

YAIY



Beacon



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**Thy Word is a lamp unto
my feet, and a light unto
my path, Psa. 119:115.**

YAIY



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MISSION

STATEMENT

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

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The Hope In Yahweh

The heart of this article had its roots in a word given to me by the Holy Spirit in a very unlikely place... The Crazy Horse Saloon, twenty-some-odd years ago. I was playing fiddle in a country rock band, living a life that made sense to me then, but now, of course, I see the error of it all.

Nevertheless, it was in that frame of reference that Yahweh spoke to me. And, I remember the looks on the faces of the band members when I shared it with them – it was as if time had stopped, if for only a moment, as they tried to grasp what I was saying. This is what I told them:

- “There is no sin without forgiveness.
- “There is no forgiveness without repentance.
- “There is no repentance without change.
- “There is no change without pain.
- “There is no pain without wisdom.
- “There is no wisdom without knowledge.
- “There is no knowledge without sin.”

If you notice, the statement can be repeated over and over, just like life.

I can see, now, that Yahweh was trying to outline, in a way that I could understand, His plan of Salvation. At the time, I had been going through some major grief. But, He gave me the comfort of UNDERSTANDING – that it all had a purpose. That this was the way it had to be. He communicated to me that, sure, there would be pain in life, but the pain would produce wisdom, and beget knowledge.

I would sin, but would receive forgiveness through making changes in my life – out of the knowledge and wisdom I gained through ... trial and (what) ... error! He was saying, “John, don’t worry! This’ll all make sense to you some day.” Well, here I am. I thought I’d take some time to review this old lesson, and, perhaps it’ll make sense to you, too. Okay. Here’s the message again:

1. There is no sin without forgiveness.
2. There is no forgiveness without repentance.
3. There is no repentance without change.

4. There is no change without pain.
5. There is no pain without wisdom.
6. There is no wisdom without knowledge.
7. There is no knowledge without sin. (On this last one, was it not the first sin that had to do with the Knowledge of Good and Evil?)

There Is No Sin Without Forgiveness

The reason is because of the “Creator’s mercy, grace and lovingkindness is perfect.” Now, we all know that there is one unforgivable sin committed by those who have rejected the Set-apart Spirit! Their mind is elsewhere, and this message is of no use to them. Scripture is filled with examples of Yahweh’s abundant mercy. Here’s just one:

When Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy, because they have sinned against You, if they turn to You again and confess Your name and pray and make supplication to You in this house (Solomon’s Temple), then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You gave to their fathers, 1 Kings 8:33-34 NASU .

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, Ephesians 1:7 NASU.

There Is No Forgiveness Without Repentance

This is “obedient change” because “obedience is the evidence of perfected love for the Almighty, Whose recompense is perfect.”

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments, John 14:15 NASU.

Yahweh is perfect in His mercy and in His punishment, as testified to by Paul in 2 Timothy 4:14-15:

Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; Yahweh will repay [KJV, “reward”] him according to his deeds. Be on guard against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching, NASU.

How did Alexander “harm” Paul? By opposing Paul’s correct teaching of the Scripture.

There Is No Repentance Without Change

The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia has this to say about Repentance:

“The Hebrew term *shubh* is most generally employed to express the Scriptural idea of genuine repentance. It is used extensively by the prophets, and makes prominent the idea of a radical CHANGE in one’s attitude toward sin and Elohim. It implies a conscious, moral separation, and a personal decision to forsake sin and to enter into fellowship with Elohim.

“The [Greek] word *metanoeo* is equivalent to *shubh* and expresses the true New Testament idea of the spiritual change implied in a sinner’s return to Elohim. The term signifies ‘to have another mind,’ to CHANGE the opinion [perception, thoughts, meanings] or purpose with regard to sin. It is equivalent to the Old Testament word [meaning] ‘turn.’ Thus, it is employed by John (Yochanan) the Immerser, Yahshua, and the apostles.”

Using the Englishman’s Concordance, the Hebrew word *shuwb* demonstrates the idea of returning to someone or something 1057 times. It is a root word meaning “to repent,” “to turn back,” or, “to return,” “to go back home.” In the figurative sense, repentance means to go to or go back to obedience to the Law of Yahweh. That’s what John the Immerser, Yahshua and the apostles preached.

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of Yahweh is at hand. Repent, and believe in the evangel, Mark 1:15.

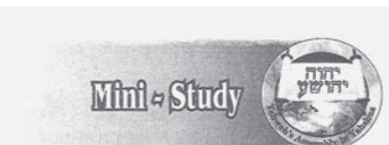
There Is No Change Without Pain

Obedient change is, by definition, the absence of sin. Although

the word, sin, is not defined as “pleasure,” it is clear that the extreme desire for sensual pleasure is the root of sin. When it comes to the world of addictions, social dysfunction, crime, war and political corruption, are not these all mechanisms people use to obtain “comfort” and pleasure? Are not people looking for relief from their pain and, sure enough, discovering pleasure in all these things? The only problem is, these are only temporary band aids, attempting to cover up the fear, guilt, shame, disappointment and powerlessness they experience in their lives.

For all that is in the world, the lust [the yearning, aching and coveting] of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride [arrogance, conceit and self-importance] of life, is not of the Father, but is of the

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A Matter of Death and Life

Do we really die when we pass away or does our soul live on in heavenly bliss while our loved ones mourn us down here on earth?

Most of my early life I had been bothered by a nagging question. If when we die our souls waft off to a joyful eternity in heaven, then why so much mourning at funerals?

If the popular teaching and belief is that man has an immortal soul, then why do ministers talk about “death” when administering last rites?

And if our soul lives on after we die, what’s the point of a resurrection of the “dead,” which the Bible speaks of?

We hear people say that good ol’ Uncle Ben has died. Is Ben really dead? Or do we go to his funeral just to mourn his lifeless body, while our uncle lives on, rolling around heaven, playing his harp and testing the aerodynamics of his wings?

There he is, lounging serenely, propped up by one arm as he peeks over a cloud’s edge and smiles down at those glumly carrying his corpse in a casket. Or at least that’s what so many think. They want to believe that the dead aren’t actually gone, we just can’t see them anymore.

Let’s face it. Most people don’t like to talk about this subject. They’re too into the present: too busy trying to get ahead, raising a family, getting a promotion, working for retirement — going for the gusto of life. The seriousness of the subject weighs heavily on the conscience, and we’d rather not be reminded of our own mortality.

The philosophy is, why worry about it? Just live a decent life, be an honest citizen, do your share, and it will all work out in the end. You’ll get to heaven, they believe. But is that true?

world, 1John 2:16.

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of Yahweh rather than to enjoy the PLEASURES of sin for a short time, Hebrews 11:24-25 NIV.

At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and PLEASURES. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another, Titus 3:3 NIV.

There Is No Pain Without Wisdom

Wisdom speaks from knowledge that has been tried, tested and proved. Who, today, has not benefited in knowledge from the “School of Hard Knocks”? How do we learn? By “Trial and ... Error”? Of course, the hard knocks are only useful if we LEARN by them. I see a lot of people, including myself, trying to solve problems by doing the same thing over and over again. Or, doing the same thing harder and harsher, until they become brutal — or, until they collapse in a heap of ruin. “If what you’re doing isn’t working, do something different.” In most cases, what DOESN’T work is trying to solve problems with the resources that Satan makes so abundant. Television, movies, alcohol, pornography, drugs, deviant forms of worship or total immersion into worldly “hobbies.”

Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward, 1 Corinthians 3:13-14 KJV.

So this is what the Sovereign Yahweh says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a TESTED stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be

dismayed," Isaiah 28:16.

This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on MY NAME and I will answer them; I will say, "They are My people," and they will say, "Yahweh is our Elohim," Zechariah 13:9.

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Yahshua the Messiah is revealed, 1 Peter 1:6-7.

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of the Messiah, so that you may be overjoyed when His glory is revealed, 1 Peter 4:12-13 NIV.

There Is No Wisdom Without Knowledge

In rejecting sin, one must fill the void with knowledge of the Truth.

The fear of YAHWEH is the beginning of KNOWLEDGE, but fools despise WISDOM and DISCIPLINE, Proverbs 1:7 NIV.

