

YAIY



Beacon



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Flowers appear on the earth;
the season of singing has come,
the cooing of doves is heard in our land,
Song of Solomon 2:12 NIV

YAIY



Beacon



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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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By the increase which Yahweh gives to us, what does He require of us?
by Elder David Brett

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The Law of Tithing

Since we've come into the Melchizedek Order of priests through Yahshua's sacrificial offering, we must essentially confirm the cutting of a new agreement with the sign and seal of Yahweh's Spirit being given, circumcising our hearts.

It's important to understand, if we just proclaim belief in the Messiah and acknowledge obedience to Yahweh's laws, we really are not where we need to be. Unless we understand the ramifications of the New Covenant (i.e., new agreement) made on our behalf and that we are to walk in the Spirit, we could miss out on our full potential.

We probably should avoid the term "renewed covenant," as it strongly implies that everything stays the same, when in fact, everything does not stay the same. A case in point is the law of tithing, which we'll want to look at more closely in this article.

Some, who do understand that the Levitical priesthood is in abeyance, will say this law of tithing is no longer for us today. They'll point out: "It was only specifically for the Levites to feed them the produce from the crops which were harvested by the Israelites." Is this true? Or is it true that there is a change in the law due to the new priesthood in Messiah?

Consider the following Scripture clearly showing "the law is NOT done away with."

Nothing Removed

For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven, Matthew 5:18–19 NASB.

Pretty serious, if one letter or stroke from "the Law" is abolished (or taught that it is abolished), then one will be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Has anyone you know or have heard of ever taught that the law is not applicable to mankind?

There is one Torah for the native-born and for the stranger who sojourns among you, Exodus 12:49 TS.

What we have taught is all blood sacrifices and purification rites, and other details found in the civil law, are going to be re-instituted or re-newed in the coming Kingdom.

This is not for those in Messiah, mind you, but for the physical people who are going to learn that sinning (1 John 3:4) has consequences, and they are going to be given these types of training wheels to guide them. At least, initially, for the first 1000 years. Beyond this we're not told a whole lot.

In addition, during the millennial rule, there will be first fruits in the Spirit with Messiah who will be helping to guide and direct the physical people. We are to walk in the Spirit even now, growing in it and allowing the Messiah to grow within us, even as we grow with Him.

In doing so, we don't neglect those things in the law of Yahweh which are applicable to us. What did Yahshua even tell the teachers of the law?

The Law is Good

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former, Matthew 23:23 NIV.

Here, Yahshua proclaims that the law (here,

specifically, the law of tithing) and the spiritual intent of the law are to be observed. Both are good. One can't just spiritualize everything away, for we are to walk on higher ground.

Then Yahshua said to the crowds and to His disciples, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice," Matthew 23:1-3 ESV.

Yahshua is teaching that the law is good, if one does according to the law. He is teaching that everyone is to obey Yahweh, the crowds of onlookers and the disciples, Israelites and non-Israelites, everyone who was listening, and will listen, even today.

He had already started to give instructions on how some of the laws, even civil ones, were to be applied on higher spiritual ground. For example, in chapter 5 of Matthew, not actually taking an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth. The main point He was making was for people not to take revenge.

Today, under current civil law, we have the right to receive recompense or damages for injuries received on the job or in a car accident on the road. It would not be sin to receive such compensation, but it is not a reason to gouge or to try to be overcompensated, nor is it a reason to seek revenge on a company or an individual.

Not Tithing is a Sin

What would be a sin is to withhold the tithe from Yahweh.

Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is YAHWEH'S; it is holy to YAHWEH, Leviticus 27:30 ESV.

A tenth? Yes, it was from agriculture and whatever the agriculture produced. This would include animals.

And every tithe of herds and flocks, every tenth animal of all that pass under the herdsman's staff, shall be holy to YAHWEH, Leviticus 27:32 ESV.

"Holy unto Yahweh" literally means, "set apart for Yahweh." It is His, not yours or mine. He gives the ability to gain increase. Whatever you gain from the ground, the work of your hands, a tenth is His.

And, He explained what He wanted done with it years ago in Numbers 18:21,

Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting.

Tithing Today

Let's fast forward a little and see what was going on with the Spirit functioning in great power among the brethren after Yahshua had been killed and had risen, and when He had sent the Spirit. Remember, this is the New Covenant they are accepting now, a new priesthood under the order of Melchizedek.

Did the brethren go to the Temple? Yes, for Pentecost and most likely they met initially in the upper room there on top of the outer wall.

The Spirit was poured out to them as tongues of fire among those who had traveled according to the command. It was a moral command. It is morally good to come before Yahweh and worship Him at the time He appoints and at the place He puts His Name, just as the Word says.

This gets into the area of prophecy of Yahshua with the woman at the well, saying that Yahweh will be worshiped in Spirit and in Truth wherever they are. But, wherever they are, they will gather together before Him. The Temple was not going to stand, but a new Temple, the Temple of the people, would.

And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them. And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Master Yahshua, and abundant grace was upon them all, for there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need, Acts 4:32–35 NASB.

Did the Apostles forget the command of a tenth to Yahweh? Not at all. Things were progressing and Yahweh would reveal what was needed. In fact, He was giving insight and it was being taught by His Spirit and by the law, with the understanding there was a change in the law which occurred, for those accepting Yahshua's blood as a covering and New Covenant in their lives. Assemblies would be established, as the Pastoral Epistles clearly show.

Now, mind you, those not accepting the Messiah would still be obligated under the previous covenant to do all that it said, which included obeying the law of the tithe and what it was used for at that time. There is a difference between that and what we are to do today.

The Spiritual Temple

Yahshua was the first One to start giving insight and depth to what we now understand. After Yahshua had overturned the money changers temple's at the Temple, the Jews, most likely the Pharisees, confronted Him, saying:

"What sign can You show us to prove Your authority to do all this?" Yahshua answered them, *"Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again*

in three days." They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and You are going to raise it in three days?" But the temple He had spoken of was His body, John 2:18–21 NIV.

It is this understanding we have today, concerning the body of Messiah, and being obedient to Yahweh.

Or, do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from Elohim, and you are not your own?" (1 Corinthians 6:19 NKJV.)

Can we understand that there is a change in the law for us? That we ourselves are changed for the better? Yet, just as Yahshua said to consider the weightier matters of the law, He said not to neglect the basics of the laws.

Tithing is a basic law which applies to all generations, just as many of the other laws of Yahweh do, though accomplished a little differently.

Let's go back to the beginning and see what Yahweh said of Abraham.

For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of Yahweh by doing righteousness and justice, so that Yahweh may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him, Genesis 18:19 NASB.

Why speak of Yahweh's ways to the children? It's obvious: so that Yahweh's ways will be known to the generations after him.

This was before the laws were written down at Mt. Sinai and affirmed in that agreement with the people. Yahweh told Abraham:

I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My

laws, Genesis 26:4–5 NASB.

In Spirit and In Truth

Abraham obeyed Yahweh's laws (plural). The Bible tells us what we need to know, and it tells us that the commandments, statutes, and laws, are eternal; not the law that was added (Gal. 3:19), as mentioned. That, specifically, is not for those in Messiah now. Still, we offer up the fruit of our lips (Heb. 13:15), don't we? As an application of the spiritual in truth, which is eternal?

You are near, O Yahweh, and all Your commandments are truth. Of old I have known from Your testimonies that You have founded them forever, Psalm 119:151–153 NASB.

"Forever!" How long is that? The

core teachings would certainly apply, such as the law of tithing.

From the Beginning

Think about how Abraham obeyed Yahweh and had faith in Him as the Creator Who could perform all that He would promise to do. Yahweh was to be honored and faith was to be combined with works.

