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*Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path, Psalm 119:105.*

YAIY Beacon



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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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Pre-Tribulation Rapture?

Topical Bibles are a great resource to have when looking up and researching various subjects in the Bible. Billy Graham once said, concerning the *New Nave's Topical Bible*, "Outside of the Bible this is the one book that I depend on more than any other." In this book is the subject matter of what is widely known as the "Rapture." The verses given are as follows: 2 Cor. 12:4; 1 Thess. 4:17; Jude 23; Rev. 12:5.

What we would like to do is take a closer look at this subject, the words used to describe it, and the time periods spoken of within context of the verses given. Unless otherwise noted, the *New American Standard Bible* (NASB) is used throughout. The first Biblical reference is 2 Corinthians 12:2 – 5, which says,

I know a man in Messiah who fourteen years ago — whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, Yahweh knows — such a man was caught up to the third heaven. And I know how such a man — whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, Yahweh knows — was caught up [Greek word #726 harpazo] into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak. On behalf of such a man I will boast; but on my own behalf I will not boast, except in regard to my weaknesses.

The Apostle Paul's experience was so impactful in his life, he spoke in the third person to describe it.

Before we look at #726 in the *Strong's Concordance*, we would like to point out that this is a vision Paul had, because only Yahshua the Messiah has ever ascended to heaven, John 3:13.

The third heaven is spiritual, as the first

and second heavens would first incorporate the sky, with its clouds during the day, and then the celestial bodies seen at night. Beyond what we can see physically, is the spiritual realm, or third heaven, as Paul describes it.

Not even King David is in this third heaven. Nor was he lifted up to this third heaven (Acts 2:29, 34; 13:36). See the mini-study called, *The Spirit Realm*. What Paul saw was in vision only.

Paul, however, does speak of a resurrection of the dead in Messiah at a specific time in the future. This time being at Yahshua's return from heaven.

*For if we believe that Yahshua died and rose again, even so Yahweh will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Yahshua. For this we say to you by the word of the Master, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of Master, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Master Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of Yahweh, and the dead in Messiah will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up [Greek word #726 harpazo] together with them in the clouds to meet the Master in the air, and so we shall always be with the Master, 1 Thessalonians 4:14 – 17. See our mini-study called, *Just One Resurrection?**

The Complete Word Study Dictionary says, "Though generally *harpázō* denotes robbery of another's property, it is not exclusively used thus, but sometimes used generally meaning forcibly to seize upon, snatch away, or take to oneself." For example,

When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of Yahweh snatched [Greek word #726

harpazo] Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing, Acts 8:39.

The *American Standard Version* translates *harpazo* 13 times: "catch up" four times, "take by force" three times, "catch away" twice, "pluck" twice, "catch" once, and "pull" once.

Continuing in Acts 8:40, it says,

But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he kept preaching the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

In this particular situation, Philip was picked up from one location and taken to another. Other situations, such as this (i.e., taken from one location and put in another, translated), would be found in the written accounts of Enoch and Elijah (Gen. 5:24; 2 Kings 2:1). But, they eventually died, as "all" the prophets did (Heb. 11:13).

The word "translated" is Strong's Greek word #3346 *metatithemi* /met•atithay•mee meaning "transfer," "carry to another place," "to be transferred," "to be taken, moved, or carried to another place."

Strong's Hebrew word #3947 *laqach* /law•kakh "to take," "take in the hand," "carry along," "to take from," "take out of," "take," "carry away," "take away."

Remember, no one has ascended to heaven (the third heaven, spiritual realm) except for our Savior. So where did Enoch and Elijah go? In what they had spoken to the people (Jude 1:14 – 15), they evidently had reason to be-

lieve they were at risk of losing their lives (1 Kings 19:10, 14). What Yahweh did was allow them to be taken out of harm's way to live their lives out in a completely different area.

During that time, Elijah wrote a physical letter from his location (2 Chron. 21:11 – 15). When investigating, we see the timing of the letter was roughly 7 - 8 years after he was "raptured." Elijah had been taken during the reign of Jehoshaphat of the southern tribes. Later, two kings named Jehoram ruled at the same time (2 King 1:17 – 18), but noteworthy is that the one over Judah reigned 8 years (2 Chron. 21:20) when

the letter was written. The letter was prophesying the demise of his reign.

Pre, Mid, and Post

While the main held belief by many today is a pre-tribulation rapture, there are those that hold to other time periods for such an event. Pre, mid, and post-tribulation Rapture beliefs: Yahshua coming before the tribulation; during the tribulation; or at the end of the tribulation.

But, as we've already seen, the idea of being "raptured" out and taken to heaven, is not exactly the correct understanding we see shared in Scripture. Further examination is warranted to help clarify because of certain Scriptures taken out of context.

1 Thessalonians 3:12–14 says, *And may the Master cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our Elohim and Father at the coming of our Master Yahshua with all His saints. For if we believe that Yahshua died and rose again, even so Elohim will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Yahshua.*

Commentary on 1 Thessalonians 3:12–13 by *New International Biblical Commentary* says: "One scenario of the end time embraced by many Christians today sees a twofold return of [Yahshua]: the first in secret to gather up the church, the second openly, following the tribulation

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Mini - Study



Is the Rapture Biblical?

"Then two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left" —Matthew 24:40.

(which, on this theory, only the world will endure) to judge the world. The first return is called the Rapture, the second the Revelation."

Because of this viewpoint, many are led astray. The Messiah plainly says everyone will see His return. So, what people believe and what is truth are two different things. Yahshua's return will not be a secret, two-phase system.

And He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. They will say to you, 'Look there! Look here!' Do not go away, and do not run after them. For just like the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day," Luke 17:22 – 24.

Scriptural Proof?

Continuing on with the Scriptures, the *New Nave's Topical Bible* brings out, for the so-called Rapture, the following:

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of Elohim, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Master Yahshua Messiah to eternal life. And have mercy on some, who are doubting; save others, snatching [Greek word #726 harpazo] them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh. Now to

Him Who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, Jude 20 – 24.

Certainly, being saved out from a fiery second death would elicit excitement for the one being saved, but it doesn't mean the wording is proof of the concept being promoted today of being raptured to a heavenly abode in which harps on clouds are awaiting those who are looking for the Savior's return.

Here we come to the last reference given for Scriptural proof of the Rapture.

Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon hav-

ing seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems (crowns). And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. And she gave birth to a Son, a male child, Who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up [Greek word #726 harpazo] to Yahweh and to His throne, Revelation 12:3 – 5.