Discipline reads as "instruction" in the KJV and other versions. Discipline [or, "instruction" in KJV etc.] is the translation of the Hebrew *muwcar* (moo-sawr'), Strong's # OT:4148; from OT:3256; properly, chastisement; figuratively, reproof, warning or instruction; also restraint. Strong's #OT:3256 *yacar* (yaw-sar'); a primitive root; to chastise, literally (with blows) or figuratively (with words); hence, to instruct.

There Is No Knowledge Without Sin

Our nature IS sin, but knowledge exposes sin.

But of the TREE of the KNOWL-

EDGE of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, Genesis 2:17 KJV.

And YAHWEH Elohim said, "The man has now become like one of Us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever," Genesis 3:22.

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned, Romans 5:12 NASU.

A Reminder

May we continue to add righteous knowledge from Yahweh to that which He has already given

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Mini Study



Why Grace Leads to Obedience

"Guilty" was the jury's verdict. The judge's sentence: death by lethal injection. For Wey Ward, a convicted murderer, the nightmare of that December day seven years ago had played endlessly through his mind.

In a jealous rage he had taken a man's life. He realized that he deserved the death penalty for what he had done. No amount of agonizing could change that.

Regardless of how many times he pleaded for forgiveness from the victim's family, no matter how much he wished he could relive events, one persistent fact remained. Ward deserved to die. The law was the law. He was guilty of a capital crime and he had to pay the price for his sin.

With nowhere else to turn, he begged mercy from the governor.

"You Have Been Pardoned"

Just 10 minutes before his scheduled execution, Wey Ward heard the most unbelievably wonderful words ever spoken to a condemned man:

"By the grace of the governor of this state, you have been pardoned."

"I can't believe it," he said to himself. "He forgave me!"

Humbly thankful for the gracious pardon, Ward vowed from that point on that he would be a model citizen. And he never was in trouble with the law again.

Although fictitious, the foregoing illustrates the concept of scriptural grace and how it works in the

us, for we do know that:

There is no sin without forgiveness.

There is no forgiveness without repentance.

There is no repentance without change.

There is no change without pain.

There is no pain without wisdom.

There is no wisdom without knowledge.

And there is no knowledge without sin.

Furthermore

Also, we know that:

There is no sin without the Law.

There is no Law without the Word.

There is no Word without the Creator ...

But

If there is no Creator, then there is no Word.

If there is no Word, then there is no Law.

If there is no Law, then there is no sin.

If there is no sin, then there is no knowledge.

If there is no knowledge, then there is no wisdom.

If there is no wisdom, then there is no pain.

If there is no pain, then there is no need for change.

If there is no need for change, then there is no need for repentance.

If there is no need for repentance, then there is no forgiveness.

And, if there is no forgiveness, then there is no hope.

Conclusion

May we continue to grow in the Knowledge and Wisdom of Yahweh, in the name of Yahshua the Messiah. HalleluYah!

Elder John Fisher



Rags To Riches



Darkness to Light

We live in a rich country compared to the poverty we see elsewhere in the world, but it didn't start out this way. It can be a comparison of sorts in our own life. The spiritual poverty and richness which contrasts it is something we'll want to consider.

For all of us in Messiah, it is a rags to riches story, spiritually speaking. There are seven specific things we can consider in coming out of the darkness and into the light. It's our story and it's one you can include in your own life, if you are willing to submit to our Creator:

1. Darkness
2. Called and Chosen
3. Reaching for the Prize
4. Truth or Consequences
5. Standing Firm
6. Vision of the Future
7. Arrival of Paradise

Darkness

Darkness is the first place we find ourselves before coming to the Father through His Son, Yahshua. Do most people understand where they are spiritually? Did we, before we were called? When do people start paying attention to Yahweh?

Yahweh Himself gives insight and a warning by saying,

When you become the father of children and children's children and have remained long in the land, and act corruptly, and make an idol in the form of anything, and do that which is evil in the sight of Yahweh your Elohim so as to provoke Him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will surely perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to possess it. You shall not live long on it, but will be utterly destroyed, Deuteronomy 4:25–26 (NASB used throughout).

When doing studies like this, you can't help but notice that Yahweh is still working with Israel, as

we'll soon see, even though they forsook Him and were banished from their land.

Many of us were doing our own thing and not paying attention to Yahweh's Word, let alone living it. He knows, however, how to get our attention.

We read in Deuteronomy 4:27–31,

Yahweh will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where Yahweh drives you. There you will serve deities, the work of man's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. But from there you will seek Yahweh your Elohim, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return to Yahweh your Elohim and listen to His voice. For Yahweh your Elohim is a compassionate El; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.

It's interesting that many today don't think that they're worshipping any idols, but you see people spending all their time with their car or with their homes or other material things.

In verse 30 it says,

When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return to Yahweh your Elohim and listen to His voice.

It is our hope that people will earnestly start to return to Yahweh and listen to His voice.

Today, it seems we are a voice crying in the wilderness full of idols. Yet, it appears that when people start to see their idols destroyed in front of their eyes they will be more open to hearing what Yahweh has to say. What is He telling us today?

Come out of her, My people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and Yahweh has remembered her iniquities. Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she

has mixed, mix twice as much for her. To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, I SIT as A QUEEN AND I AM NOT A WIDOW, and will never see mourning. For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for Yahweh Elohim Who judges her is strong, Revelation 18:4b-8.

This is speaking to those exposed to the Babylonian system of the world, and all are exposed to it. Some say, "this is speaking of America, because it has open borders to every nation and every nation wants to come here, making it like Babylon."

Yahweh also speaks of the sensuality of Babylon, and how the merchants become rich. America appears to be the number one producer of pornography in the world, and it is an industry that thrives and makes itself known in just about every corner of society today. Today, in fact, you cannot watch just any new movie that is produced in America, because many are filled with sensuality designed to arouse the viewer.

Many in poor countries view America as rich, but morally it is poor and blind. It seems many churches in America are just as blind, due to tradition and false ways of worship which include those things Yahweh calls an abomination. Yet, there is hope that the blinders will come off.

Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that

you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent, Revelation 3:17-19.

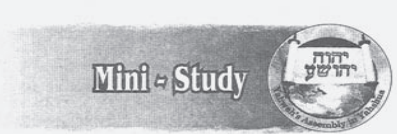
It's been said that the Assemblies in Revelation can be looked upon as eras. Some point to the last one being the Philadelphian era, even though the Laodicea Assembly appears to be the last in line spoken of.

Both are Yahweh's people, but the Philadelphian Assembly is the one that gets its act together, and worships Yahweh the way He wants to be worshipped; in His Spirit and in His Truth. And, the truth of the matter is, we may be seeing a parallel of these assemblies today. Some are certainly farther away from true worship than others.

Called and Chosen

It could be said "this is actually

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Mini-Study

יהוה יושע

Just One RESURRECTION?

How many resurrections does the Bible teach?

The general message of the churches is that a big battle is taking place for control of the minds of mankind. The churches are striving to teach the Bible and trying to save humankind, but Satan is busy leading them astray. If such a struggle be the true situation of what is going on today, Satan is the big winner. It appears he is gaining ground as the growing population outstrips the converts to churchianity. The ratio of "unsaved" continues to grow faster than those being "saved!" Is Satan really outwitting and outmaneuvering Yahweh today?

Lacking a proper understanding of Yahweh's plan for redeeming mankind, the churches insist they must convert everyone now! This results in a last ditch effort to save those about to die who have not publicly confessed they believe in the Bible's promise and accepted the Savior. If one has stated even on the deathbed that he or she accepts the salvation extended by "J-sus," churchianity believes this person will be taken to heaven immediately upon death. Is this really true? Is everyone to accept the Savior before dying, and if he/she does not, is he/she doomed to eternal torment in the place called "hell" as they say? Among those just starting to comprehend deeper truth, a nagging uncertainty arises. What will happen to them?

The question concerns the many truths which were not understood nor practiced by parents, relatives or loved ones during their lifetime,

the first step that one takes when coming to Yahweh," but it's also true that we've all seen and have been in darkness. What spiritual state were we called from? Isn't it easier to reach out for help when you're in need? How high was your hand the first time you asked Yahweh for help? Didn't we truly have filthy rags, spiritually speaking?

Were we not lacking spiritual and moral wealth? It is a very true statement to say, "No one is without sin."

For all of us become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on Your Name, who arouses himself to take hold of You; for You have hidden Your face from us and have delivered us into the power of our iniquities, Isaiah 64:6-7.