We find that by going back even further in time that Abram had faith when he went and recovered Lot from those who had captured him.

And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine; now He was a priest of El Elyon. He blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of El Elyon, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be El Elyon, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." He gave Him a tenth of all, Genesis 14:18–20 NASB.

Abram later says in Gen. 15:2, "Yahweh," besides the Title, El Elyon, which means, "Most High Mighty One." So, even Abraham knew the Proper Name of the One he served, Yahweh. We, too, are to know and are to honor Him by Name and to live according to His word.

But, the main point here is that, of the commandments, statutes, and laws performed by Abraham, tithing was known and done by him.

Tithe of Increase

Notice, also, that the tithe was of the increase, apparently from the booty won in the war, not just of produce or animals. It would have been gold and silver, as well as other things of value.

Melchizedek was a king and a priest of Yahweh, just like Yahshua. Abram saw that this Being, as a representative of Yahweh, would be able to accept a tithe to Yahweh and used for His purpose.

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

Mini Study



**Never Let It Be Said,
You Have Robbed Yahweh!**
— The tithing principle for today —

A letter reached our office recently requesting some of our mini-studies. The solicitation ended with the words, "Send them if they are free." The implication was, if they are not free then don't send them.

Our ministudies explain the teachings of Yahweh. Among this person's requests was a study on proper baptism into Yahshua's Name — a priceless truth that is central to salvation itself. Rather than "free," this information is invaluable. It is precious. Yet the nature of the request revealed how little value was actually placed on it.

Obviously, publications, tapes, and even ministerial trips don't just happen without many sharing the burden of the expense. Nothing that is produced comes without cost. Someone must bear the expense of materials, labor, and distribution even when they are provided free of charge.

'Free' Truth?

The salvation that comes through Yahshua was purchased at the highest possible price — the very life of the Son of Yahweh. Even the Word of Yahweh has come to us at the highest of costs. Countless saints down through history have suffered torture and even death to pass on the truth given ultimately to us, including the Scriptures themselves. We have the Bible today because zealous, totally devoted people paid with their very lives to preserve it!

Some do not esteem the truth of the Word as highly as others, even though their very salvation hinges on it. In contrast, Yahshua spoke of a merchant who, in dealing in pearls, found a special one and sold all he had — including all other pearls — in order to

As a side note, Scripture tells us that Salem was another name for Jerusalem:

His tabernacle is in Salem; His dwelling place also is in Zion, Psalm 76:2 NASB.

Salem is also related to Shalom, as in "peace."

Does Yahweh Care?

Is Yahweh concerned whether we tithe or not? After all, He already owns everything. Maybe this is why He calls not tithing to be a robbery:

Will a man rob Yahweh? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, "How have we robbed You?" In tithes and offerings. "You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says Yahweh of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows," Malachi 3:8-10 NASB.

Do we not store up and distribute spiritual food for the people? Does this not, in return, build up the Temple of Yahweh? Please request our free booklet, *The Temple Tenth*.

This also builds up one's own reserves, and it is a principle noted in at least one other location of Scripture:

Honor YAHWEH from your wealth and from the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled completely, and your vats will overflow with new wine, Proverbs 3:9-10 NET.

Thinking about the physical vs. the spiritual, remember when Yahshua asked Peter if he "loved" Him? After he said that "he did," Yahshua told him to feed the sheep. Is that physical or

spiritual food that's being spoken of?

He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Master, You know all things; You know that I love You." Yahshua said to him, "Feed My sheep," John 21:17 NKJV.

Scripture or Traditions

Do you notice that we're looking at Scripture from Genesis to Revelation, including the inspired New Testament letters, and not just from Torah? Some teach we need to refer to the Mishna (i.e., Talmudic oral teachings) for the details of that Torah. The details are in Scripture! Not in commentary or in so-called oral laws written down by man full

of wrong man-made traditions.

This is very important to understand, because there are those going too far into Judaism and getting lost. Just because they have the Scriptures written down doesn't mean they do what it says.

They have many mystical writings, and oral traditions that just are not what we or many Jews, for that matter, would call kosher.

Jewish Life TV recently had a whole program talking about the Cabala and how it helps give revelation to a person. It's no revelation at all and it lacks true knowledge.

Christian Commentaries

People in Christianity also are suffering from a lack of knowledge because they think they can just believe and have faith, and they make up their lives as they go, in moral relativism. Much of the Christian Commentaries promote this liberal view with some now choosing things like homosexuality, as a so-called loving thing to accept, all in the name of love.

Today's faith (i.e., traditional Judaism or Christianity), though some truth is in both, does not bring us into the true knowledge of Yahweh and His Son. If we want to know Them, then we must walk accordingly in and with Them.

This basically means that we must consider the Spiritual aspects and the literal aspects of Yahweh's word, which are appropriate in Messiah Yahshua. It means walking in the Spirit.

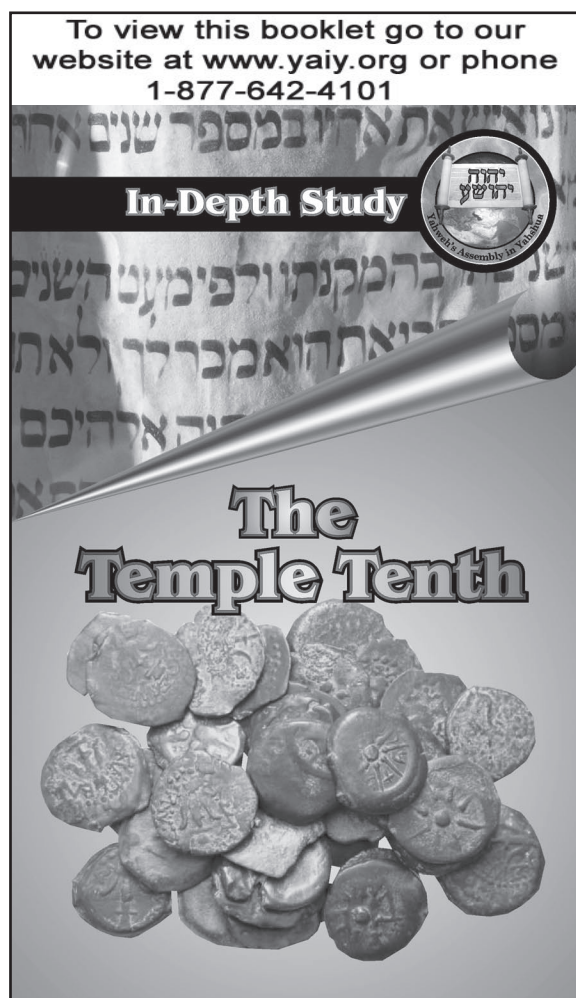
Some cannot accept this teaching, now, even as some couldn't accept it in the first century:

About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing, Hebrews 5:11 ESV.

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

In-Depth Study

The Temple Tenth



Dull of hearing what? Dull of hearing and understanding the Word of Yahweh, to be sure.

In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of Yahweh's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! (Hebrews 5:12 NIV.)

Ouch! Those who should know Scriptures don't, is what the author of Hebrews is saying. This is the dilemma we face today.

Honor Yahweh!

Concerning the law of tithing, it's a matter of simply honoring Yahweh with the fruits of one's labor. And the matter is between the individual, himself, and Yahweh. We don't police such things, but we do preach and practice such things that are applicable, things that can be applied to the work of Yahweh today.

Yahshua saw the need in His day. And, it appears to be in parallel to our own time, as we line ourselves up with the true worship of the first century and not the horde or hosts of man-made traditions found today both in Christianity and Judaism.

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Master of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest," Matthew 9:36–38 NKJV.