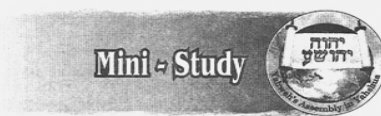
This, is proof! Yahshua was raptured! But, is this saying what the majority are saying? The *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* says, "(the Rapture) North American (according to some millenarian teaching) the transporting of believers to heaven at the second coming of [Messiah]. ORIGIN 16th century (in the sense 'seizing and carrying off'): from obsolete French, or from medieval Latin *raptura* 'seizing,' partly influenced by RAPT."

It appears that while Revelation 12:5 does describe the taking up of the Male child, that being, Yahshua the Messiah; it doesn't say anything about brethren being raptured to heaven.

If we were to pick one of pre, mid, or post tribulation, the latter one makes the more sense than the other two. Still, the overall concept taught in Christianity today, is not Scriptural.

The *New Nave's Topical Bible's* Scriptural references

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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,

for the Rapture, again, are as follows: 2 Cor. 12:4 (Vision); 1 Thess. 4:17 (first resurrection); Jude 23 (helping others to see the salvational truths of Scripture, such as, faith in Yahshua and obedience to the Father, see Acts 20:21; Rev. 14:12; 12:17); Rev. 12:5 (the resurrection of Yahshua from the dead, the first of the firstfruits, the Wave Sheaf offering).

Do any of the *New Nave's Topical Bible's* Scriptural references for the Rapture give credence to that particular doctrine taught in most churches today? The simple answer is "No."

The Saints in Tribulation

Are Yahweh's people raptured out (in a pre-trib rapture) before the tribulation starts? Revelation 9:3 – 4 says,

Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of Elohim on their foreheads.

Verse 5 goes on to say this period of time, during the tribulation, will last five months.

What is this identifying mark?

Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father

written on their foreheads, Revelation 14:1.

These are the Saints, the Elect, the Chosen Ones out of all the earth, who are alive physically in the end times, just before Yahshua's return. Remember, those dead in Messiah are not raised until after the tribulation and the return of Messiah from heaven.

But! But, What?

Some will say that those beheaded during the tribulation are those who are saved during it.

Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And

I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Yahshua and because of the word of Yahweh, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Messiah for a thousand years, Revelation 20:4.


Yes, they came alive. They came alive after the tribulation to enter into the coming Kingdom, to reign with Yahshua for 1000 years. It is referred to as the Millennial Reign.

Following events is not always easy in the book of Revelation as not everything is in a neat chronological order. But the book itself starts out speaking of the Day of Yahweh (wrongly translated, "Day of the Lord"). See our in-depth study called, *The Mistaken 'J'*.

Revelation is an event book, focused mainly on the tribulation as its main body and theme. The following gives the main entrance gate into the Day of Yahweh spoken of in Joel 2.

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind would blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living Elohim; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the

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The Spirit Realm

What is spirit? The Bible speaks often about the "Holy Spirit", and says Yahweh IS spirit. Is it true that spirit really means energy? Is a spirit being such as an angel like a ghost? A deeper understanding of spirit as energy will help clarify our understanding of the Bible. The first resurrection is to the spirit realm. Should we know more about what's in store for us as we strive to be among the firstfruits?

According to the ancient Greeks the earth is composed of four things; earth, air, fire and water. Since then science's advances now catalogue the earth's 90 some elements according to their atomic weight. All matter, substance, everything is made up entirely of atoms which are the building blocks of matter. Whether something is solid, liquid or gas depends merely on how closely the atoms are packed.

The atom is not a solid, indivisible substance, but consists mainly of space. The center or nucleus of the atom is the main mass. The center consists of protons and neutrons. Circulating around the nucleus are smaller particles called electrons. An atom is only a few hundred millionths of a centimeter across. A proton is so light that it would take 160 million million million million (4) of them to weigh one gram. An electron is 1800 times lighter than this, (Illustrated Fact Book of Science, Arco Publishing, Inc. New York.)

THE GRAND DESIGN

Whether we look at the universe through the telescope or view specks of matter through a microscope, the grand pattern of a Great Designer emerges. The planets circling the sun, the moons rotating around the planets are a macrocosm of what would be seen through an atomic microscope. Rotating around the nucleus of the atom are the

sea, saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our Elohim on their foreheads," Revelation 7:1 – 3.

In other words, when the Saints are sealed after baptism, having received the Spirit of Yahweh through the laying on of hands by the eldership in the faith, then all proverbial *gehenna* breaks loose. See our in-depth booklet entitled, **Understanding HELLFIRE.**

The tribulation, yet ahead of us, is a time period which will shake the foundations of this earth with a consuming fire and wrath from on high.

What About Apostasia?

Some say that *apostasia* actually means "departure," as in the "Rapture," and not a "falling away." Is this true? 2 Thessalonians 2:1 – 3 says,

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Master Yahshua Messiah and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of Yahweh has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy [falling away] comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction.

We've already looked at some clear scriptures that show the saints are not removed out of the tribulation. The use of *apostasia*, in con-

text here, is speaking more in the sense of the apostasy of the beast system. A "falling away" to it, or into it, in other words.

The Complete Word Study Dictionary says, "In 2 Thess. 2:3, the word *apostasia* does not refer to genuine [brethren] who depart from the faith, but mere professors who, without divine grace, succumb to the Satanic deception of the Antichrist."

Of special interest is what was promised for the Assembly who does not forsake His Name nor His Word.

Because you [the Philadelphian Assembly] have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth, Revelation 3:10.

Yahweh's people, the ones specifically not following false doctrines or false names, will have a clear understanding of what Yahweh's Word says and be more aware of what is going on. Yahshua will clearly be within them and helping them.

It doesn't necessarily mean that they'll be taken out of the picture, it may just mean that the deception will not overtake them. If the "hour of testing" is speaking of the tribulation and not the anti-Messiah beast system, then it may be that they will have some special protection.

With prophecy, it's best to keep an open mind to the possibilities, but a secret pre-trib rapture is something we

can rule out based upon clear Scriptural truths.

One Taken, Other Left

Some say that the verses "one will be taken, while the other is left," is clearly speaking of the Rapture. Let's consider it in context.

For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Master is coming, Matthew 24:37 – 42.

If you haven't already seen it, the question we want to ask here is, "Who is taken out first?" The context is very telling. What happened to Sodom and Gomorrah?

In Luke 17:34 – 37, Yahshua also says,

I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other will be left. There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken and the other will be left. [“Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other will be left.”] And answering they said to Him, “Where, Master?” And He

said to them, "Where the body is, there also the vultures will be gathered."

Times of destruction, the Day of Yahweh, is what is spoken of here.

In the following we find the parable of Wheat and Tares.

Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into My barn, Matthew 13:30.

Is the timing clear? The ones taken out first are the wicked, not the Saints.

In Mark 13:19 – 20, Yahshua tells us how bad things will get before His return,

For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which Elohim created until now, and never will. Unless Yahweh had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the Elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days.

Spoken as a matter of fact, as it will happen just as He has prophesied.

Destined for Wrath?

Some say that we are not destined for wrath, which is what the tribulation is. They point to 1 Thessalonians 5:9, which says,

For Yahweh has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Master Yahshua Messiah.

Wrath, in context here, is speaking of condemnation. In other words, the lake of fire.

He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of Elohim abides on him, John 3:36.

Yahweh has not made us, so He can destroy us. He made us, who will obey Him, so we can enter into eternal life. Those obeying the Son will be obeying the Father. The Son said,

If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love, John 15:10.

The Son did not have a separate set of laws. He upheld His Father's commandments. This is the true love which is spoken of in Scripture.

Whoever believes that Yahshua is the Messiah is born of Elohim, and whoever loves the Father loves the Child born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of Elohim, when we love Elohim and observe His commandments. For this is the love of Elohim, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome, 1 John 5:1 – 3.

For further study, see the mini-study called, **Love (How it Fulfills the Law)**.

The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear Elohim and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For Elohim will bring every act to judgment, everything which is

hidden, whether it is good or evil, Ecclesiastes 12:13 – 14.

Tribulation is coming upon the earth, because the earth has become corrupted. It is those who do evil and wickedly, breaking Yahweh's instructions, which will be bringing wrath upon the world.

In The End

In the end, people will not be raptured to heaven, but they will be punished as disobedient children. The *New Nave's Topical Bible*, as good resources go, does not prove the "Rapture" as being truth.

Scripture does talk about two major resurrections though, and it's the first one we are striving to be in. According to Scripture, it's the best one. You read of it in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and also in other areas such as 1 Thessalonians 4:14 – 17.

Those verses and others are talking about a resurrection to eternal life, not a Rapture out of tribulation. The first resurrection (being caught up to Yahshua), is at the end of the tribulation. It is those in this resurrection who will reign with Yahshua upon the earth.

You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our Elohim; and they will reign upon the earth, Revelation 5:10.

The reward for Yahweh's people comes with Yahshua's return, not before (John 17:15; Rev. 11:18).

Elder David Brett

Greatest Desire

What is your greatest desire? If you could be granted one wish, what would it be for? Would you desire health, happiness, peace, wealth, as many people probably do? Wouldn't you then be shooting for the gratification of your physical or materialistic desires? Is it really overly important to have them or anyone of them? Having them, will it make you a better person in the eyes of Yahweh? Certainly to be happy, healthy, to live in peace and/or to be wealthy would be nice, but we should know that because of the very nature of man their attainment is very difficult and that these will never universally come about until Yahweh's Kingdom has been set up.

Wisdom — Prudence Revisited

What, then, should be your greatest desire? By rereading Proverbs chapter 3 you will find the answer, specifically verse 15:

She (Wisdom) is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared to Her.

Proverbs 4:7 reads about the importance of Wisdom:

Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

Proverbs 3:21 and 8:12 have already shown us the importance of Wisdom and understanding dwelling together.

My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion, Proverbs 3:21.

I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions, Proverbs 8:12.

Why should Wisdom be the greatest of all desires? How is desiring Wisdom connected to attaining our goal as set forth in Matthew 6:33 of seeking first the Kingdom of Yahweh?

But seek ye first the kingdom of Yahweh, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Wisdom and understanding will preserve, keep, and direct your paths.

When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: to deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward (perverse) things; who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the forwardness of the wicked; whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths: to deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words. Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her mighty-one. For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life. That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous. For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it. But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it, Proverbs 2:10 - 22.

The Heart of Man

The heart is deceitful (referring to the old nature) above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9).

Concerning the nature of the heart of man, Yahshua gave a parable in Matthew 15:10 - 11:

Hear, and understand: not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth the man. See also Mark 7:14 - 15.

In explaining this parable, Yahshua said that those things which come out of his

mouth to defile a man originate in the heart,

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man, Matthew 15:18.

And certainly one can not pull the wool over Yahweh's eyes for He knows your innermost thoughts and desires.

And He (Yahshua) said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but Yahweh knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of Yahweh, Luke 16:15.

And Yahweh, Who knoweth the hearts, Acts 15:8a.

Since the heart of man is, by nature, deceitful, one should not place his trust (confidence) in his heart (*He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool,* Proverbs 28:26a) but place his trust in Yahweh (Prov. 29:25; Ps. 37:3 - 6; Prov. 28:25; Ps. 40:4; 118:8, 9).

In supplanting the old nature by the new (Read Romans 6), one can not become lax for Satan is always trying to gain a foothold. One must therefore self-examine himself periodically — more than on a once a year basis prior to Passover. One can do this through prayer and fasting — resulting in a closer fellowship between him and his Creator.

Physically speaking, the heart is an organ whose function is to pump blood throughout the body. Spiritually speaking, the heart is the mainstay of our very charac-

ter. A weak heart will permit undesirable influences to gain a foothold in us, while a strong heart will not. A heart of stone will reject Yahweh, but a heart of flesh will not. In a prayer for deliverance David requested that his heart be sound (thorough or perfect) in Yahweh's statutes (*Let my heart be sound in Thy statutes; that I be not ashamed,* Psalm 119:80.) and that the hidden part be made to know Wisdom (*Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part Thou shalt make me to know wisdom,* Psalm 51:6.).

This Wisdom is the Wisdom from above and is imparted to us from Yahweh (*For Yahweh giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding,* Proverbs 2:6.) so that we can more fully understand the Scriptures "which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Yahshua Messiah," II Tim. 3:15.

We should have Yahweh's Words implanted in our hearts (Prov. 3:1 - 4; 4:4, 20, and 21; and 14:33) and we should conduct ourselves according to them. Hence, one can now see the validity of Proverbs 2:10 - 22, where Wisdom and understanding will direct our paths in obtaining our goal as given in Matt. 6:33.

Guidelines

One way to examine the Scriptures is as a set of guidelines — rules by which our lives should be governed. Nowhere in the history of

mankind has man ever set up (or ever could set up) a more perfect set of guidelines. Many times over man has proven the adage that laws are made to be broken. We, by our very nature, break Yahweh's laws every day. We are not to make a point of doing so, for, most assuredly, there will come a day in which we will suffer for the wrong we have done. But suffering for righteousness sake is acceptable with Yahweh. I Pet. 2:19 - 21 and 3:14 - 17 say:

For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward Yahweh endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with Yahweh. For even hereunto were ye called: because Messiah also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps, 1 Peter 2:19 - 21.