When we were called, our righteousness was as filthy rags. We had to be cleansed in the blood of Messiah. The process continues as we work to keep our garments unstained from the world and the Babylonian system and false ways of doing things.

For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but Yahweh has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and Yahweh has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised Yahweh has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before Yahweh, 1 Corinthians 1:26-29.

Can we boast about anything? Certainly, we can boast about what Yahweh has done and is doing for His people who come out of the world into His marvelous light.

After all, it is said,
But you are A CHOSEN RACE,

A royal **PRIESTHOOD**, A **HOLY NATION**, A **PEOPLE FOR YAHWEH'S OWN POSSESSION**, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him Who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were **NOT A PEOPLE**, but now you are **THE PEOPLE OF YAHWEH**; you had **NOT RECEIVED MERCY**, but now you have **RECEIVED MERCY**, 1 Peter 2:9–10.

The Apostle Peter is quoting Hosea and speaking of Israel, all 12 tribes that make up the entire nation of Israel. We're not talking about the land, we're talking about the people and any who will join with them through the Messiah, Who was Himself of the tribe of Judah.

Reaching For The Prize

What are we striving for now? What's the next step for us? What's important? Isn't eternal life, but the wealth of this world can choke a believer. What did Yahshua the Messiah tell us about worrying about such things?

Do not worry then, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear for clothing?" For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own, Matthew 6:31–34.

What are we to be seeking? It is indeed a priority to seek His Kingdom and His Righteousness in our lives. To live according to the coming Kingdom and the righteousness that will be found in it. Such as Yahweh's commandments, along with the weightier matters, all done in love.

What did the Apostle Paul instruct? In 1 Corinthians 9:24–27

he affirms his own question by saying,

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

Disciplining his body, making it a slave? What is he talking about? Isn't he talking about overcoming the world by not committing deeds of the flesh? In other words, isn't he speaking of having the type of self-control which helps us to win

the race and the battle we're in? Committing sins are defined in Scripture as breaking Yahweh's instructions, and they are committed when we don't have self-control. We must train by studying Yahweh's Word and being submissive to the promptings of Yahweh's Spirit which gives us the inward determination and stamina to overcome, rather than being overcome.

Truth Or Consequences

There are consequences of taking a wrong turn after coming into the light. This is why we must have the self-control by the Spirit within us to take the appropriate steps. We must consciously apply Yahweh's Word in our life. Otherwise, we may end up searing our own conscience after it has been cleansed and blessed through Messiah's blood at baptism.

Let's talk about **WHAT NOT TO DO** when regular life seems to be getting you down. What happened to ancient Israel after they were blessed?

But Jeshurun (Israel) grew fat and kicked (became unruly)— you are grown fat, thick, and sleek— then he forsook Elohim Who made him, and scorned the Rock of his salvation. They made Him jealous with strange deities; with abominations they provoked Him to anger, Deuteronomy 32:15–16.

They made Him jealous with strange deities. When someone is really trying to obtain wealth, what are they doing? They are focused on material things, right? What can money buy? Everything, anything, and all things in general. Isn't this true, at least, when speaking of the physical?

Yet, we are to deny ourselves for the better of others and to focus on Yahweh. By doing so we focus on Life. What did Yahshua say and do?

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devot-

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Mini-Study



Meaning Behind the Savior's Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man

Of all that the Bible says about the state of the dead, perhaps nothing is cited more than the Savior's parable about Lazarus and the rich man, Luke 16. This account is said to support the belief that the dead go immediately to heaven or to ever-burning hellfire.

Many believe that this parable should be taken literally in every sense because the name of a real-life Biblical person, Lazarus, is used.

Often, however, the Messiah's teachings were couched in allegory and usually had a deeper, spiritual truth to them. In fact, our Savior's technique of choice when instructing was through analogy and parable. Such is the case here.

Because Yahshua employed a story in Luke 16, we must be careful about taking a literal approach and not grasping the original intent. Realize that this is a parable, used Scripturally to impart deeper truth, as all parables do.

The truth of what the Savior said is overlooked by most, and the whole thrust of His teaching in this parable has been misunderstood down through the ages. To think that Yahshua the Messiah was supporting the notion of going to hell at death is to contradict a host of other Scriptures. No interpretation is accurate if it contradicts other passages.

A Message to Certain Jews

Central to the parable is Yahshua's teaching about an unjust steward, which begins Luke 16. He concludes in verse 13 with this: "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve Elohim and mammon" (Luke 16:13).

When they heard this, an elite class of Jews known as the Pharisees, who especially loved money, derided Him in verse 14. Then our Savior levels His sights directly on the Pharisees. His comments are an affront to these men who found His teachings contemptible.

ed to one and despise the other. You cannot serve [both] Yahweh and wealth, Matthew 6:24.

Speaking of those who've become rich, their character can become corrupt because of their greed. No wonder the warning is put forth and the end is already secured for those who persist in sin.

Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of Yahweh of Hosts. You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter, James 5:4–5.

Riches are deceitful and they corrupt those that focus on having them. It's the nature of the Beast. What is the end for those who lose their focus on the Kingdom and His righteousness?

And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful, Matthew 13:22.

Loving things of this world and the money in it can play havoc with your heart and your head if you are trying to also serve Yahweh. Focusing on making wealth takes one away from the importance of the spiritual matters of life itself.

To satisfy the flesh is to blind one of the heavenly life that is to come and the responsibilities we have now to be fruitful and helpful to others who are being called out of the world. Remember the parable of the sower and seed sown.

Can we comprehend the spiritual richness bestowed upon us?

I will rejoice greatly in Yahweh, my soul will exult in my Elohim; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a

garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels, Isaiah 61:10.

Though physical jewels are mentioned, it's the spiritual being emphasized. How much greater is the spiritual, which will last forever, versus those things which waste away and are therefore temporary?

Standing Firm

Growing in understanding and knowledge is our goal. We have to continue walking in the right direction, taking the right steps and making the right decisions.

Baptism and the receiving of the Spirit through the laying on of the hands of the eldership will help us to change our character so that it will conform to the Messiah's. With new perspectives, which is life changing, and mind and heart altering, the Spirit within gives true life and riches.

For the love of Messiah controls us, having concluded this, that One died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him Who died and rose again on their behalf. Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Messiah according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer. Therefore if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come, 2 Corinthians 5:14–17.

Paul is speaking from firsthand knowledge of the Spirit of Yahweh working within himself. He says the "love of Messiah controls us." In other words, it gives us "self-control." But, it is the fact he is experiencing Messiah within himself, that he says it.

We are to look at the world with spiritual eyes and recognize the difference of how we used to live compared to how we live now. In a very real sense, we are spiritually

rich in Messiah. Whereas, before, we were spiritually poor. We are to stand firm in Messiah.

Then He told them a parable: "Behold the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near. So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of Yahweh is near.

Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap; for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man," Luke 21:29–36.

Escape what things that are about to take place? Read Matthew chapter 24 when you have time.

We are to pray that we're able to stand at Yahshua's return. That means more than just physically standing. It means spiritually; we need to be able to stand firm in the Spirit of Yahweh in Messiah Yahshua.

If we are led by the Spirit, the same that led the Messiah, then we are sons and daughters in Messiah. If we overcome to the end, then we will stand firm in the end, and be established forevermore.

Vision Of The Future

What will this world be without Satan's influence? Imagine 1000 years without evil and murder and pain. Of course, this will occur gradually. People will have to learn to do right versus wrong. A kingdom ruled no longer by man, but by Yahshua the King, the

Righteous King, Who will rule with a new Name: Yahweh Zidkenu, which, quite fittingly, means, Yahweh our Righteousness.

Behold, the days are coming, declares Yahweh, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as King and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; and this is His Name by which He will be called, "Yahweh our Righteousness," Jeremiah 23:5–6.

If we overcome to the end, we'll be there having eternal life with joy, energy, vitality and power to help rule with Him. We'll rule by the standard of righteousness.

Now it will come about that in the last days the mountain of the house of Yahweh will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the El of Jacob; that He may teach us concerning His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion and the Word of Yahweh from Jerusalem, Isaiah 2:2–3.

Isn't this part of the Good News? Things are going to be corrected and that is Good News.

One of the greatest joys for us as a people will be to see all others on earth sincerely wanting to know and accept the truth of Yahweh's Word, Jer. 16: 14, 19.