Are funds needed to provide for Yahweh's work? Of course, just as brethren are needed. History shows once tithes cease from coming in, so the work also suffers.

Suffering the Consequences

Nehemiah addressed this and other things coming back from Babylon when he saw that things

were not being done properly.

I also learned that the portions assigned to the Levites had not been given to them, and that all the Levites and musicians responsible for the service had gone back to their own fields. So I rebuked the officials and asked them, "Why is the house of Elohim neglected?" (Nehemiah 13:10-11a NIV.)

While we know that the work will increase with Yahweh moving the hearts and minds of the people, that time is appointed ahead of us with the great working and power of Yahweh's Spirit in the prophesied latter rain. Therefore, we wait patiently for it.

Stay the Course

In the meantime, and even at that time, we need to keep in mind what Paul said concerning the Assembly at Corinth which is applicable to all brethren today.

All things must be done properly and in an orderly manner, 1 Corinthians 14:40b NASB.

This means we need to put away false ways, and focus on Yahweh's ways that are appropriate for us today in His Spirit.

We seriously do not think the Spirit is going to cause us to walk backwards, as we see some Jews doing today at the Wailing Wall. We also don't think we need to be involved with other man-made traditions which are mostly for show, like waving oneself back and forth, like a flame, rather than actually BEING spiritual and a light to the nations.

Yahshua also warned when one gives, "don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing." That, of course, was in reference to the poor. However, it was also to teach against what the Pharisees were doing so they could be seen by everyone.

Both Before and Now

With this said, it's important to remember that tithing was done

under both the Levitical Priesthood and also the Melchizedek Orders. In both, and at different times, it was done and given to Yahweh.

The point was and is, it was and is to be done, as a basic unchanging principle. Therefore, the law of tithing we see stands as it did from the very beginning, and it is for the work of Yahweh to move forward as it builds up the spiritual Temple we see occurring today in Messiah.

The New Testament often emphasizes the spiritual, but you'll also notice it doesn't do away with basic laws and principles from heaven. Even the tabernacle on earth was patterned after the heavenly tabernacle, showing the laws thereof also had spiritual significance.

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart shall be also, Matthew 6:19 TS.

By saying this, Yahshua didn't say not to tithe, but just the opposite, as it would have come to mind for all those aware of Yahweh's law of tithing. The Gentiles coming in and learning would learn from the law of Yahweh and other areas such as Malachi and Psalms, as well as being led by the very Spirit of Yahweh.

The point is that it is not just Torah, but the whole Bible presents the concept and the law of tithing. It comes with an automatic cause and effect of both physical and spiritual blessings, when done appropriately.

In submitting fully to Yahweh's Spirit, in His truth, we'll be able to obtain our full potential. The full potential is eternal life as Spirit beings.

Elder David Brett



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of the Dead

History is replete with stories of invading armies or hoodlums robbing graves of the gold and jewelry contained within these “sanctuaries of the dead.” However, these stories are but literal truths of the exploits of profane men. There is yet another context in which these unlawful acts are demonstrated and recorded, in part, in Jeremiah chapters 8 and 9.

Pillaging of Graves

“In that day,” says Yahweh, “the enemy will break open the graves of the kings and officials of Judah, and the graves of the priests, prophets, and common people,” Jeremiah 8:1 NLT.

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown’s Commentary states, “The victorious Babylonians were about to violate the sanctuaries of the dead in search of plunder; [because] ornaments, treasures, and insignia of royalty were usually buried with kings. [But] rather, their purpose was to do the greatest dishonor to the dead.”

The commentary uses the phrase, “sanctuaries of the dead,” literally, to mean graves. However, from a figurative point of view, just “who are the dead?” I propose for your consideration that the dead are those who profess to know, but do not know Yahweh; who do not abide in the Law of Yahweh nor does the Law abide in their hearts and minds; and to those who worship falsely, bowing down to idols and creating false days and seasons of worship. The dead are those

who obey false teachers who say they know the Law but teach it as dead, and the dead are those who outright deny the Law given to Moses by Yahweh. These are the dead.

Sanctuary of the Dead

And, where do these dead take refuge? Where is their sanctuary? Their sanctuary is in the church of comfort. Their sanctuary is in the church of peace. Their sanctuary is in the teachings of man. Their sanctuary is in the ecclesia of Satan, where false laws are created, promulgated and kept alive by preaching false doctrine and breathing false truths into the ears of those who cannot see their treacherous devices. This is where the dead go for sanctification. And, this is where the dead are exploited by profane men, preaching lies for the specific purpose of monetary gain. They are televangelist grave-robbers from Babylon.

Back to Jeremiah 8:1-2a NLT.

“In that day,” says Yahweh, “the enemy will break open the graves of the kings and officials of Judah, and the graves of the priests, prophets, and common people. They will dig out their bones and spread them out on the ground before the sun, moon, and stars -- the [idols] My people have loved, served, and worshiped.”

What Is Your Sign?

SUNday worship, SUNrise services, astrology

[which is “preached” on the front pages of newspapers, on the home pages of most, if not all the major internet companies] and fortune telling. One might be asked, “What’s your sign?” – MY sign? My sign is the Sabbath of Yahweh!

The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. It will be a SIGN between Me and the Israelites forever, for in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He abstained from work and rested, Exodus 31:16-17 NIV.

Another SIGN is the “Sign of Jonah”: representing the three days and three nights that Yahshua was in the grave, being lifted up by the right hand of Yahweh on the Day of which He is The Sovereign, on the end of the Sabbath of Yahweh, the 7th Day which Yahweh sanctified forever – THAT’s my sign.

Listen To Yahweh

Their bones will not be gathered up again or buried but will be scattered on the ground like dung. And the people of this evil nation who survive will wish to die rather than live where I will send them. I, Yahweh Sabaoth [Yahweh of Hosts], have spoken! "Jeremiah, say to the people, 'This is what Yahweh says: When people fall down, don't [or, shouldn't] they get up again? When they start down the wrong road and discover their mistake, don't [or, shouldn't] they turn back? Then why do these people keep going along their self-destructive path, refusing to turn back, even though I have warned them? I listen to their conversations, and what do I hear? Is anyone sorry for sin? Does anyone say, "What a terrible thing I have done?" No! All are running down the path of sin as swiftly as a horse rushing into battle! The stork knows the time of her migration, as do the turtledove, the swallow, and the crane. They all return at the proper time [or, 'appointed

times' in the KJV] *each year. But not My people! They do not know what Yahweh requires of them,"* Jer. 8:2b-7 NLT.

Do we know what Yahweh requires of us? Will we return to Yahweh – and at the appointed times each year?

Consequences For Rejecting Yahweh

"How can you say, 'We are wise because we have the law of Yahweh,' when your teachers have twisted it so badly? These wise teachers will be shamed by exile for their sin, for they have rejected the word of Yahweh. Are they so wise after all? I will give their wives and their farms to others. From the least to the greatest, they trick others to get what does not belong to them. Yes, even My prophets

[those who interpret Scripture] and priests [those responsible to teach truth] are like that. They offer superficial treatments for My people's mortal wound. They give assurances of peace when all is war. Are they ashamed when they do these disgusting things? No, not at all -- they don't even blush! Therefore, they will lie among the slaughtered. They will be humbled when they are punished," says Yahweh. *"I will take away their rich harvests of figs and grapes. Their fruit trees will all die. All the good things I prepared for them will soon be gone. I, Yahweh, have spoken! Then the people will say, 'Why should we wait here to die? Come, let's go to the fortified cities to die there. For Yahweh our Elohim has decreed our destruction and has given us a cup of poison to drink because we sinned against Yahweh. We hoped for peace, but no peace came. We hoped for a time of healing, but found only terror. The snorting of the enemies' warhorses can be heard all the way from the land of Dan in the north! The whole land trembles at the approach of the terrible army, for it is coming to devour the land and everything in it--cities and people alike. I will send these enemy troops among you like poisonous snakes you cannot charm,"* says Yahweh. *"No matter what you do, they will bite you, and you will die,"* Jer. 8:8-17 NLT.