But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. 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: having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation (behavior) in Messiah. For it is better, if the will of Yahweh

be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing, 1 Peter 3:14 - 17.

Stone or Flesh?

What kind of heart do you have? Is it pliable so that it can be molded into shape to conform to Yahweh's laws and thus accept the Wisdom from above. Or, is it made of stone to reject the truths of the Scriptures and thus live by man's wisdom? The truth of the whole matter boils down to where your true interests lie. Is the attainment of materialistic gifts more appealing to you than spiritual gifts? It best not be "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," Luke 12:34.

Treasures In Heaven

Praise ye Yah. Blessed is the man that feareth Yahweh, that delighteth greatly in His commandments ... Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever, Psalm 112:1, 3.

This same thought is reworded in Proverbs 22:4 as

By humility and the fear of Yahweh are riches, and honour, and life.

In the Companion Bible's comments, this verse reads as:

"The reward of humility (that is) the fear of Yahweh will be riches, and honor and life (life everlasting)."

Earthly riches and honor are not to be sought after as an end in themselves because riches profit nothing (*Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth*

from death, Proverbs 11:4), breed trouble (*Better is little with the fear of Yahweh than great treasure and trouble therewith,* Proverbs 15:16),

produce want (*A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent ... He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him,* Proverbs 28:20, 22), and are left behind after death (*For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names ... Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him,* Psalm 49:10, 11, 16, and 17).

One should not labor to be rich,

Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom, Proverbs 23:4.

One should labor for Wisdom and a good name for they are better than riches.

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her, Proverbs 3:13 - 15.

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things than may be desired are not to be compared to it, Proverbs 8:11.

How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver, Proverbs 16:16.

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold, Proverbs 22:1.

Therefore, the conclusion of all these verses is simple.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also, Matthew 6:19 - 21.

By laying up your treasures in heaven, your heart will be filled with good things, and by your actions, by the very way you live, you will show others these good things: love, joy, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. These are the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23).

Now let Wisdom speak once again:

Riches and honor are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver, Proverbs 8:18, 19.

Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon Her: and happy is every one that retaineth Her, Proverbs 3:16 - 18.

Length of days means that each day will be more important and not that you will necessarily have a longer physical life.

Through Wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding is it established: and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches, Proverbs 24:3 - 4.

A Proud Heart

Pride is a device which Satan places in our hearts to deceive us. Robert South, a

17th century English clergyman, once wrote:

“Pride is the forerunner of a fall. It is Satan's sin, and Satan's ruin: and has been, ever since, Satan's stratagem, who, like an expert wrestler, usually gives a man a lift before he gives him a throw.”

A nose turned up, or eyes lifted up, are the outwards signs of pride. A man's pride shall bring him low (*A man's pride shall bring him low,* Proverbs 29:23a) and result in shame (*When pride cometh, then cometh shame,* Proverbs 11:2a), contention (*Only by pride cometh contention,* Proverbs 13:10a), stirring up strife (*He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife,* Proverbs 28:25a) and destruction (*Pride goeth before destruction,* Proverbs 16:18a).

If we fear Yahweh then we should hate pride (*The*

fear of Yahweh is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate, Proverbs 8:13) for such is an abomination to Yahweh (*These six things doth Yahweh hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him. A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,* Prov. 6:16, 17) and He has promised to destroy the house of the proud (*Yahweh will destroy the house of the proud,* Proverbs 15:25).

Conclusion

Let the truth be said resoundingly that Yahweh's Words are those which should be followed to lead us in the right direction — to first seek the Kingdom of Yahweh.

Elder Roger G. Meyer

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Falling Away

The July 2018 monthly mailing of *Sisters for Yah* brought a timely subject to our notice. Because we are living in that time when some will not endure Sound Doctrine, but are, instead, turning their ears away from the TRUTH and after their own lusts, heaping to themselves teachers which neither understand what they say, nor whereof they affirm!

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables, 2 Timothy 4:3 – 4 NKJV.

Desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm, 1 Timothy 1:7 NKJV.

We are living in that time, approaching the day of which the Apostle Paul spoke in II Thessalonians:

Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, II Thessalonians 2:3.

Nevertheless, and regardless of the eschatological calendar, churchianity continues to look towards an end-time harvest, and in some places they're packing the people in. But they're going about it the wrong way.

Providing For the Affections and Lusts of the Flesh

Consider this: increasingly, church campuses today feature, or are otherwise being retrofitted to 24/7/365 fitness and recreation centers; cyber cafes; for-profit senior adult and child day care centers; theaters; and offer chartered motor-coach excursions to Branson to see the Bald-knobbers, ... and, oh, yes,

trips to Israel, Rome, the Caribbean, and the Last Frontier (under the auspices of Bible Conferences) and a host of other amenities that compete with all that is the rest of the world.

But there's no way you can do Yahweh's work, the devil's way: compassing sea and land to pack them in. But once they're in, shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against them by making fair speeches with great swelling words of vanity and therewith, make them twofold more the children of perdition.

But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in, Matthew 23:13.

For they that are such serve not our Master Yahshua Messiah, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple, Romans 16:18.

While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage, 2 Peter 2:19.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves, Matthew 23:15.

Some few places, like Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua, keep back nothing that is profitable and shun not, to declare the whole counsel of Yahweh. But there will be many more who push back ..., they, whose hearts (as in the abundance of the heart) protest, "Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits."

And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from

house to house ... Wherefore I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of Yahweh, Acts 20:20, 27.

Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits, Isaiah 30:10.

And when the presbytery decline to 'respect their persons, retorting instead,

"The word that Yahweh putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak ... I cannot go beyond the word of Yahweh my Elohim, to do less or more... to do either good or bad of mine own mind; but what Yahweh saith, that will I speak" (Num. 22:38, 18, 24:13), then, come the excuses:

Excuses, Excuses, Excuses

- "Yahweh has too many rules and regulations,"
- "Living Yahweh's way causes my kids to be deprived of fun,"
- "My friends and family hate me now," and
- "I'm just not good enough to live up to Yahweh's standards,"

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Let's put these things in the context of Scripture. In Luke's Evangel, we read several of them which were CALLED but who proffered

excuses for not responding to the CALL! Chapter 9, verses 59 and 60, Yahshua says: "... Follow Me... Go, thou, and preach the Kingdom of Yah..."

And in verses 59 and 61, they which are called, reply:

- "...Suffer me first to go and bury my father..."; and
- "...But let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house..."