However, it's going to take some tribulation first to get their attention, Deut. 4:30; 30:1-8; Jer. 50:4-5.

Arrival Of Paradise

Arrival of the New Jerusalem, a spiritual paradise on a new earth, is prophesied to come. This will be after the 1,000-year reign, with newness of all things. With eternal life with joy, energy, vitality and power, the future hope is hope indeed.

And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from Elohim, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of Yahweh is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and Yahweh Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away," Revelation 21:2–4.

What is passing away? All darkness and evil, of course.

But the day of Yahweh will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and righteousness looking for and

hastening the coming of the day of Yahweh, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, 2 Peter 3:10–14.

We really are without excuse, having been called out of the world and out of our filthy rags. We've been given clean clothes and are to be keeping them clean and are preparing for Yahshua's return.

While we are not perfect, we're told to be perfect. It means conforming to Yahshua and allowing Him to have dominion in our lives. It means following the lead of Yahweh's Spirit. As Yahshua did, and is doing the Father's will, we are to do the same.

In doing so, we will be able to see the paradise in which Yahweh dwells.

Remember, if you are having troubles, there is a reward for those that overcome. We need to be like the Apostle Paul and think as he and others no doubt did, in the richness of the Messiah.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us, Romans 8:18.

Let's not forget where we came from and where we are wanting to go. It is worth taking the steps forward into the straight and narrow gate, which the Messiah directs us into:

Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it, Matthew 7:13.

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Elder David Brett



Don't Slip And Don't Slide

The Torah is the first Jewish division of the Old Testament and contains the first five books of the Bible. It is said to contain the laws or set of instructions one is to live by. The main thrust of this article indirectly deals with the advantages of following these rules and the consequences if we don't follow the commands that the Scriptures give.

The picture shown next to the title shows the result of an accident. It appears the road was snow-covered and perhaps a little icy. More importantly, there is an encircled road side sign which reads "slippery surface in adverse conditions."

Apparently, the driver did not heed the warning given by the sign – and the vehicle slipped and slid and hit a tree. The result depicted by this scene is analogous to the story of mankind. Mankind is given warnings to lead him in the right direction. If he doesn't heed those warnings, he will have a predictable outcome.

Slip And Slide

Remember the phrase: "slip and slide." In the physical world, one might slip on some ice or on a banana peel. Or one might slide in a toboggan down a snowy hillside or slide down a playground slide in the summer.

So much for the physical examples of the phrase "slip and slide." What about any Scriptural meaning and usage?

In the KJV of Scripture, one Hebrew word that is used predominately and is translated both "slip" and "slide" is the word *ma`ad*, מָעַד, Strong's # 4571, a primitive root; to waver. A second word used is the word *mowt*, מָוַת, a primitive root; to waver. One Greek word so used is *pararrhueso*, παραρρῦέω,

Strong's #3901: from NT:3844 and the alternate of NT:4482; to flow by, i.e. (figuratively) carelessly pass (miss).

Sidebar – Tangent

At this time let us go out on a tangent (or have a sidebar) which will be joined to the ideas of slipping and sliding at a later time.

There are 3 Greek words which are translated steadfast (steadfast) in the New Testament. They are Strong's #s 949, 1476 and 4731. Collectively, by implication, and literally and figuratively, they mean to be solid, stable, and immovable.

We are told in 1 Peter 5:8 what Satan is trying to do:

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

Satan's main mode of attack is through deception. Satan's first such attack was to deceive Eve. Scriptures even tell us that Satan tries to deceive the very elect.

Remain Steadfast

Paul gives a warning in 2 Cor. 1:7-12 to the people of Corinth to be steadfast in their faith:

And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation. For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in Yahweh Who raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a

death, and doth deliver: in Whom we trust that He will yet deliver us; ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf. For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and righteous sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of Yahweh, we have had our conversation (behavior) in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

Paul said the same to the people of Galatia in Gal. 5:1:

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Messiah hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

In our dealings with man, Paul gives us some direction in Acts 24:14 -16:

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 which are written in the law and in the prophets: and have hope toward Yahweh, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward Yahweh, and toward men.

Paul is telling us here that we should be free of any activity which would cause us to stumble or fail.

Take Heed

But, the people of this world will receive anguish because they like to do what they think is right in their own eyes and not in the eyes of Yahweh.

When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called My Son out of Egypt. As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto baalim, and burned incense to graven images. I

taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them. He shall not return into the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to return. And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour them, because of their own counsels. And My people are bent to backsliding from Me: though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt Him, Hos. 11:1-7.

Anyone Can Fall

Because we are human, we tend to stumble, as we are told in Prov. 24:16:

For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

With some, it is known they take glory when mischief befalls another, but in Prov. 24:17 we are told not to:

Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth.

If someone we know falls, we should not find glory in his falling. Why? Yahweh answers that question in Prov. 24: 18:

Lest Yahweh see it, and it displease Him, and He turn away His wrath from him.

Some commentators will add “unto thee” at the end of this verse to show what really might happen.

Backsliding

What would it look like when one slides down a playground slide the wrong way – or back-slides? It is easy to see how one could get hurt very easily by sliding down a playground slide the wrong way. There is no way to be sure of the outcome what might happen to one who backslides.

And My people are bent to backsliding from Me: though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt Him, Hos. 11:7.

To find out what is meant by spiritual backsliding, let us look at what characteristics Yahweh's Word assigns to those who do exhibit the characteristics of one who backslides.

Left Thy First Love

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love, Rev. 2:4.

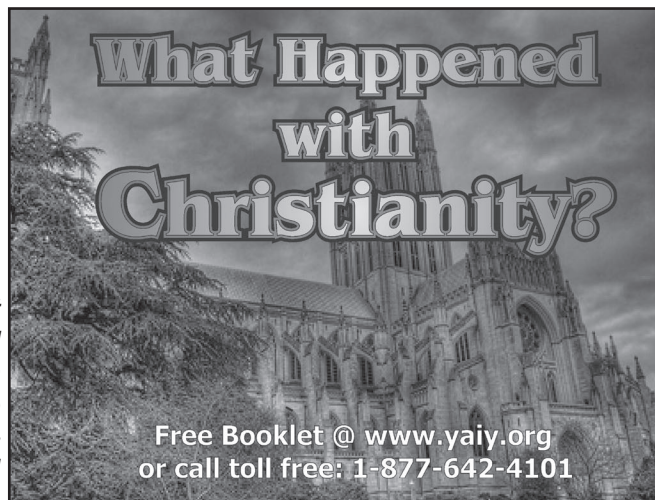
Now, what is meant by “left thy first love”? One most certainly can equate its meaning to the answer Yahshua gave to a Sadducee lawyer who asked Him:

Master, which is the great commandment in the law? (Matt. 22:36).

Yahshua's answer can be found in verses 37 and 38:

Yahshua said unto him, Thou shalt love Yahweh thy Elohim with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

Yes, these verses tell us that our first love, when we are able to discern the truth, is to be Yahweh. And how do we show our love to Yahweh? We show that we do love Yahweh, and Yahshua, if we keep His commandments.



If ye love Me, keep My commandments, John 14:15.

And, by keeping His commandments, we are told that we shall remain and continue to abide in His love:

As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love, John 15:9-10.

It can certainly be said that our first love is exhibited by the zeal one has concerning the truth shown by keeping the commandments. And, to leave our first love would be shown through our disobedience to His law.

Laziness

As was mentioned before, mankind, in general, wants to do what they feel is right. And that is one characteristic which identifies a backslider.

The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways, Prov. 14:14a.

Believing one's ways are superior to Yahweh's ways indicates pride – an inordinate boasting of superiority. This feeling of superiority can cause one to be unprepared for the “day” which will eventually hit us.

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man, Luke 21:34-36.

Cowardice

Another sign of actions pointing to a backslider is that of being unwilling to express one's beliefs.

This is told us in Mark 8:38:

Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.

Rev. 21:8 says what will happen to those whom Yahshua is ashamed of:

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Over-Association With Worldliness

As a youngster, peer pressure

is very strong. Sometimes it even causes one to say things which are not true and do things counter to what one believes is true. This can also happen as one grows in age. One has to learn to separate oneself from being influenced by wrong feelings and ideas. 1 Cor. 15:33 expresses this thought:

Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

Denying Yahweh And His Truth

The last characteristic of one who backslides is found in Matt. 10:32-33:

Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.