Who are these enemy troops? The word “troop” in Hebrew is spelled, *gimel dalet*, and is pronounced, in Hebrew, “god.” “Troops” refers to false gods, false worship, false deities and false prosperity: the god of luck – you know, “good luck,” is lawless. The word is translated by the New Living Bible as “enemy troops,” but in most other versions as “serpents,” from the Hebrew word *nachash*, which means to hiss or whisper a magic spell. It is a word, translated by the writers of the KJV as “divine,” “enchanter” or the use of

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Mini Study



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?

“enchantment.” I remember a time when my wife and I were speaking to the wife of an Hasidic Jew, a man who was authorized to certify kosher foods. We told her that we were disgruntled with the teachings of the church we belonged to. She interrupted and asked, “Do you mean that you became ‘disenchanted’?” We laughed in response to her insight into the spiritual nature of our experience.

False Actions Disturb Yahweh

“My grief is beyond healing; My heart is broken. Listen to the weeping of My people; it can be heard all across the land. ‘Has Yahweh abandoned Jerusalem?’ The people ask, ‘Is her King no longer there?’ Oh, why have they angered Me with their carved idols and worthless gods?” asks Yahweh. “The harvest is finished, and the summer is gone, the people cry, ‘yet we are not saved!’ I weep for the hurt of My people. I am stunned and silent, mute with grief. Is there no medicine in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why is there no healing for the wounds of My people?” (Jer. 8:18-22 NLT.)

What is this “balm” medicine, in Gilead? Who is this physician? Is He not the One Who came to reveal the Light of Truth? The One Who healed the physical wounds of the people as evidence of His Sovereignty over this world? The One Who spoke the Truth and put the lies of the false leaders to shame? Is it not He Who, as a Perfect Offering for our sins, gave His life that we might live eternally? Is He not the Suffering Servant Who one day, “Today,” will come as our Conquering King? Is He not the One Who loves us and wants us to know Him through obedience to His Word? Is He not Yahshua, the Son of Yahweh the Father, the Anointed of Yahweh, Set-apart for the healing of our wounds; for the healing of our unrighteousness

and our willfulness? Is He not the One Who said, “Come follow Me, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light”?

Jeremiah Speaks

Oh, that my eyes were a fountain of tears; I would weep forever! I would sob day and night for all my people who have been slaughtered. Oh, that I could go away and forget them and live in a shack in the desert, for they are all adulterous and treacherous. [Now, Yahweh joins in on this dialogue] “My people bend their tongues like bows to shoot lies. They refuse to stand up for the truth. And they only go from bad to worse! They care nothing for Me,” says Yahweh. “Beware of your neighbor! Beware of your brother! They all take advantage of one another and spread their slanderous lies. They all fool and defraud each

other; no one tells the truth. With practiced tongues they tell lies; they wear themselves out with all their sinning. They pile lie upon lie and utterly refuse to come to Me,” says Yahweh. Therefore, Yahweh Sabaoth says, “See, I will melt them in a crucible and test them like metal. What else can I do with them? For their tongues aim lies like poisoned arrows. They promise peace to their neighbors while planning to kill them. Should I not punish them for this?” asks Yahweh. “Should I not avenge Myself against a nation such as this? I will weep for the mountains and wail for the desert pastures. For they are desolate and empty of life; the lowing of cattle is heard no more; the birds and wild animals all have fled. I will make Jerusalem into a heap of ruins,” says Yahweh. “It will be a place haunted by jackals. The towns of Judah will be ghost towns, with no one living in them.” Who is wise enough to understand all this? Who has been instructed by Yahweh and can explain it to others? Why has the land been ruined so completely that no one even dares to travel through it? Yahweh replies, “This has happened because My people have abandoned the instructions I gave them; they have refused to obey My Law. Instead, they have stubbornly followed their own desires and worshiped the images of Baal [or, if you can hear it, “the statues of the lord”], as their ancestors taught them. So now, listen to what Yahweh Sabaoth, the Elohim of Israel, says: Look! I will feed them with bitterness and give them poison to drink. I will scatter them around the world, and they will be strangers in distant lands. Their enemies will chase them with the sword until I have destroyed them completely.” Jer. 9:1-16.

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Mini-Study



Body, Soul & Spirit

Man is a complex entity; a physical body composed of 15 major chemical elements. Seventy-two percent of this body is oxygen. These necessary elements are found in the soil in various compounds. Growing plants utilize these compounds, which are assimilated into man's body through diet. Some plants are eaten by animals, which in turn end up in man's diet.

Upon death, man's body decomposes into the basic elements and returns to the earth. “Dust thou art and to dust shalt thou return” Genesis 3:19. “Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust” Psalm 104:29.

One of the most widely held teachings of churchianity today is that within man's body lives a soul. This soul is the ethereal part of man that leaves the body at death and goes to heaven or to hell, or (in the beliefs of Catholicism) to purgatory. The soul is thought to be the “real you” inside the physical body. The soul is assumed to be an immortal spirit that can never die. This runs counter to the plain teaching of Scripture which clearly states, “The soul that sinneth it shall die” Ezekiel 18:4; repeated in verse 20.

Satan, the Father of Lies

This most widely held fallacy originated when Satan deceived Eve in the Garden of Eden. Thus Satan is called the first liar in Scripture. Yahshua said he was a liar and the father of lies, John 8:44. “Thou shalt not surely die,” Satan told Eve, “For Elohim does know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and

Whom Is Being Spoken Of?

Are we not Israel? Do we not, as a nation, carry around the Scrip-

tures of the Israelites; of the Jews; of the Hebrews? Do we not worship the Elohim of Israel; of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Do we not adore the Savior of the Tribe of Judah? And, do we not have enemies? Do they not want to destroy us? Then, LISTEN to what the Creator of the Universe is telling us! For, He says He will chase us with the sword until He has destroyed us completely! ... Why?

This is what Yahweh Sabaoth says: "Think about what is going on! Call for the mourners to come. Quick! Begin your weeping! Let the tears flow from your eyes. Hear the people of Jerusalem ... [and who are the "people of Jerusalem," except the ones awaiting the New Jerusalem?] (Hear the people of Jerusalem) crying in despair, 'We are ruined! Disaster has come upon us! We must leave our land, because our homes have been torn down.' Listen, you women, to the words of Yahweh; open your ears to what He has to say. Teach your daughters to wail; teach one another how to lament. For death has crept in through our windows and has entered our mansions," Jer. 9:17-21a.

Who is Death, if not Satan himself, whose mission is to lead us away from Yahweh?

This is what Yahweh says: "Let not the wise man gloat in his wisdom, or the mighty man in his might, or the rich man in his riches. Let them boast in this alone: that they truly know Me and understand that I am Yahweh Who is just and righteous, Whose love is unfailing, and that I delight in these things. I, Yahweh, have spoken! A time is coming," says Yahweh, "when I will punish all those who are circumcised in body but not in spirit -- the Egyptians, Edomites, Ammonites, Moabites, the people who live in distant places, and yes, even the people of Judah. Like all these pagan nations, the people [or, the "House"] of Israel also have un-

circumcised hearts," Jer. 9:23-26 NLT.

The King James Version translates these last two verses as:

Behold, the days come, saith Yahweh, that I will punish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised; Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart.

Let The Scriptures Speak!

Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness, Luke 11:35 KJV.