Then, in Chapter 14:16-20), Yahshua tells of a certain man who made a great supper, and sent his servant to say to them that were bidden, "Come; for all things are ready."

And, in Verses 18, 19 and 20, they which are bidden, reply:

- "... I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it...";
- "... I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them..."; and
- "... I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come."

An Appointment to Supper

This is serious business: we're talking here about an appointment that precludes burying my father; bidding them farewell at home at my house; a piece of ground; five yoke of oxen; and marrying a wife. We're talking here of stuff found in Revelation: "HalleluYah; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, to Yahweh our El ... HalleluYah ... Praise our El, all you His servants, and you that fear Him, both small and great ... HalleluYah: for Yahweh Elohim omnipotent reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife has made herself ready ... Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb ..." (Rev. 19:1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9).

And though many are called and bidden, it will be the poor, the maimed, and the halt, and the blind in the streets and lanes of the city and on the highways and in the hedges that are chosen, and why? Because they are

To view this mini-study go to our website at www.yaiy.org or phone 1-877-642-4101

Mini - Study

To the Heart of Valentine's Day

*E*very February 14 we see an "angelic" infant with a bow and arrow aiming for the heart of his "valentine." Cupids are everywhere with bows and arrows, heart shapes, paper lace, birds and flowers. All these are associated with St.Valentine's Day. But just where did these symbols and the celebration of the 14th of February come from? Most of all, should we be celebrating this seemingly innocent day on which so many remember sweethearts and lovers?

A Priest with a Heart
The origin of this day is not clear, as there seems to be more than one explanation. The most accepted legend is that a Roman priest named Valentine had a special feeling for young people. When the Roman Empire needed soldiers, Emperor Claudius II decreed that no one could marry or become engaged. Claudius believed that marriage made men want to stay home instead of fighting wars. The kindly Valentine defied the Emperor's decree and secretly performed weddings for a number of young couples. He was arrested, imprisoned, and put to death. Another legend holds that Valentine was aiding persecuted Christians and was imprisoned. A jailer and his family were so impressed by his sincerity that they became Christians themselves. Valentine was fond of the jailer's blind daughter and by a miracle restored her sight. On the morning of his execution he sent her a farewell message signed "From your Valentine." St. Valentine was beheaded on February 14. When he was buried, the story goes, a pink almond tree near his grave burst into bloom as a symbol of lasting love.

February 14 Fertility Festival
February 14, when Valentine is supposed to have died, was also the eve of an important Roman festival, the Lupercalia. On this evening, Roman youths drew names of girls who would be their partners during this spring

unencumbered with the cares of the world and the affairs of this life!

So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind ... And the master said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled, Luke 14:21, 23.

And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful, Mark 4:19.

No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier, 2 Timothy 2:4.

They didn't protest, "Yahweh has too many rules and regulations" for they figured it out: **OBEDIENCE to Yahweh's commandments is not so grievous as His rebuke and chastening!**

Called Out, Separated

Yeah, "Living Yahweh's way causes my kids to be deprived of, 'What did you say?'" — ...wasting the substance of life, running to an excess of riot and revelry and otherwise, making provision for the flesh to fulfill its affections and being drawn away by lusts which conceive sin and afterward, death!

And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living, Luke 15:13.

Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you, 1 Peter 4:4.

But put ye on the Master Yahshua Messiah, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof, Romans 13:14.

And they that are Messiah's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, Galatians 5:24.

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed, James 1:14.

Yeah, your kids need to be deprived of that kind of Foolish Unruly Naughtiness (F.U.N.)!

So, "My friends and family hate me now." Perhaps, they never loved you very much in the first place.

Well, take heart, the Family of Yahweh is made up SOLITARIES:

Yahweh setteth the solitary in families: He bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land, Psalm 68:6.

What else do you suppose Yahshua meant when He said,

I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in

law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household, Matthew 20:35 – 36.

And Yahshua answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, ...If any man come to me, and hate not (love less) his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple, Mark 10:29, Luke 14:26.

Indeed, when father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister, etc., etc., forsake you, then Yahweh takes you up!

When my father and my mother forsake me, then Yahweh will take me up, Psalm 27:10.

The TRUTH is, they which make this excuse, "My friends and family hate me now,"

- don't want to work out their salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12);
- don't want to save themselves from an untoward generation (Acts 2:40);
- don't want to earnestly contend for the faith presumed delivered them (Jude 3);
- don't want to both will and do of Yahweh's good pleasure (Phil. 2:14); and
- don't want to give diligence to make their call-

ing and election sure (2 Peter 1:10).

One must present themselves before their family and friends to be exemplary believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity! (I Tim. 4:12).

None Righteous, No Not One

By saying to yourself, "I'm just not good enough to live up to Yahweh's standards," you're right. Really, you aren't! If you were, you could scratch out Hebrews 4:16,

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

They which invoke that excuse don't want "To live up to Yahweh's standards."

They're the same who declare of themselves, "O wretched man that I am ...," but never get quite so far as to pray, The gift of Yah to deliver them from the body of this death. (Read Rom. 7:24, 6:23).

His Yoke Is Easy

I'll add one more: "His commandments are a yoke I can't bear."

These like to cite Acts 15:10,

Now therefore why tempt ye Elohim, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

They assume that "the yoke" here is the TORAH,

which they will also insist, was contrary to us, blotted out, taken out of the way, and nailed to the cross, Col. 2:14. But, given this convocation of apostles and elders in Jerusalem, who had been called to consider the question of circumcision after the manner of Moses to be saved, we don't but wonder *the yoke which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear* may rather had been the oral torah for which this Pharisaic sect of the Jews' religion, were much more zealous! In fact, according to Yahshua, Who, in Matthew, Chapters 15 and 23, had very much of derisive attestations against scribes and Pharisees, we may appreciate that if anything was contrary to us, blotted out, taken out of the way, and nailed to the torture stake, it would have been traditions and the commandments of men taught for the doctrines of Yahweh.

Moreover, by making such an assertion that "His commandments are a yoke I can't bear," they are making a liar, like unto themselves, of Yahshua, Who said, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light!" (Matt. 11:30).

Conclusion

And, we conclude that excuses are given only by the lawless and disobedient, who were once thought to have heard the Word with gladness, confessed, repented, and renounced their sin

and so endured for a time. But afterward, when affliction or persecution arose for the Word's sake, immediately they were offended... having no root in themselves. (I Tim. 1:9; Mark 4:16 - 17).