The Full List

We have listed some 6 characteristics of one who is backsliding:

1. Left first love – in so doing heads the wrong way,
2. Pride – being boastful,
3. Laziness or being unprepared – unwilling to prepare oneself for what is coming,
4. Cowardice – unwilling to express the truth,
5. Over association with worldliness – unwilling to detach oneself of worldliness when necessary, and
6. Denying Yahweh and His truth – not willing to confess the truth when the opportunity is at hand.

Combating Actions Of A Backslider

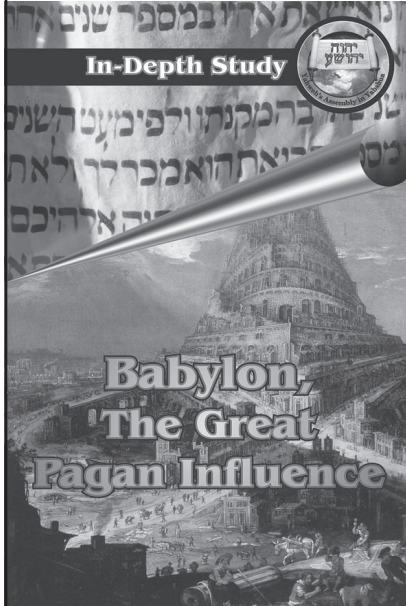
How does one combat the actions of being a backslider?

First, change the title to: Combating actions of being a backslider.

Next – properly focus one's love.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because

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In-Depth Study

Babylon, The Great Pagan Influence

One objective of the above named booklet “Babylon, The Great Pagan Influence,” is “to note and identify the difference between the Biblical worship and nominal and pagan worship.”

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fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love Him, because He first loved us, 1 John 4:18-19.

Thus, item 1 on the list becomes: ~~Left first love~~ Direct love to Yahshua.

Next – guard against pride.

Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for Yahweh resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of Yahweh, that He may exalt you in due time, 1 Peter 5:5-6.

Thus, item 2 on the list becomes: ~~Pride~~ Enjoin humility.

Next – ward against laziness.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world, 1 Peter 5:8-9.

Thus, item 3 on the list becomes: ~~Laziness or being unprepared~~ Seek diligence.

Next – glorify Yahweh.

Yet if any man suffer as a follower of the Messiah, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify Yahweh on this behalf, 1 Peter 4:16.

Thus, item 4 on the list becomes: ~~Gowardiee~~ Glorify Yahweh.

Next – abstain from seeking worldly treasures.

Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of do-

ing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify Yahweh on the day He visits us, 1 Peter 2:11-12 NIV.

Thus, item 5 on the list becomes: ~~Over association with worldliness~~ Abstain from seeking worldly treasures.

Lastly, give a defense .

But sanctify Yahweh Elohim in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear, 1 Peter 3:15

Thus, item 6 on the list becomes: ~~Denying Yahweh and His truth~~ Give a defense.



Be A Warrior

Here is the list we should use to combat the wiles of satan:

Combating actions of becoming a backslider:

1. Direct love to Yahshua,
2. Enjoin humility,
3. Seek diligence,
4. Glorify Yahweh,
5. Abstain from seeking worldly treasures, and
6. Give a defense.

Backslider's Punishment

What might Yahweh do to those who backslide?

And another also said, Master, I will follow Thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Yahshua said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of Yahweh, Luke 9:61-62.

Helping A Backslider

What can one do if someone has gone astray?

Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins, James 5:19-20.

One's Feelings Towards Backsliding

What should be our general feeling about backsliding?

I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto Thee, O Yahweh, will I sing. I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt Thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me, Ps. 101:1-3.

Correct Warning Sign

So, the original road sign said: Caution - Slippery surface under adverse conditions. For us, to obtain everlasting life, we must NOT SLIP, we must NOT SLIDE, and we must NOT BACKSLIDE, but remain true and steadfast in all we say and do.

Elder Roger G. Meyer



Valentine's Day

The way this day is celebrated today is a far cry from how it was celebrated at its beginning.

Sweethearts trading heart-shaped cards; Chubby, cuddly cupids carrying bows and arrows. They have nothing to do with celebrating love, or do they?

In the month of February, candy makers unload tons of heart-shaped boxes full of candy. This candy is then purchased by individuals for the people they love. Millions of innocent school children are indoctrinated to exchange Valentine cards with each other. Florists consider February 14th, St. Valentine's Day, as one of their best business days. All who celebrate this ritual have love in their hearts. Is this simply a harmless, innocent ritual? Yahweh surely doesn't mind? Let's explore this!

Origin

It will probably surprise you, but Valentine's Day, though relatively unimportant, is not an innocent secular holiday. Far from secular, the origin of Valentine's Day comes from the same source as many other non-Biblical, pre-Christian observances, such as Christmas, New Year's Day, Easter, and Halloween. It can be traced directly to earliest pagan history.

The "universal church," as she did with all these other observances, selected a popular pagan holiday, adopted it, and dressed it up with a "Christian name." Paganism was Christianity's name for the official religion of the Roman Empire, which involved worshipping an array of deities and occasionally participating in orgiastic festivals. In an attempt to give Christians an alternative to those festivals (and to take their minds off the revelry they were missing out on) the church sometimes created holidays to coincide with the pagan calendar.

Lupercalia

What was it originally? The original name for Valentine's Day was the holiday called Lupercalia. It was celebrated thousands of years before there were ever such people known as Christians or saints.

Lupercalia was a holiday celebrated by ancient Romans on the ides of February (February 15). The celebration honored the deities Lupercus and Faunus, as well as the twin brothers Romulus and Remus, the legendary founders of Rome.

According to the myth, Romulus and Remus were suckled by wolves at a cave on the Palatine Hill, in the city of Rome. The Romans appropriately named this cave the Lupercal, and used it as the center of Lupercalia ceremonies.

Luperci (priests of Lupercus), dressed in goat-skins for the ceremony, sacrificed goats and a dog, smeared themselves with sacrificial blood, and would run around the hill carrying a goatskin thong called a februa ("means of purification"). Women in the city placed themselves in positions around the hill so that the priests could strike them with the februa. This was thought to assure the women of fertility and easy childbirth.

In another part of the ceremony, priests would pair up the young men and women in the city by writing down the names of the girls and collecting them in a box. Boys then individually drew girls' names from the box, and became paired with them until the following Lupercalia.

During the festival, the pairs of children danced and played together. The girl assigned to each young man in that manner would be his sexual companion during the coming year. Often, they might fall in love

and later marry.

A Change Is Made

In an effort to do away with the pagan festival, Pope Gelasius ordered a slight change in the lottery. Instead of the names of young women, the box would contain the names of saints. Both men and women were allowed to draw from the box, and the game was to emulate the ways of the saint they drew during the rest of the year.

Although the lottery for women had been banned from the church, the mid-February holiday in commemoration of St. Valentine was still used by Roman men to seek the affection of women. It became tradition for the men to give the ones they admired handwritten messages of affection containing Valentine's name. This may have been the festival that was later named after the former saint—Valentine's Day.

Legends

One of the legends says that a Roman Emperor, Claudius the Second, had forbidden his men to marry. He wanted them to be heartless and fearless soldiers free of wives and girlfriends. Claudius apparently decreed that no marriages should be celebrated and that all engagements be broken off immediately. But one of the Christian priests didn't obey the Emperor's edict. This priest (whose name was Father Valentine) secretly performed marriages in and around the city of Rome. Found out not too long later, Valentine was imprisoned where he languished and died. Legend has it devoted friends buried him in the church of St. Praxedes on the fourteenth of February, 270 AD.

Father Valentine was a kind and wise person who had a lot of friends. They begged the Emperor to free him and sent flowers to jailed Valentine. Many experts think that these were the first letters and

flowers sent on Valentine's Day.

Another story says that Valentine was an early Christian in the time when Rome was unfriendly to this upstart religion. For helping some Christian martyrs he was seized, dragged before the prefect of Rome and cast into jail. There he was said to have fallen in love with, and cured the keeper's daughter, Julia, of blindness. When the news of this miracle spread, Rome's leaders gave orders that Valentine should be beheaded. The morning of his execution, he is said to have sent Julia a farewell message signed, "From your Valentine."