There is a way that seems right to man, but the end thereof are

the ways of death, Proverbs 16:25 KJV.

Before every man there lies a wide and pleasant road he thinks is right, but it ends in death, Proverbs 16:25 TLB.

Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him, Proverbs 26:12 NASU.

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! (Isaiah 5:20-21 KJV.)

And Yahshua said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind." Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?" Yahshua said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains," John 9:39-41 NKJV.

In other words, Yahshua came to "comfort the afflicted – and afflict the comfortable." If you claim to know the truth, but live outside of the Law, then you cannot see the truth.

Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring Him in?" "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared. "You mean He has deceived you also?" the Pharisees retorted. "Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in Him? No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law [What law is he referring to, unknowingly? Their law!] - there is a curse on them." Nicodemus, who had gone to Yahshua earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, "Does our law condemn anyone without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?" They replied, "Are you

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Mini - Study



Scriptural Age of Accountability

Is child baptism scriptural? At what age does the Bible consider one an adult, and a candidate for immersion?

What is the minimum age for baptism into Yahshua's Name? The Apostle Peter clearly showed that one should be old enough to repent.

When the Jews were convicted of their sin, they asked what they should do. Peter responded in Acts 2:38, "Repent and be immersed every one of you in the Name of Yahshua the Messiah for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Obviously a person should be old enough to understand repentance before being baptized.

What does the Bible mean by "repent?" Briefly, to turn completely from our wicked ways, stop doing those things that Yahweh condemns, and obediently follow in the footsteps of Yahshua. We are to be totally broken up over our past sins and vow not to repeat those things we know are wrong and sinful. When we do sin, we are to confess our sin and ask forgiveness through Yahshua.

Jews Hold Bar-Mitzvah at 13

Luke chapter 2 relates how Yahshua was left behind by His parents in Jerusalem following the Passover and the days of Unleavened Bread. He was about age 13, and even today Jewish boys have a ceremony known as "Bar-Mitzvah," meaning *Son of the Covenant*, when they are accepted into the congregation. Is 13 the age of accountability, the age when one can with complete understanding repent and then be immersed?

from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee," John 7:45-52 NIV.

But if you bear the name "Jew" [#3064, from #3034 to revere or worship, and, of course, to worship Yahweh] and rely upon the Law and boast in Elohim, and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth, you, therefore, who teach another, [why] do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, [why] do you steal? You who say that one should not commit adultery, [why] do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, [why] do you rob temples? You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, [why] do you dishonor Yahweh? For "THE NAME OF YAHWEH IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written. For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? And he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Law, will he not judge you who though having the letter of the Law and circumcision are a transgressor of the Law? For he is not a Jew [a worshipper of Yahweh] who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a "worshipper of Yahweh" who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from Elohim, Romans 2:17-29 NASU.

What Are The Sanctuaries Of The Dead?

Now, I ask you, is Paul abandoning the Law of Yahweh with his words, in verse 29, "But he is a 'worshipper of Yahweh' who is one ... by the Spirit [and] not by the letter?" May Yahweh forbid that notion! Paul is pointing out that, unless the Law is in one's heart, they will not be able to carry out the words of the Law. He is pointing out that the people of the world laugh and scorn those who profess to be believers but who are as wicked in their lies as those of the world. Paul is essentially calling these professed believers hypocrites. I was reading the words of an atheist the other day ... it's kind of funny, because atheists are able to criticize the contradictions of contemporary religions by comparing what the Bible actually says to what is

taught in these houses of worship; in these sanctuaries of the dead. However, what atheists lack in their criticism is the motivation to seek the true meanings contained within Scripture. They are so caught up in proving how wrong the church is, that they do not consider that, with a correct reading of Scripture, there ARE no contradictions. And, they are probably not familiar with groups such as ours who understand those hypocrisies and believe in BOTH the Messiah AND the Law.

Also I scattered them among the nations and they were dispersed throughout the lands. According to their ways and their deeds I judged them. When they came to the nations where they went, they profaned My holy name, because it was said of them, "These are the people of Yahweh; yet they have come out of His land." But I had concern ["chamal" to commiserate or to have pity] for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went, Ezekiel 36:19-21 NASU.

Then what's the advantage of being a Jew? Is there any value in the Jewish ceremony of circumcision? Yes, being a Jew has many advantages. First of all, the Jews were entrusted with the whole revelation of Yahweh. True, some of them were unfaithful; but just because they broke their promises, does that mean Yahweh will break His promises? Of course not! Though everyone else in the world is a liar, Yahweh is true. As the Scriptures say, "He will be proved right in what He says, and [this is the part I like] He will win His case in court," Romans 3:1-4 NLT.

May Yahweh not allow the Tempter to deceive us into being right in the sight of men in order to obtain comfort – but to, at all times, be right in the eyes of Yahweh. Hal-leluYah!

Elder John Fisher

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Mini Study



Do You Have an Immortal Soul?

Churchianity in general teaches that the real you, the real person, is living in a fleshly, temporal body. Our fleshly body is likened to a container of sorts that is embalmed at death and buried in the ground while the real person, the real you, is invisible, having wafted off to heaven – or maybe to an ever-burning hellfire. This ethereal something is referred to as the "soul".

"His soul has departed from the body and is now in heaven with the Lord" is a popular summation of death at many funerals. Often the eulogy alludes to whatever attributes of the deceased are suitable, and concludes by noting that the dead person is actually more alive than ever without the body. The person's body is about to be put in the ground to await the resurrection to heaven, but the soul is already there according to the popular belief.

No Immortal Soul in Scripture

Yahweh's Word presents an entirely different picture of the "soul." Try to find the expression "immortal soul" anywhere in the Bible. It is not there! Nowhere does the Bible declare that the soul or body is naturally immortal. In fact, the opposite is true. Souls can be destroyed. The body is not the soul, because Yahshua said Yahweh is able to destroy both body AND soul:

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," Matt. 10:28.

What Is The Creator's Will For YOU?

Sincere people try to obey Yahweh's will, but few people really understand what Yahweh's will is and most don't even know whose will they are obeying. It is impossible for a mind befuddled by belief in false doctrines to understand Yahweh's will. Is the reason so many prayers go unanswered because people do not pray from the heart, asking, "Thy will be done"?

Instead, confusion about what Yahweh's will is results in a prayer that is a rationalization of, "My will be done."

When Yahshua was asked how to pray, He gave the example that begins, "Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven," Matt. 6:9-10.

What Is Yahweh's Will?

So what is Yahweh's will? Is knowing Yahweh's will necessary for salvation? Scriptures are able to make us wise for salvation, 2 Timothy 3:15. Therefore, it is necessary to know Yahweh's will in order to be saved; the promise is that His Word will tell us what we need to know.

The first thing to understand is that we must pray THY will be done, not MY will be done! Anyone who can read can know the elements of Yahweh's will, but it takes His grace (the influence of His Holy Spirit) to open the mind to understanding and give the moral courage to exercise the self-restraint needed to overcome temptations to disobey.

In Isaiah 53:10 we read:

Yet it pleased Yahweh to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You shall make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of Yahweh shall prosper in His hand.

Yahshua came to do His Father's will and pay the penalty for sins. Yahweh has willed that the penalty for sin is death. That is, the second death:

Behold, all souls are Mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is Mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die, Ezekiel 18:4.

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of Yahweh and of Messiah, and shall reign with Him a thousand years, Revelation 20:6.

Now, we know that:

Sin is transgression of the law, 1 John 3:4.

Therefore, because salvation means being saved from death, sin must be disobedience of Yahweh's will as delineated in His law. Yahshua is without sin, Hebrews 4:15; hence, doing Yahweh's will meant He obeyed the law as well as paid the penalty for our transgressions of the law,

For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of Yahweh in Him, 2 Corinthians 5:21.