Therefore, their excuses for having *fallen away* have become, precisely, the reason *their latter end is worse with them than their beginning* and become, also, the reason we have both exhortation and admonition. There's a thief out there, and a murderer and a destroyer and a devourer going up and down and to and fro in the earth on an unrelenting quest to tempt you, to entice you, to beset you, to overcome you, to bring you into bondage, to destroy and devour you ... and all, in that order, too! (II Thes. 2:3; II Pet. 2:20).

We couldn't say it any better than Yahshua, so we'll let Him take it from here: READ Mark 4:1 - 19.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall, I Corinthians 10:12.



Elder John W. Reece

Freedom

Do you have it? Are you Sure?

Here in the United States, during the first week of July, we observe a national holiday known as Independence Day. It's a day that has been set aside to commemorate the beginning of our nation and the source of our freedom.

In America, we have several national holidays that celebrate the freedom we, as Americans, enjoy. Among those are Memorial Day, which is observed at the end of May to recognizing the men and women who have been killed in armed conflicts on behalf of the nation and Veterans Day, which is observed on the anniversary of the armistice ending the worst war in human history — up to that point — World War I.

It is fashionable in the U. S. to exalt the men and women of the Armed Forces as heroes who defend our freedom and who sacrifice their lives to protect our freedom. As someone who has previously served in the Armed Forces, many times I have had people say "thank you for your service" to me. The current culture of the adulation of the military hasn't always been the case. If you're old enough to remember the time during the days of the military draft and the War in Vietnam and even into the late 1980's it wasn't "cool" to serve in the military or to express any appreciation for military service.

The first Gulf War changed the nations' attitude in the relatively short war in 1991. Finally, the nation had a military victory in a campaign against a foreign enemy. The troops came home, parades were held and speeches made, and the military was once again "cool" to the populace and they were exalted for protecting our freedom.

Now we have "Heroes" who have given

us our freedom in The Land of the Free — because of the Brave.

But, is that really what happens? Ask yourself this question: After the 2,852,901 men and women who were killed or maimed since the first shots were fired in the War for Independence from Britain, are you more free or less free than you were even 30 years ago?

What does it mean to be free and what or who is the source of your freedom?

Let's take a look at how we got to where we are today.

During the time when the people, our ancestors, who began to settle this land, which later became the United States and was organized into colonies, had written documents and agreed upon as to how we were to be governed. Among the first were the Fundamental Agreement of the Colony of New Haven signed on June 4, 1639 (Note: Common titles and names are used for historical accuracy.)

The agreement spells out 6 fundamental areas of agreement that all of the colonists individually subscribed to. The first reads:

WHETHER the scriptures do hold forth a perfect rule for the direction and government of all men in all duties which they are to perform to GOD and men, as well in families and commonwealth, as in matters of the church? This was assented unto by all, no man dissenting, as was expressed by holding up of hands. Afterwards it was read over to them, that they might see in what words their vote was expressed. They again expressed their consent by holding up their hands, no man dissenting.

Then, some 137 years later, an example

is found in the 1776 Constitution of Delaware is less emphatic.

Article 22: Every person who shall be chosen a member of either house, or appointed to any office or place of trust, before taking his seat, or entering upon the execution of his office, shall take the following oath, or affirmation, if conscientiously scrupulous of taking an oath, to wit:

"I, do profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His only Son, and in the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for evermore; and I do acknowledge the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by divine inspiration."

Later, one of our founding documents in the United States is our Declaration of Independence. This document identifies the source of our rights as it reads, "We are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," progressing even further towards secularism.

Eleven years later when the U.S. Constitution was ratified, the founders took another step and declared that "We - the People" are the source of authority; not the scriptures, not Father Yahweh or even a generic Creator. No. We are the ones who ordain and establish the laws by which we govern ourselves. Sound familiar?

Isaiah 14:13 - 14 *For you have said in your heart, "Let*

me go up to the heavens, let me raise my throne above the stars of Ēl, and let me sit in the mount of appointment on the sides of the north; let me go up above the heights of the clouds, let me be like the Most High."

Now laws are made, and rights conferred by nine men in black robes. These men can make or restrict our freedom based upon their own ideas and values.

Case in point – 2008 Proposition 8 in California. This was a ballot initiative passed in 2008 to amend the California state constitution to provide that "only marriage between one man and one woman is valid or recognized in the State of California." The will of the people was ultimately reversed by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2013.

So what we can see here is a progression of the source of authority for governance. First, the Scriptures were the authority, then men who agreed that the Scriptures were inspired, then a general agreement that the source of our rights were endowed by a "Creator," then the authority became "We the People" or the consent of the governed, and now the authority is a very few in the judiciary (ultimately the Supreme Court).

To put it in today's language – How's that working out for you?

Is that true freedom and is that what the Scriptures teach us?

What is the desire of our Creator, Almighty Father Yahweh, for us?

What does it mean to be free? Does it mean we are able to do anything we want to without consequence? Does freedom mean that we are free to make our own laws? Are we free to blaspheme and worship idols? The first amendment gives us the right to do that. Are we free to engage in intimate relationships with anyone we choose? The Supreme Court has upheld laws to that effect. Really, if you think about it, we're "free" to engage in all kinds of behavior: adultery, idolatry, hatred, fits of rage, selfish ambition, envy, drunkenness. There is a long list of behaviors that we as American citizens are free to do without punishment by the government. Is this what these heroes fought and died for?

Any of us who are parents know that allowing a child to make up their own rules is not a good thing for a child and inevitably will bring about a lot of pain and ultimately destruction.

Let's look at what the One Who actually does have the power to set you free – Yahshua the Messiah. Yes, what did He say about freedom?

When Yahshua was speaking with the religious elite of His day, the discourse between them was recorded by the Apostle John and the subject was freedom,

John 8:31-36 *So Yahshua*

said to those Yehudim who believed Him, "If you stay in My Word, you are truly My taught ones, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." They answered Him, "We are the seed of Abraham, and have been servants to no one at any time. How do you say, 'You shall become free'?" Yahshua answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone doing sin is a servant of sin. And the servant does not stay in the house forever – a son stays forever. If, then, the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."

These Pharisees completely misunderstood what Yahshua was talking about. They were relating on a completely physical level stating that they were not subject to a human government or institution (which is kind of an odd thing to say while being under Roman rule).

Yahshua, on the other hand, was relating on a spiritual level – something these scribes and Pharisees didn't understand at all. Similarly, do we have the same misunderstanding about freedom? Are we looking at this concept of freedom on a physical level rather than a spiritual level as the Pharisees did?