Syncretism

These are nice stories! However, they are examples of the ongoing efforts of the religious leaders of the Christian church to appease their members and new converts through syncretism. According to the dictionary, syncretism is "a combination, reconciliation or coalescence of varying, often mutually opposed beliefs, principles or practices into the new conglomerate whole typically marked by inter-



The story of Romulus and Remus is intertwined with the story of wolves and some ancient rites to create the stories of Valentine's Day.

nal inconsistencies."

This is a form of compromise that allows one to side-step a difficult issue. This is a way to avoid taking a stand for your beliefs and having to defend the basis of that belief.

Most people today could remember the story of St. Valentine, but Lupercalia and associated deities of classified mythology are forgotten. We rarely study them or see any significance in our lives. The St. Valentine story motif has the elements of a good story: love, honor, courage, and sacrifice. But let's go deeper into the significance of Lupercalia and the mythology behind this.

Mythology

Ancient pagan fertility rituals have come down to our present time almost intact. The only difference in the ancient pagan rituals and their modern counterparts is the fact that their names have changed in order to veneer them with Christian respectability.

Lupus is the Latin word for wolf. The wolf is the symbol for valor. Valerentine was a common Roman name, which Roman parents often gave to their children in honor of the famous man who was first called valiant: Valentine, in antiquity, Lupercus, The Hunter.

The Romans identified Lupercus with Faunus, a deity of nature. The Greeks called this deity of nature—Pan. Pan, the chief of the satyrs, presiding over rural occupations, was patron of fishermen, hunters and shepherds.

Faun was the Roman mythological name. It corresponded with the satyrs of mythology. They had pointed ears, short horns and a tail.

Pan was an Arcadian deity of light and, as evil, was equivalent to the Sun deity: Baal, also spelled B-A-L or B-E-L. Baal is any of the numerous local deities among Semitic peoples, typifying the pro-

ductive forces of nature and worshipped with orgiastic rites. Baal simply meant lord.

Baal, which is mentioned often in the Holy Scriptures, was a title of Nimrod, the hunter who was against Yahweh. We read in the King James Version Genesis 10:9,

He was a mighty hunter before Yahweh: wherefore it is said, even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before Yahweh.

The hunter, Nimrod, it is said, pursued wolves in the Apennine Mountains of Italy, and acquired the title of Lupercus-wolf hunter or hunter of valor. Remember: Valens means to be strong, powerful, mighty. Valens is a Latin word and is the root for valiant.

Nimrod not only was strong, powerful and mighty in a political sense, but he was also strong, powerful, and mighty in a sexual sense. The worship of the pagan people was centered on sexual activity to insure fertility.

Nimrod, Baal-Lord-Sun God of the ancients, is the basis for all mythology worldwide. His exploits and those of his wife Semiramis and their foundation of the satan-centered system of mythology are explained in great detail in the excellent book titled "The Two Babylons," written by Alexander Hislop.

If you study the origin and symbols of Valentine's Day, they are not simple and meaningless. They refer you to a pagan ruler Nimrod who rebelled against Yahweh. Perhaps to continue recognizing these holidays, we are giving support to that rebellion by Nimrod. Nimrod was not the first to rebel, however. The first was Satan. We do not wish to associate ourselves in any way to that great rebel.

Christianity Embraces Pagan Customs

It is a documented fact that pagan customs were grafted into Christian religion. Although Christianity swept the world in a relatively

short time as histories of great religions go, the early missionaries faced an uphill task. The pagans were reluctant to give up their false deities and ancient practices. So, missionaries, unable to convert them easily to an entirely new code of worship, did the next best thing. They took the pagan festivals as they were and gradually grafted the observances of the new faith onto these festivals and the rites and customs surrounding them.

Yes, the Christian missionaries took each of these pagan festivals and veneered them with Christian respectability by changing their names. That is why today we have Christmas rather than Saturnalia, Easter rather than the Festival of the Goddess of the Dawn, and Valentine's Day rather than the Lupercalia.

Even though Christian missionaries took the pagan festivals as they were and gradually grafted the observance of the new faith onto their festivals, with their rites and customs, they are still abominations in the sight of Yahweh.

In fact, Yahweh has given us a direct command not to serve Him in the way that the pagans served their deities! In Deuteronomy, 12:29-32, we read:

When Yahweh thy Elohim shall cut off the Nations from before thee, whether thou goest to possess them and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land; take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before this; and that thou inquire not after their deities, saying, How did these nations serve their deities? Even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto Yahweh thy Elohim; for every abomination to Yahweh, which He hated, have they done unto their deities; for even their sons and daughters they have burnt in the fire to their deities. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add

thereto, nor diminish from it.

Does Yahweh have something to say about religious leaders who took the pagan festivals as they were and gradually grafted the observances of the new faith into these festivals and the customs and the rites surrounding them? Yes, He does. Let's look at what 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 says:

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of the Messiah. And no marvel; for Satan is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.

Although these ancient fertility rituals have come down to us through Satan's ministers in forms of beauty, we are still creating, maintaining and renewing fertility to the same ancient pagan deities that Yahweh says are an abomination to Him. As described earlier, we are using new terms and stories, but they all have the same roots. The roots are found in the Old Testament Scripture. Yahweh was concerned with them and still is today.

Its Roots

Valentine's Day has its roots in pagan fertility celebrations. They were not acceptable in their original forms and even if we are using a "modern" approach, we are still practicing pagan celebrations which honor the pagan deities. Do not fool yourself. We are not honoring Yahweh in any way by associating ourselves with this type of holiday.

It is a Scriptural fact that we cannot serve Yahweh while serving in this world's style of pagan worship. Let's see what 1 Corinthians 10:20-22 says:

But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to Yahweh;

and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of Yahweh, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of Yahweh's table, and the table of devils. Do we provoke Yahweh to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?

In other words, we can't have it both ways. We have to choose whom we serve. In Romans 6:16, we are emphatically told that we are servants to whom we obey:

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

Serve Yahweh, Not Man

If we obey Yahweh by practicing every Word that proceeds from His mouth without adding to His Word or taking from His Word, we are servants of Yahweh. However, if we follow after the servants or ministers of Satan, who are deceived into grafting pagan customs into Christianity, then we are servants of Satan.

Servants of Satan! Now that is the truth without veneer or syncretic manipulation. That is a frank description of Whom we obey when we acknowledge and honor Valentine's Day. It seems harsh and certainly not politically correct, but truth feels that way sometimes.

Yahweh warns us to come out of this pagan

system. If we choose not to do this, we have made our choice and will be identified with it. Consider what Revelation 18:4 has to say:

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

Now that we have identified this world's holidays as the wrong ones to be associated with, what does Yahweh prefer?

Yahweh's Feasts

Yahweh established seven annual Sabbaths in addition to the weekly, seventh-day Sabbath and the Sabbatical Year and the Jubilee Year. These seven annual Sabbaths He set according to the harvest of crops throughout the year in the Northern Hemisphere. The annual Sabbaths or Feast Days are found in Leviticus 23 and form the foundation of Yahweh's calendar. Israel was an agrarian society, and the grain harvests are symbolic of Yahweh's harvest of human souls—the spiritual harvest.

The annual Feasts or Holy Days are as follows: the first and

last day of Unleavened Bread (the 15th and 21st of the first Scriptural month), Pentecost or Day of First-fruits (50 days from the weekly Sabbath of Unleavened Bread), Feast of Trumpets (first of the seventh Scriptural month), Day of Atonement (tenth day of the seventh Scriptural month), Feast of Tabernacles (15th day of the seventh Scriptural month), and the Last Great Day (22nd day of the seventh Scriptural month).

The first annual Sabbath follows the Passover and occurs on the fifteenth day of Yahweh's first month of the year. It is known as the First Day of the seven days of Unleavened Bread. The second annual Sabbath is the twenty-first day of the Scriptural first month and is the seventh and final day of Unleavened Bread.

Passover and Unleavened Bread take place in the spring, in the beginning of the year, in our March or April.

Pentecost, meaning fiftieth, is the third annual Sabbath and must be counted to determine when it is observed. Known as the "Feast of Weeks" or Shavuot in Hebrew,

Pentecost is a one-day celebration that comes 50 days after the weekly Sabbath during Unleavened Bread.

The four remaining annual Sabbaths occur in the seventh Scriptural month in the fall of the year, September or October.

Feast of Trumpets is the fourth annual Sabbath and falls on the new moon or first day of the seventh Scriptural month.