In Romans 8:20 we read:

For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who has subjected the same in hope.

It is Yahweh's will that, as creatures of His creation, we are in bondage to corruptible flesh.

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak, Matthew 26:41.

It is very true that the flesh is weak and by its own strength unable to resist temptations to sin.

Yahweh has provided a way out:

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, Acts 4:12.

It is Yahweh's will that Yahshua the Messiah is our only hope for release from bondage unto salvation. That hope is grounded in the fulfillment of Yahshua's promise to give Yahweh's Holy Spirit to those who obey Him,

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

(See also Mark 16:16; John 8:24; Acts 5:32, 16:31; Galatians 2:16, 3:11.)

Do Yahweh's Will

Those who read these Scriptures and conclude that all they need to do to obey Yahweh's will is believe, have faith, and be baptized, do not understand Yahweh's will.

You believe that there is one Elohim; you do well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But will you know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? (James

2:19-20.)

People read these verses and react as if to think, "Okay, so demons believe, but they don't have faith and aren't baptized; but I am saved because I believe, have faith, and have been baptized.

Frustrations resulting in unanswered prayers often lead to leaving it up to circumstances to determine Yahweh's will. The attitude becomes, "If Yahweh wants it to happen, it will happen or, if Yahweh wants me to do something, He will make it possible for me to do it."

This is a very limited way of determining Yahweh's will because it is limited only to a particular situation or event. But it is a totally invalid way of determining Yahweh's will for our lives.

Some situations can and do arise occasionally, however, that require an immediate response. At those times we have no recourse but to leave it up to circumstances to determine Yahweh's will for the occasion.

Even in such situations, though, circumstances can often be unwittingly influenced to favor an individual's will rather than Yahweh's.

As for prayerful study, belief in false doctrines can and most often does misinterpret Scriptures in ways that favor man's will rather than Yahweh's.

Let's look at Matthew 7:21-23:

Not every one that says unto Me, "Rabbi, Rabbi," shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, "Rabbi, Rabbi, have we not prophesied in Your Name? And in Your Name have cast out devils? And in Your Name done many wonderful works?" And then will I profess unto them, "I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work iniquity."

Doesn't "enter the kingdom" mean salvation? "Faith alone" doctrines are clearly contradictions of these Scriptures. Here, Yahshua

warns that people can have faith and even perform miracles in His Name, but if they don't do Yahweh's will, they will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Understand Yahweh's Will

The Bible calls anything that is contrary to Yahweh's will wicked and lawlessness.

As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity. And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who has ears to hear, let him hear, Matthew 13:40-43.

Who are the righteous who will shine like the sun in the Kingdom? Aren't they the people who have done Yahweh's will in this life? Who will do the weeping and gnashing of teeth? Won't it be those who believed they were doing Yahweh's will because they performed counterfeit miracles (2 Thess. 2:9-12) but in their heart rejected truth and delighted in wickedness?

Living Yahweh's Will

People not only can know Yahweh's will, but they can also test it and prove it by living in obedience to His law. This really takes faith and it is the only way Yahweh can be put to the test without displeasing Him.

Those who live according to the desires of their sinful nature are either deliberately rejecting obedience to what they know is right, or are deceived into believing they are obeying Yahweh's will.

Allowing the influences and pressures of the world to control us quenches the influence of Yah-

weh's Spirit (His grace) and will cost us the spiritual strength and understanding to overcome the world, the desires of our sinful natures.

Grace be to you and peace from Yahweh the Father, and from our Savior Yahshua the Messiah, Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of Elohim and our Father, Galatians 1:3-4.

The purpose of Yahshua's sacrifice was to rescue us from the influence of Satan's spirit of disobedience, Romans 8:1 and Ephesians 2:2.

For this is the will of Elohim, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor; not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not Elohim; that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Master is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For Elohim has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despises, despises not man, but Elohim, Who has also given unto us His Holy Spirit... Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loves another has fulfilled the law. For this, "You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, you shall not covet," and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love works no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 and Romans 13:8-10.

Yahweh wants His people to be holy so He gives them His Holy Spirit to help them overcome the spirit of disobedience. Holiness is a "from the heart" reverence and

obedience that proves sincerity, 1 John 5:3. There is a close correlation between knowing Yahweh's will and obeying it.

Know Yahweh's Will

Regardless of how sincere or zealous people are, they must know what Yahweh's will is before they can obey it. Knowing Yahweh's will on an elementary level is not difficult to learn. Many chapters in the New Testament such as Romans 12, 13, and 14 tell us plainly what it is.

Elohim is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth, John 4:24.

Many people know the elements of Yahweh's will on the elementary level and are willing to live by them, but they fail to realize that if they quench the Spirit's lead in growing beyond the elementary level of understanding they may lose the spiritual power to obey even the elementary requirements of the law, Hebrews 5:13-14.

Yahweh's Will Summarized

The Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 are a summary of Yahweh's will as set forth in Old Covenant law. They are eternal, unchangeable, and will never be added to, reduced or repealed.

All New Testament commandments and statements about the conduct Yahweh demands of His people emphasize and explain the spiritual application of these laws.

Transgressions of the law, even by His own people, are called wickedness in the New Covenant, 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 and 6:8-11.

Yahshua did not do away with the law or Yahweh's will that His people obey the law. The change in the law, Hebrews 7:12, was in the laws that foreshadowed Yahshua's sacrifice, His priesthood, and the Old Covenant temple cultus.

Read Hebrews 6:20; 1 Corin-

thians 3:16-17; Romans 12:1; Hebrews 13:15-16 and 1 Peter 2:5:

Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Yahshua, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec...Know you not that you are the temple of Elohim, and that the Spirit of Elohim dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of Elohim, him shall Elohim destroy; for the temple you are. ...I beseech you therefore, brethren, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto Elohim, which is your reasonable service....By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to Elohim continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices Elohim is well pleased... You also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to Elohim by Yahshua the Messiah.

These scriptures tell us how the law was changed and how it now applies in the New Covenant. In Matthew 5 we are told Yahshua's explanation of the spiritual intent of the moral law and its application in the New Covenant.

Righteousness is obedience to Yahweh's laws! How could He expect the righteousness of New Covenant people to exceed that of the Pharisees, if Yahshua removed the requirement to obey Yahweh's laws?

We now turn our attention to a review of the Ten Commandments as given in Exodus 20. Let's see just how these laws are being broken today.

Only One Elohim

The First Commandment says: *I am Yahweh your Elohim, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other elohim before Me,* Exodus 20:2-3.

Do people in churchianity wor-

ship other elohim? They don't believe they do, but why do they worship on pagan days and in pagan ways which Yahweh says He hates, Deuteronomy 12:31? Why do most people desire wealth, power, fame, and sensual pleasures rather than righteousness and knowledge of Yahweh?

No Graven Image

The Second Commandment says:

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I, Yahweh thy Elohim, am a jealous El, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, Exodus 20:4-5.

People in Bible-based worship don't bow down to graven images today, yet more transgress this commandment than the commandment to keep the Sabbath. Not only that, but they also feel less guilty about transgressing this one commandment than any of the nine others. This may be because most people aren't aware of the fact that they worship an image.

Most thinking involves mental pictures and these mental images are mental images of what we imagine Yahweh and His Messiah are like. We tend to worship our image and not many will worship an image of a Mighty One Who demands obedience to laws!

Most worship in the image of one they believe has provided a way for them to ignore our Creator's will and still be saved.

Children aren't sacrificed to idols today, but they are the victims of the consequences of their forefathers' sins. They compound these consequences by their own continuance in sin. When children reach the age of accountability, Yahweh

considers them old enough to understand the reasons for their troubles and to turn from repeating the errors of their fathers. Yahweh says if they do this they will live! The trouble is that children are not being taught the way of Spirit and Truth.