The apostle Kepha (Peter) reiterated Yahshua's teaching when he wrote in his 1st letter:

1 Peter 2:13 - 16, *Be subject to every institution of man because of the Master, whether to the sovereign as*

supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of doers of evil, and a praise for those who do good. Because such is the desire of Elohim, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, as free, yet not using your freedom as a cloak for evil, but as servants of Elohim.

Our teacher Sha'ul (Paul) gives a second witness in his letter to the Galatians:

Galatians 5:13 - 15, *For you, brothers, have been called to freedom, only do not use freedom as an occasion for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the entire Torah is completed in one word, in this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." (Lev. 19:18). And if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!*

Almighty Father Yahweh has from the very beginning given us the freedom to choose. But as Yahshua pointed out to these Pharisees, how you choose will decide whether you are a slave (to sin) or free (from the death penalty).

The Pharisees should have known this being students of the Torah – the freedom to choose is summarized in Deuteronomy:

30:15- 20, *See, I have set before you today life and good, and death and evil, in that I am commanding you today to love YAHWEH your Elohim, to walk in His ways, and to guard His com-*

mands, and His laws, and His right-rulings. And you shall live and increase, and YAHWEH your Elohim shall bless you in the land which you go to possess.

"But if your heart turns away, and you do not obey, and shall be drawn away, and shall bow down to other mighty ones and serve them, I have declared to you today that you shall certainly perish, you shall not prolong your days in the land which you are passing over the Yardén to enter and possess. I have called the heavens and the earth as witnesses today against you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore you shall choose life, so that you live, both you and your seed, to love YAHWEH your Elohim, to obey His voice, and to cling to Him – for He is your life and the length of your days – to dwell in the land which YAHWEH swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Yitsaq, and to Ya'aqov, to give them.

What do we think about freedom? Have the world's ideas - (western culture) infiltrated our thinking?

How about those in the U.S.? We have constitutional rights, don't we?

We have freedom of speech, right? Can we say anything we want? The apostle Ya'akov (James) gives us this admonition:

James 1:26, *If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his*

tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is worthless.

James 3:5 - 8, *So too the tongue is a little member, yet boasts greatly. See how a little fire kindles a great forest! And the tongue is a fire, the world of unrighteousness. Among our members the tongue is set, the one defiling the entire body, and setting on fire the wheel of life, and it is set on fire by GëHinnom. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man is able to tame the tongue. It is unruly, evil, filled with deadly poison.*

Does Freedom mean freedom from the Law (Torah)?

There are those who teach that we are now free from keeping the Old Testament Law.

Romans 8:1 - 2, *There is, then, now no condemnation to those who are in Messiah **Yahshua**, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the torah of the Spirit of the life in Messiah **Yahshua** has set me free from the torah of sin and of death.*

So there it is – we're free from the law; right? Is that what Sha'ul (Paul) is saying? No. The penalty of sin, which is death, is what we are free from.

Sha'ul puts to rest any thought that we are free from the Torah. He says quite the opposite. We are actually free **because** of the Torah.

Roman 6:15 - 20, *What*

then? Shall we sin because we are not under Torah but under favour? Let it not be!

Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves as servants for obedience, you are servants of the one whom you obey, whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness? But thanks to Elohim that you were servants of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of teaching to which you were entrusted. And having been set free from sin, you became servants of righteousness. I speak as a man, because of the weakness of your flesh.

For even as you did present your members as servants of uncleanness, and of lawlessness resulting in lawlessness, so now present your members as servants of righteousness resulting in set-apartness. For when you were servants of sin, you were free from righteousness.

Romans 6:21 - 23, *What fruit, therefore, were you having then, over which you are now ashamed? For the end thereof is death. But now, having been set free from sin, and having become servants of Elohim, you have your fruit resulting in set-apartness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the favourable gift of Elohim is everlasting life in Messiah **Yahshua** our Master. Footnote: See Rom. 8:13.*

2 Corinthians 3:17, *Now **YAHWEH** is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of **YAHWEH** is, there is*

The apostle Ya'akov provides even more clarity:

James 1:23 - 25, *Because if anyone is a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, this one is like a man studying his natural face in a mirror; for he studied himself, and has gone away, and immediately he forgot how he looked. But the one looking into the perfect Law of liberty, and continuing in it, this one not having become a hearer of the word which can be forgotten, but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in his labor.*

When we fall for the world's definition of freedom, we become as Kepha (Peter) describes in 2 Peter 2:18 - 20:

*For speaking arrogant nonsense, they entice – through the lusts of the flesh, through indecencies – the ones who have indeed escaped from those living in delusion, promising them freedom, though themselves being slaves of corruption – for one is a slave to whatever overcomes him. For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Master and Saviour **Yahshua** Messiah, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the first.*

We can see that both the secular world and mainstream Christianity's idea of freedom – that we can sin with impunity and be free of the consequences is not sup-

ported by scripture.

The fact is, true freedom has been abundantly blessed is found in obedience to the Torah – the instructions Almighty Yahweh has given us. Our Father loves us and wants us to live with Him throughout all eternity and to avoid the natural penalty that disobedience brings with it – ultimately eternal death.

We do live in a land that that our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20). by Almighty Yahweh and we should never fail to thank Him for the relative peace and safety and wealth that we enjoy here. However, let us also remember that just as Abraham was, we also are strangers and sojourners in this land (Heb. 11:13) and



Deacon John Illgen

QUESTION & ANSWER

Q Why was it permitted for men to have more than one wife in the Tanakh, and not permitted now? Did Abraham break the law when He had relations with Hagar? The Torah says if a man has two wives, a loved one and an unloved one, and then another verse says that "If a man takes a girl and buys her to be his wife, and then takes another wife, the first still has marriage rights under the law." Isn't this the law that will be established when the kingdom is set up? I know that Messiah spoke against divorce, but I have not found a scripture speaking against having more than one wife.

A A marriage between a man and a woman is what was planned from the beginning. It was the first polygamist, Lamech, descendant of Cain, who is noted as taking on more than one wife (Gen. 4:18). Lamech apparently had a mark of disapproval upon him from Yahweh Himself, as he died at the age of 777.

A law specifically against polygamy ap-

parently didn't exist, except against the kings who were warned not to multiply their wives (Deut. 17:17). With it, the consequences clearly are shown in Solomon's history (1 Kings 11:1-13).

Deuteronomy is the constitution of the coming Kingdom. And, the inheritance laws should be in place along with land Sabbaths, etc. With that said, constitutions can be amended by the King. The civil law may indeed be more accommodating to the original intent, once the people learn the depth of Yahweh's ways,

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the Elohim of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more, Isaiah 2:3 - 4.