The Day of Atonement falls on the tenth day of the seventh Scriptural month. It is a holy day of fasting.

The sixth annual Sabbath comes on the fifteenth day of the seventh Scriptural month and is the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles. The first day following the Feast of Tabernacles is Yahweh's seventh annual Sabbath known as the Last Great Day.

Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread have been fulfilled twice. The first occurred when the Israelites were slaves of the Egyptians. They were "passed over" and spared by the destroying angel because they had obediently smeared blood on the doorposts and lintels of their dwellings. In the New Testament, our Savior was our "Passover" (1 Cor. 5:7) Who was put to death on Passover day. He spoke of yet a later fulfillment of Passover when we will observe it with Him in His Kingdom, Luke 22:15-18.

Pentecost or Feast of Weeks took place when the Covenant was made with Israel and His law was codified. It is a memorial of events at Mount Sinai. In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit was given on Pentecost (Acts 2) to empower Yahweh's people to keep Yahweh's law.

Prophecies connected to the four annual Sabbaths of the seventh Scriptural month have yet to be fulfilled.

It is important that we understand the historical meaning of Yahweh's Feast Days so we can comprehend the purpose He is working out on earth and how He is sanctifying His people.

These special days are a shadow of things yet to come - a future prophecy of events yet to unfold. Paul writes for us:

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a Sabbath Day, which are a shadow of things to come, Col. 2:16-17.

They foreshadow future events meaning they are prophetic, Col. 2:17.

Anyone who seeks to know prophecy must understand the annual Feast days thoroughly. The significant acts of man's salvation happened at feast times.

Understanding the Feasts means we understand Yahweh's plan of salvation which necessitates that we obey Him and keep His feasts.

He that says I know Him and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him, 1 John 2:4.

Prophecy Yet To Be Fulfilled

The fall annual Sabbaths are entirely prophetic and await a future fulfillment. These show us a work that Yahweh will yet accomplish for His people. His Sabbaths are the sign He has given between Himself and His people by which we are sanctified.

The Sabbaths were given us so that we might better know Yahweh. They were not given as a meaningless burden to be thrown off and discarded at the Savior's impalement. They have great meaning and purpose behind them. They fit into Yahweh's overall plan anciently, through our day and into the Kingdom.

Yahweh's feasts are not done away at the death and resurrection of the Messiah. The feasts were given to ancient Israel to keep, they were observed by the Savior and the Apostles, and are to be kept by us today.

They are still in effect today and will be kept in the Kingdom, according to Isaiah 66:23, Zechariah 14:16-18, and others. If they were

commanded for Israel, kept by the Savior and by the New Testament Assembly after His resurrection, and will be kept as statutes in the coming Kingdom, why would they be suspended now? Doesn't it seem as if they are very significant?

It is only by deliberate misinterpretation of Scripture that most of today's ministers teach that these perpetual Sabbaths are done away.

Prove All Things

How does it happen that we are unable to correctly discern what is true and what is false? How do we innocently accept a holiday like Valentine's Day, which in fact has a history that leads you back to the deity of this world, satan?

Remember what we are told in Ephesians 6:12,

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world's forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

We learn more about the attributes of Satan in Ezekiel 28:12-13,

You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of Yahweh; every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz and the diamond.

Satan's demons are very intelligent and aware of reality. We find this in Mark 3:11,

Whenever the unclean spirit saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, "You are the Son of Yahweh."

In Ephesians 2:2, Satan is described as having a special power over us,

In which you formerly walked according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Most people believe this is Yahweh's world or certainly Yahshua's world. But that is not true. This world was given to Satan to rule. He has twisted that opportunity and despoiled it.

These Scriptures confirm who the real ruler of this world is.

Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out, John 12:31.

I will not speak with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me, John 14:30.

In whose care the mighty one of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Messiah Who is the image of Yahweh, 2 Corinthians 4:4.

We know that we are of Yahweh, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one, 1 John 5:19.

These Scriptures confirm that this whole world is under the influence of Satan and his demons, which are able to manipulate, deceive, and confuse at will. They construct history and culture to meet their needs. The symbolism of a valentine is just another example of their work.

Cupid

Look how cleverly Satan has manipulated the symbols of Cupid, the rose and love. Margaret Ickis in her book, *The Book of Festival Holidays*, sheds light on this.

"Cupid was one of the gods of mythology, whose name in Latin means 'desire.' He is usually represented as a chubby, naked, winged boy with a quiver of arrows by which he transfixed the hearts of youths and maidens. His darts, some of which were poisonous at the tip, could pierce anywhere.

"The rose, which speaks of love, is undoubtedly the most popular flower in the world. By rearranging the letters in the word 'rose,' we get Eros - the god of love. This may explain why it has always been called

the flower of romance, the choice of lovers in every century."

The first criterion in this fertility hunt is erotic desire, which Cupid and Eros represent! In mythology, it is said when Nimrod's mother saw him as a young boy, she desired him. Nimrod became her cupid, her desired one and later her deity of valor—her hunter.

Arrows

What about the significance of "Arrows"? J.E. Cirlot offers this in his Dictionary of Symbols.

"It was used to designate the sun's rays. But, because of its shape, it has undeniable phallic significance, especially when it is shown in emblems balanced against the symbol of the 'mystic center,' feminine in character, such as the heart. The heart is pierced with an arrow of conjunction."

The Heart

Finally, the most predominant symbol of the fertility rite of Valentine's Day is the heart. In our



Cupid, the mythical god whose name means "desire," uses both the rose and love as its symbols.

country, the heart symbol has the same meaning as love. Almost everywhere one looks you can see examples of this symbolic representation of love. The heart is also a popular design for costume jewelry, saying love without saying it.

This symbol was also familiar in ancient Babylon where it symbolized the deity who was worshipped. This symbol did not come down to our day untainted and pure, despite what the world has been deceived to think.

Let us read a very revealing and astounding excerpt from Halley's Bible handbook. This will certainly put "the heart" of truth into proper context.

"The Imperial Church of the 4th and 5th centuries had become an entirely different institution from the persecuted church of the first three centuries. In its ambition to rule it lost and forgot the spirit of [Messiah].

"Worship, at first very simple, was developed into elaborate, stately, imposing ceremonies having all the outward splendor that had belonged to heathen temples.

"Ministers became Priests. The term 'priest' was not applied to Christian ministers before A.D. 200. It was borrowed from the Jewish system, and from the example of heathen priesthood. Leo I (440-61) prohibited priests from marrying, and Celibacy of priests became a law of the Roman Church.

"Conversion of the Barbarians. the Goths, Vandals, and Huns who overthrew the Roman Empire accepted Christianity; but to a large extent their conversion was nominal and thus furthered the Church with Pagan practices."

We are warned "learn not the way of the heathen," Jeremiah 10:2.

Elder Ralph Henrie (deceased)



Thanks for all of your hard work and effort. We care about all of you very much. We hope all of you are doing well. Have a good Passover and feast.

— **MN, AK**

Keep up the good work! May Yahweh continue blessing your efforts to preach the truth. — **MP, MA**

Thank you for all that you fine folks do for so many others. May you be blessed as you bless those others in your power and will to do so. — **VS, CA**

Greetings to all at YAIY! I've just received the in-depth study pamphlet "Biblical Holy Days." Wow! I teared up from the love and power that I know is within keeping the Sabbaths and all feast days. I thank you all so much at YAIY for the beautiful publications that you put out and helping those who are the lost sheep find their way back to the flock. Nobody I know calls upon the Creator Yahweh or Messiah Yahshua and are reluctant to even "try" it even though it is so obvious and easy to understand as long as your heart is open and one is genuinely humbled. Thank you so much, YAIY. — **RV, CA**

Thank you so much for keeping me on your mailing list. I appreciate you more than my mere words could ever express, and the CDs are truly a blessing.

— **LF, OH**

First off, I want to let you know that I truly enjoy the Beacon magazine. I can feel the love you have for us in every word you write. The studies are well thought out and written to where anybody can understand them. — **KF, NC**

Thank you for the booklets. I love reading all the stuff that has Yahweh's name in them. It is so hard for me to find reading material with set-apart names in them!! — **JF, TX**

Thank you for all that you do! The newsletter, magazine and Sisters of Yah are such a blessing. Yahshua bless and prosper the ministry and touch many lives. — **MM-C, FL**

Thank you for your help and support and for feeding me with the best of meals - the word of Yahweh. Yahweh bless your assembly. — **VC, OR**

I am writing this time to say "Thank You" for the literature you send me and I will be reading and studying every bit of it. I will anxiously be waiting on the next materials you send and will be sharing all literature with others. May Yahweh bless your assembly abundantly so that you may always be able to provide literature of the true sacred names and Scriptures to those who have no means otherwise.