Parents will, no doubt, answer for this fact, but a child that is old enough to study for himself to see and understand right from wrong will die in his sins. Few parents seek Biblical solutions to problems with their children and most of the few that do seek Bible answers do not understand how they are teaching children to continue transgressing Yahweh's laws.

It seems many parents expect schools to discipline their children and when they have problems with children who do not learn discipline in school they turn to social workers and secular counselors for answers. Is it any wonder that more and more young people become involved with alcohol, drugs, and all sorts of immoral and antisocial conduct?

Juvenile courts and correctional institutions are swamped with juvenile delinquents. Courts and prisons are overwhelmed with adults who were never taught Bible truths in their childhood and youth. It has never been explained to them that most of their problems would never have confronted them in the first place and could yet be solved if they would just obey Yahweh's laws.

The insidious thing about worship is that it leads to believing you don't have to do anything to be like Elohim because you are like Him. People misunderstand Psalm 82:6 and John 10:34. In these verses, "elohim" in the Psalm and "theos" in John refer to human rulers and judges who, having power and authority over people, are in a sense mighty ones. Psalm 82:7 and the fact that Yahshua was talking to the Pharisees proves that the ref-

erence is to human beings and not to Sublime Beings.

Do such verses cause some people to visualize Yahweh in their own image and think because Yahweh is like them they can manipulate Him as they do other people? Paul warns us in 1 Corinthians 10:14 to flee from idolatry. This warning has to apply to mental imaging.

Worshiping a mental image is the prevailing form of idolatry today. Because any form of idol worship opens the door to demon possession, it is as dangerous as worshiping graven images.

Satan and his demons are as active today as they were in Bible times, but they have to be more subtle. Gross, overt manifestations of witchcraft, divination, sorcery, astrology, and magic don't achieve the same results with educated people as with the ignorant and superstitious.

Mental imaging deceives people into following demonic spirits of disobedience, while believing they are following Yahweh's Holy Spirit and doing His will.

Visualization has been the primary means of contacting the spirit world since ancient times. It has been used by medicine men, witch doctors, sorcerers, and magicians to gain power and influence in all ages.

Today, people are being taught to visualize the Creator and His Son as an aid to faith. They are told it doesn't make any difference what you think these spirit Beings look like. All that matters is that mental pictures help in feeling their spiritual presence. So, "picture them any way that works for you!"

Why would the making of mental images be any more acceptable to Yahweh than making graven images of metal, stone or wood when they both serve the same purpose and pose the same danger to True Worship? The danger is, as mentioned, opening the mind to demon

possession.

Today, educated people pooh-pooh the idea of demon possession. They think of it as an unscientific attempt to explain mental and emotional disorders. It can't be denied that the scientific investigation of mental disorders has achieved a great deal of good in dealing with the carnal nature, but it has ignored and avoided the spiritual needs of human nature.

If what the Bible tells about Yahweh, the Messiah, and angels is true, then what it says about Satan, evil spirits, and demon possession must also be true. Causing people to believe he doesn't exist is Satan's way of deceiving educated people into dismissing the Bible as the simplistic imaginations of ancient writers.

Propounding the ancient concepts of witch doctors and medicine men in modern scientific-sounding jargon has caused many Bible students to disbelieve and doubt much of what the Bible says.

Fewer people are interested in obedience to Almighty Yahweh today. Since our culture left its Bible-based foundation, it has been floundering in a morass of humanistic and relativistic notions of right and wrong that have had devastating consequences on society.

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of Yahweh; having a form of righteousness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away, 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

In the last days people will be living in accord with their sinful natures. What spirit will be influencing them? Yahweh's or Satan's?

Can satanic influence be anything other than a kind of demon possession?

A prominent Christian preacher recently said that words like sin and guilt, which Fundamentalists have always used negatively, must be "positivized." How can that which is contrary to Yahweh's laws be made positive? Would the Holy Spirit influence a preacher of righteousness to make such a statement?

Why do people believe that a demon-possessed person must act only like a wild man? Could Satan's ministers appear as "angels of light" if this were true?

The adversary never ceases in efforts to regain control of an individual who has become indwelt by Yahweh's Holy Spirit. We are not defenseless, though. James 4:7 assures us that Satan will flee from us if we resist him. Romans 8:35 implies that nothing can separate us from Yahweh's love. Nothing, that is, except willful resistance to Yahweh's Spirit.

Paul indicated in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 that a person can willfully separate himself from Yahweh's love and spiritual influence. People embrace the statement in Romans 8:35 wholeheartedly, but refuse to consider the result of quenching Yahweh's Spirit. This is the danger of breaking the Second Commandment. It leads to resisting Yahweh's Holy Spirit and disobeying His will.

Proper Use of Yahweh's Name

The Third Commandment reads, *Thou shalt not take the name of Yahweh your Elohim in vain; for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain*, Exodus 20:7.

The KJV of this verse translated the Hebrew word *shawv* (Strong's 7723) as "vain." The NIV translated *shawv* as "misuse and misuses."

In Malachi 3:14, the KJV translated *shawv* as "vain," while the NIV's translation is "futile." In both

the KJV and the NIV of Leviticus 22:32 the word "profane" is translated from *chalal* (Strong's No. 2490) which, like *shawv*, has several meanings, one of which is "misuse."

Taking Yahweh's Name in vain or profaning His Name is misusing it. Misusing Yahweh's Name involves a lot more than just using it in profanity. That is only one way of misusing it.

Isaiah 52:5-6 tells us,

Now therefore, what have I here, says Yahweh, that My people is taken away for nought? They that rule over them make them to howl, says Yahweh and My Name continually every day is blasphemed. Therefore My people shall know My Name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am He that does speak: behold, it is I.

In the last days Yahweh's people will know His Name and will not profane it by misusing it. Neither will they cast it down as useless (that is one of the meanings of *chalal*) or mock it and blaspheme it by substituting the names of the Baals for it and willfully disobeying His laws.

Isaiah 65:11 and 15 tell us that the people who forsake Yahweh and His kingdom (symbolized by mountain) will leave their name for a curse for Yahweh's chosen ones.

Who are Yahweh's chosen ones? They must be people who do not profane His Name and knowingly transgress the laws that will govern His kingdom.

Who will leave their name as a curse? Yahweh isn't talking about people of pagan religions. He is talking about covenant people who forget His Name and disobey His laws and worship in the names of the Baals.

Those who would be among the chosen must remember that calling upon the only Name given under heaven whereby we can be saved but knowingly continuing in sin is

profaning His Name in a way that is worse than using it in vile language!

Remember the Sabbath

The Fourth Commandment reads,

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

The cliché "time is money" is not literally true, but we understand its figurative meaning. Yahweh is timeless, but He has measured our lives by time and He is very much concerned with how we spend the time He has allotted to us.

The more we value something the more time we will spend on it, even if it means neglecting something considered of lesser value. Does this explain why neglecting the Sabbath is displeasing to Yahweh?

If you turn away your foot from the sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of Yahweh, honorable; and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words: then shall you delight yourself in Yahweh; and I will cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father: for the mouth of Yahweh hath spoken it, Isaiah 58:13-14.

The pace of time hasn't changed, but the pace of life has. Some boast about living in the fast lane! Yet, in spite of the hectic pace, our system

of production and commerce gives us more leisure time in a week than even the wealthy could indulge in during Biblical times.

Too many participate in leisure activities on the day of rest without a thought about how Yahweh says we should observe His Sabbath.