In our society, with its civil laws and a

better understanding of Yahweh's ways, we are to live our lives as pleasing to the Father as possible in His Spirit and truth. That is the difference for us in the Melchizedek Order, who are striving to be a type of first fruits in the Kingdom, reigning with the Messiah,

And hast made us unto our Elohim kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth, Revelation 5:10.

In the past, Yahweh didn't institute polygamy, but allowed it and regulated it. It is illegal for us in this land even if we wanted to do such things. Which, we don't.

Q I just finished reading your enhanced article "Who Is Our Creator?" on your site. It is very enlightening and I am richly blessed. A question I want to ask is from Yahshua's statement in Luke 24:39: "for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." What was He referring to here as spirit with no flesh and bone? I believe all dead people are in the grave.

A All dead people are in the grave, except for Yahshua. It's interesting He should mention His hands and feet, that is where the nails would have been. However, there was no blood anymore. Spirit only was allowing Him to live; proof of life eternal after death, from the One Who did die and yet not see decay (Psalm 16:10). He was showing this to the disciples and explained to them that He is indeed the One the Scriptures spoke about (v. 44-48). He is the only One resurrected to eternal life at this time (Acts 13:32-39), but there will be first fruits at the appointed time (1 Cor. 15:23)...the time of His return.

Q Please explain why Paul had Timothy circumcised? (Acts 16:1 - 3).

A I think the answer is partly found in Acts 21:24. Paul was good about being like others to save others:

For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more. To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of Elohim but under the law of Messiah, so that I might win those who are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some. I do all things for the sake of the evangel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it, 1 Corinthians 9:18 - 23 NASU.

Since Paul was this way he would have encouraged Timothy to follow his example (1 Cor. 11:1). Paul didn't think that circumcision had to be done to be saved, but to save others he thought it best not to cause an outcry that would have hindered their preaching efforts to the Jews. His way was to try to not offend and to always maintain a clear conscience (Acts 24:16 and 25:8).

However, there were times when pressed that he stood his ground and spoke plainly against the thought that "physical" circumcision had to be done to be saved, Acts 15:1 - 2. He went so far as to say, *I wish that the people who are upsetting you would go all the way; let them go on and castrate themselves!* (Galatians 5:12 GNT). The whole book of Galatians was written in opposition to those who say that you must be physically circumcised to be saved. Clearly Paul taught that "justification" is in Yahshua the Messiah, it is only in Him that we have forgiveness of sins.

Today we find that circumcision is good for physical health reasons, but clearly Yahweh wants us to be circumcised of heart (Ezek. 36:26 - 27).



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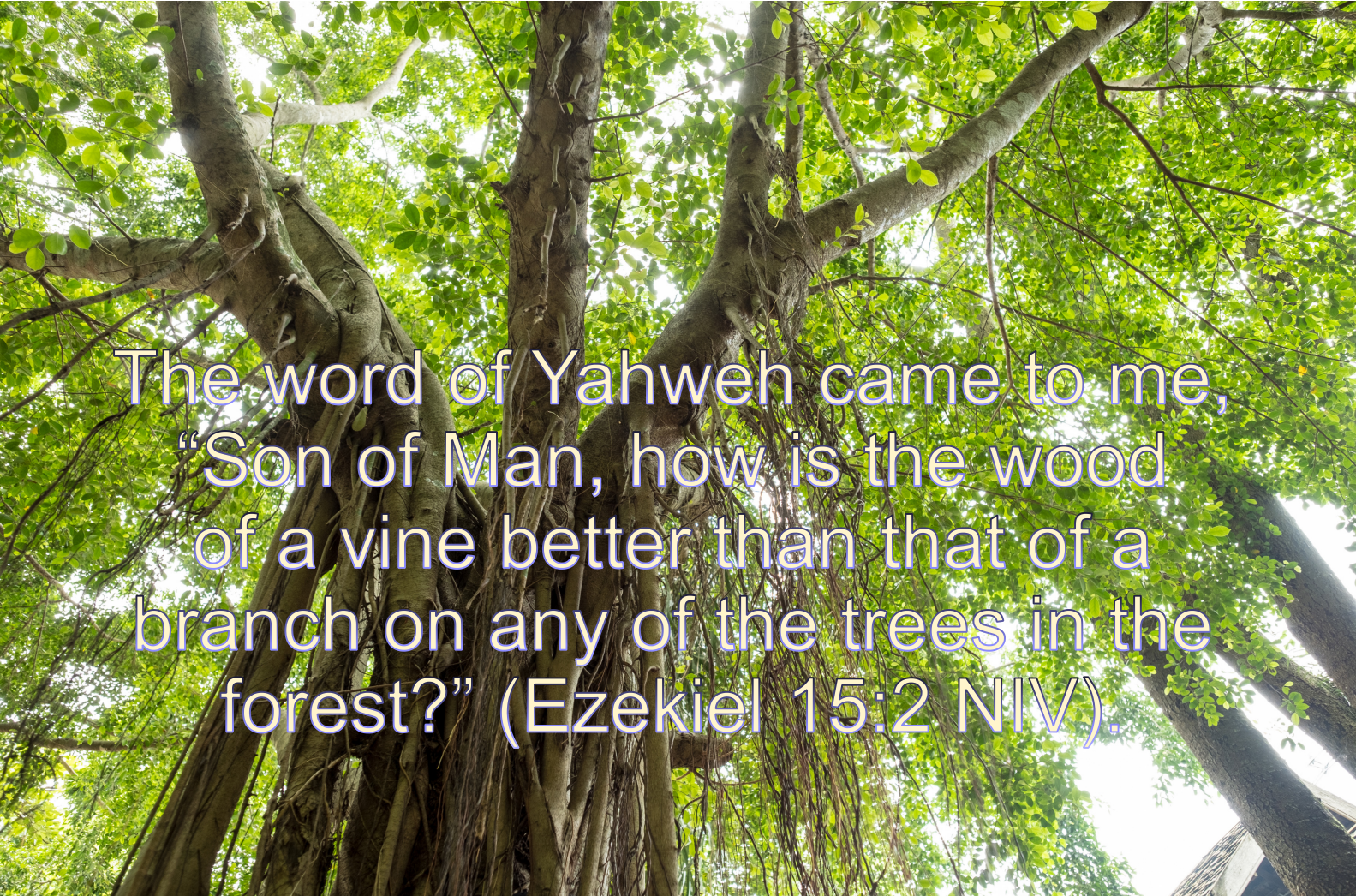
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The word of Yahweh came to me,
“Son of Man, how is the wood
of a vine better than that of a
branch on any of the trees in the
forest?” (Ezekiel 15:2 NIV).