— **CL, TX**

Thanks for all you have sent. I really enjoy reading all the material and I pass it on. May Yahweh's favor be upon you all for all your work of sending His truth out for all to receive freely. — **EC, AK**

I would like to continue receiving the "Beacon" magazine. It is a great Bible companion in undersanding the true doctrines of Almighty Yahweh. The Beacon along with your booklets and tracts have opened my eyes and heart to the word of Yahweh and the love of Yahshua for us all. I look forward to each and every issue. — **GC, CA**

Please forgive me. I feel a burden to ask for the material you say is free of cost. The reason why I feel so burdened is because I want to hear/learn of all the material you have. Your list of material is overwhelming. I thank you so much for the knowledge/information you provide and I eagerly look forward to hearing from you soon. — **TB, NV**

I want to thank you for all the wonderful truths that are contained in the pamphlets that you have sent. In the names of the Father Yahweh and His Son Yahshua, I thank you. — **DB, CO**

I am very thankful for the DVDs that you have sent me. They are a great learning experience about the Word and the Scripture. — **DA, FL**

Thank you very much for sending me your very wonderful and informative "Beacon" magazine over the last couple of years. Please renew my subscriptions to the Beacon, Kids for Yah and the other newsletters I've been receiving. I really appreciate them. Please thank the congregation members and anyone who makes it possible to send the Beacon and the newsletters to me. — **JM, NC**

Greetings in the name of our Father Yahweh and our Master and Savior Yahshua the Messiah. I hope and pray this will find you in good health and in good spirits. Thank you for the truth that is being revealed from your good work. I find your teachings very enlightening and in harmony with the Scriptures. Please, send me any new material you have that will help me be a better servant and worshipper of the Mighty Ones of heaven. — **KM, KY**

Your studies have been very enlightening to me for which I want to thank you very much. — **DJ, PA**

I want to thank you for the wonderful Bible Correspondence Course. I'm learning a good bit more than what I thought I knew. — **RH, PA**

Just a quick note to inform your ministry that your bi-monthly magazine the "Beacon" is the most excellent religious publication that I've had the opportunity to receive, bar none. — **TH, CA**

Greetings to all in YAIY! You are about the quickest ministry I know in getting spiritual materials to all who seek Truth. I am so grateful to receive all I have requested of you and especially for your burning desire for wanting to send more! Since I have come to the truth of the Sacred Names, I have never been more hungry for the word as I am now. I thank you so much for all you have sent thus far. I couldn't help but to notice your free year's subscription magazine called "YAIY Beacon" magazine. I would really love to start receiving this magazine just as soon as you can start sending it. Thank you for your help in doing this. — **WC, NC**

Thank you for all the work you do. The family really enjoys the "Beacon" very much. — **GDB, FL**

I got my first copy of your magazine today. It's great. It leads me closer to the truth and builds my faith. Thank you Beacon for providing such. I wish everyone had a copy. — **MD, MS**

It's always a blessing to receive your assembly bi-monthly magazine. The articles are very informative. Keep up the good work and may Yahweh bless your assembly abundantly. — **GDJ, PA**

I've just read my recently received issue of the Beacon. Once I started it I couldn't put it down. Thank you. And thank you for the other literature you've sent me. I've learned so much these last few months. — **EDA, MI**

I wish to order a subscription of your Beacon magazine. Someone let me read their copy and I was welcomed by the truth and understanding of the Bible as I've never understood it before. I was also enlightened and refreshed. — **BG, TX**

I'm writing to say thank you very much for all the literature you have been sending me. It has been very helpful in my journey towards learning Bible truth. — **CD, GA**

I would like to thank you for your kindness. The DVDs are a blessing. And it is really good to have the words, so that we can sing along. My wife and I have come to know that Yahweh and His Son each has a personal name among other things, for almost two years now. And Yahweh has been working with us for over twenty years now. It has been and is a forever learning and growing process. And I love it. So, we would like to thank you for your part. For the most part, anything you feel would be useful to us, we would be thankful. — **JH, WV**

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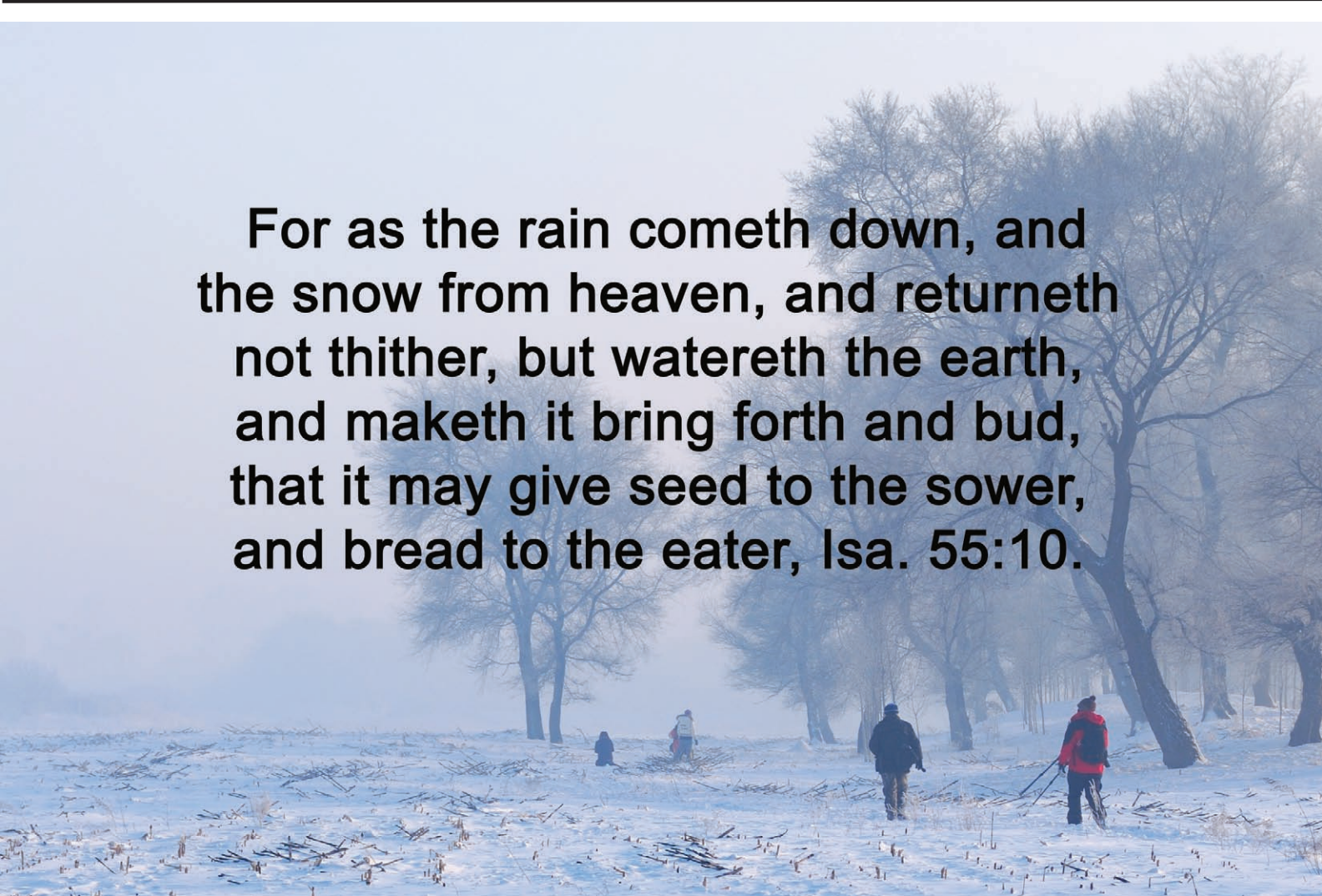
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the snow from heaven, and returneth
not thither, but watereth the earth,
and maketh it bring forth and bud,
that it may give seed to the sower,
and bread to the eater, Isa. 55:10.**