming he understands, that in the Father's name, the consonants are actually vowel sounds. The first century Jewish Historian, Flavius Josephus, also confirms this in his writings when speaking of the miter the high priest wore in which Yahweh's name is plainly written.

We believe that we certainly speak with an accent, when speaking both Sacred Names, but a name like "Jesus" is obviously not even in the same ballpark with what we find our Jewish Savior's name should be. The Greek New Testament (another obvious translation), has no emphasis on a "u" sound in the middle, but rather looks to be a valiant try at transliterating what we would say in the English as Yahshua.

I trust we both agree that the Savior's name must have the Father's name within it to fit within prophecy, Ps 124:8; Joel 2:32. Notice especially Exodus 15:2 NASU, which says, "Yah (Strong's 3050, Yud and Heh) is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation..." This is why the corrupted "Yeshua," as you pointed out from the Babylonian captivity (Ezra 2:2; Neh 8:17) is wrong. At some point (most likely with Gabriel), Yahshua came into usage. See Num 13:16.

We both may be a little off in our understanding, but as previously mentioned, Yahweh will bring both houses together. It looks like we are getting very close to this being made possible.

Q Once a gentile becomes a believer in Yeshua does he have to follow all the laws that Yahweh gave to Israel. If I read it correctly in the Old Testament the laws were given to the Jews only and not the gentiles. Do you think that gentile believers have to obey the sabbath and take Saturday to rest? If so, why and if not why? Thank you. This has really been bugging me.

A At creation Yahweh made the 7th day holy. Most would agree that the 10 Commandments should be observed, but I've heard ministers say they keep the "Christian Sabbath." To me this doesn't make sense since I know they're attending on the 1st day of the week while Yahweh says to keep the 7th day holy. Most any dictionary will tell one that Saturday is the 7th day. Acts 15 indicated that the gentiles were to stop doing the most horrendous things initially, then continue to learn since Yahweh's law is taught each Sabbath, verse 21.

Is the law for the Jew only? Not at all. Here's a little trivia: Did you know that Abraham was neither a Jew nor an Israelite, but was in fact a Hebrew? Jews are descendant from just one tribe of the 12

tribes of Israel. As you probably know, Jacob is the one who became Israel and he had 12 sons whose descendants became the 12 tribes of Israel. The laws of Yahweh were given to all of Israel and any who joined with them. What is the new covenant all about? Are we not given a new Spirit as spoken of in Ezekiel 36:26-27? Though this prophecy is spoken in part, we are the start of it in the New Testament. In fact, before we receive the Spirit we must recognize what sin is (1 John 3:4) and then turn away from it so we can start being obedient to our heavenly Father, Act 5:32. By the way, Abraham was a man of faith. That is emphasized by many today, but they fail to mention that he was also obedient, Gen 26:5.

Today we find a lot of traditions that are man-made and unholy. We're told to be holy as Yahweh is, and He hasn't changed the 7th day to the 1st day of the week. It may help to understand that in the New Testament they didn't have the New Testament writings. Yes, they had letters. But, they studied Scripture and taught out of it, 2 Tim 3:16-17. They would have taught that Israel was to be a holy nation, and that we are to be a holy nation today, 1 Peter 2:9. Where is Peter quoting from? Isn't it from the Old Testament? Isn't he quoting about Israel? Today, we are being grafted in as wild olive branches to the root of the olive tree, which is in fact, Israel, Romans 11:17, 26-27; Jeremiah 11:16.

It is the penalty of sin (death) that is taken away with the perfect sacrifice of the Messiah, Yahshua. We are justified in Him. It doesn't mean that we should walk contrary to the law. What did the Apostle Paul say again and again, "shall we sin, so that grace may abound? Yahweh forbid!" If Yahshua had done that, that is, "sin," He wouldn't have been the sacrifice we needed. Neither would He be the perfect example to follow. However, He is, and we are to follow in His footsteps. Paul said to follow him as He followed Yahshua, 1 Cor. 11:1. Even with that, He continued and said that Yahweh is the head of Messiah. Remember, Yahshua did the Father's will and not his own. This is just another reason why we do as Yahshua said, Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4. Again, He is quoting from the Old Testament. The New Testament is an agreement. We have agreed to accept the Salvation of Yah (Yahshua) for the forgiveness of sins. We then are now not under the death penalty, because we have faith in the Savior's sacrifice of Himself, Rev. 14:12. Yahshua becomes our elder brother, a Jew, which allows us to become part of the family of Israel...being grafted in, in the spiritual sense. However, we're still a physical people and there are instructions to live by. When it gets right down to it, are we not to worship in Spirit and in truth? (John 4:23)

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is the sure way to be finally rejected. Yahshua, who will be the final arbiter, said, *"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it,"* Matt 7:13-14. There is no easy way into the kingdom. There is only Yahshua's way. Yahshua never taught or suggested that it takes only one step to get into the kingdom.

"Once saved always saved" is not a Scriptural doctrine. Its source is the same lying serpent that told Eve she could have eternal life if she obeyed him, and disobey Yahweh. Your salvation is far too important to be trifled with

by optimistic, experimental, ill-founded and erroneous doctrines. The doctrine of "eternal security" is perhaps the most dangerous of Satan's deadly sedatives. It is nothing short of the re-enactment of the Garden of Eden deception, in which a misleading short route to eternal life was offered. The consequence of accepting that first lie was death. The result of the erroneous teaching of "eternal security" will also be death. *"Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation,"* Heb 2:1-3.

The solemn warnings of Yahshua must be heeded in prefer-

ence to the words of others who, like you, will be judged by Yahshua. Yahshua repeatedly told His followers to be always ready for His return. Are you?

Elder Buel Hallpike

<Discover from page 19>

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

My discovery of the Sabbath yielded a bonus. It set the stage to my discovery of more truths--culminating in the knowledge of Almighty Yahweh, and Yahshua the true Messiah. HalleluYah!

Elder A. S. Untalan, Sr



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"Truth came through Yahshua the Messiah..."
"What is His Name?"

"I will walk in Your truth..."

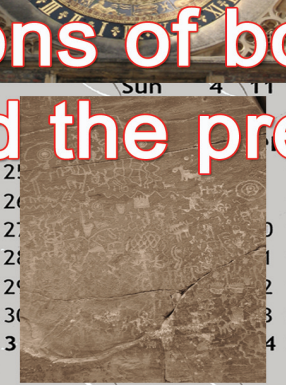
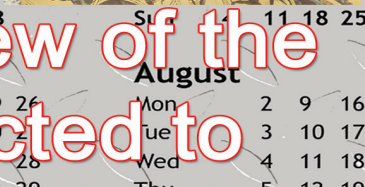
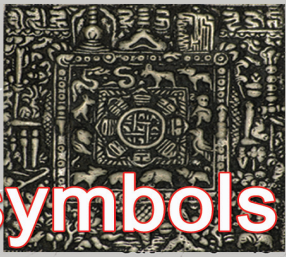
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