The parking lots and streets around many catholic churches are now filled on Saturday nights. The reason so many of these churches are conducting religious services on Saturday evenings is so that Catholics who want all day Sunday for other activities will not have to feel guilty about missing Sunday morning services.

One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, Romans 14:5.

Does Romans 14:5 mean that New Covenant people have the right to choose for themselves which day they will honor? If it does, then Yahweh will not be displeased with churches that switch worship to other days in order to accommodate those who want a full two-day weekend in which to enjoy activities they think are more pleasurable.

This attitude annuls the 4th Commandment and ignores Isaiah 58:13-14, which says that the Sabbath is Yahweh's Holy Day and we are not to honor it by going our own way.

Catholic scholars and theologians admit that there is no Biblical authority for their changing the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day of the week, but they insist the church has been given the authority not just to change the day of worship but also to annul all Old Testament Holy Days and declare any day holy it chooses to honor.

Protestants believe their doctrines are derived solely from Scriptures, but they display their misunderstanding by not even

questioning the change in the times and the law, Daniel 7:25.

It seems that neither religious leaders nor lay people understand the difference between a holy day and a holiday. If they did, would there be so much tolerance and accommodation by the churches of so much irreverent secular activity by the laity on days the churches call holy days?

Isaiah 56:2 tells us how we are to treat Yahweh's Sabbath.

Blessed is the man that does this, and the son of man that lays hold on it, that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and keeps his hands from doing any evil.

Yahshua and His apostles did not desecrate Yahweh's Holy Days. Why do people think they have the right to do so? It seems that two misconceptions have contributed the most to changing the days. They are:

- Belief that the Messiah's resurrection occurred on Sunday morning, and
- Belief that grace means nothing more than unmerited forgiveness of sins.

These two beliefs lead to the thinking that says, "We are not under the law, but under grace," meaning the law doesn't apply in the New Covenant. In their thinking, the law was given to Old Covenant Israel as a rule of life and blessings were promised only if the rules were obeyed.

They believe that in the New Covenant all sin is forgiven and blessings are promised only for belief and faith in the Messiah. They don't see any specific command to keep the Sabbath or any other day holy; therefore, they feel free to choose to commemorate the Messiah's resurrection once a year on Easter Sunday morning and once a week on the first day of the week. They don't want to commemorate His death on Passover, or the six days of creation on the Sabbath.

But why are all the days they

choose to call holy the same days of the year pagan religions of Babylon and Rome regard as holy?

Deuteronomy 30:19 tells us we are to make a choice:

I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both you and your seed may live.

People are free to choose in both Covenants, but the choice is between life and death and not simply between observing days Yahweh says are holy and days the pagans regarded as holy.

Honor Your Parents

The Fifth Commandment says:

Honor your father and your mother: that your days may be long upon the land which Yahweh your Elohim giveth you, Exodus 20:12.

Many commentators mention the centrality of this commandment by pointing to its pivotal position between our relationship with the heavenly Father and our relationship with people.

A child's love for parents and a parent's love for the child does not have to be learned; it is inborn. The Bible tells us Yahweh, the Heavenly Father, loves us, but we have to learn to love Him and learn how to honor and express our love for Him.

If children do not learn to honor their parents while growing up, they may never learn to honor anybody or anything after they leave home. Of course, parents must be worthy of respect and honor and if they obey Yahweh's commandment as best they know how, they will be. This is where most of the problems with children begin.

Many parents set bad examples for their growing children, by deliberately doing things they know violate the commandments. Obedience to His commandments is how we love and honor Yahweh, 1 John 5:3. The Bible makes it plain to see,

for those who will open their eyes to see, that if Yahweh's earthly children do not show their love for Him by learning to honor Him through obedience to His commandments in this life, they will not receive eternal life in His kingdom.

It is true, as the Bible tells us, that Yahweh so loves us that He gave His only Son to die for us. It is also true that the Son's death pays the penalty for PAST SINS, but the influence of the indwelling Holy Spirit given at baptism in the Son's Name will help us overcome future temptations to sin.

Yahshua said unto him, You shall love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets, Matthew 22:37-40.

And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments... For this is the love of Yah, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous, 1 John 2:3 and 5:3.

Yahshua verifies the pivotal position of the 5th Commandment and leaves no doubt as to how to show love for the heavenly Father.

Yahweh speaks about disciplining in Proverbs 13:24:

He that spares his rod hates his son: but he that loves his son chastens him betimes.

How does the Heavenly Father discipline His earthly children? By allowing them to suffer the consequences of their sins. The consequences of sin are often referred to in the Bible as the rod of Yahweh's anger. Obedience begins with discipline in the home and this is why the parent-child relationship is important enough for Yahweh to write it into His law. That relationship must be intended to teach us the importance of obedience to Yah-

weh.

Yahweh speaks on how a child can avoid being disciplined in Ephesians 6:1-4:

Children, obey your parents in the Master: for this is right. Honour your father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth. And you fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Master.

The King James Version of verse 4 reads "provoke not your children to wrath." To exasperate means to annoy to the extreme. Annoying to the extreme would certainly provoke wrath. Paul surely doesn't mean this injunction to countermand Yahweh's command to train up the child in the way he should go, Proverbs 22:6, and do not withhold discipline from him, Proverbs 23:13.

This doesn't mean severe punishment for minor infractions of rules. Obedience must be enforced firmly but fairly. The punishment must be timely and reasonable, appropriate to the seriousness of the infraction, and administered with love.

The child who has to be spanked is not likely to believe the parent who says, "This hurts me more than it does you." Yet, it truly does grieve the parent who really loves the child to have to punish him. Yahweh feels the same for us.

Life could not exist without rules. Even plants and animals must obey rules called laws of nature. All animals exhibit an amazing obedience to rules of conduct among themselves. Very few species kill their own kind and seldom kill without cause.

Human society is far more complex than any in the animal world and, therefore, obedience to rules of conduct is far more critical to human well-being than it is for animals.

Except for the instinctive reactions of infancy, human beings must learn rules of conduct and the consequences of disobeying them. When individuals do not learn to obey laws, whether Yahweh's or man's, everyone suffers and, because many will not obey even when they know right from wrong, society must bear the burden of supporting armies, police forces, courts of law, and penal institutions.

Ever-increasing lawlessness now threatens our civilized way of life and is setting the stage for the appearance of the man of sin who by lying deceptions will restore law and order among individuals and nations and bring peace to the world for 3 1/2 years. The chances of an individual becoming a victim of crime or accident from another's lawlessness is very high. The courts do not seem to understand the seriousness of the situation.

So bad will lawlessness get that the world will welcome the lawless one when he appears as the solution to their problems.

Commandment Against Murder

The sixth commandment reads: *Thou shalt not kill*, Exodus 20:13.

The King James Version of three different Hebrew words rendered "kill" can leave one puzzled as to why Yahweh would command His people not to kill in this verse and at the same time in Leviticus 20 command them to "kill" their fellow Israelites who disobey the commandments. Read Leviticus 20 and note how often the death penalty is the commanded punishment for transgressions of the Commandments.

Both Strong's Exhaustive Concordance and Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon verify that the Hebrew word translated "kill" in Exodus 20:13 means to kill in the sense of murder and the Hebrew

word translated "kill" in Leviticus 20:16 means to kill in the sense of slaying an enemy in battle.

Can there be any understanding of these two commandments (one not to kill and the other to kill) other than the fact that Yahweh considers law breakers to be enemies of His people? Even though He made a New Covenant with those who accept His Son as their Savior and gives His Spirit to each, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 leaves no doubt that Yahweh still considers law breakers enemies of His people and subject to the death penalty as the wages of sin. A difference is that Yahweh's people are not to do the killing.

Yahshua tells us not to try to weed the field, Matthew 13:28-30 (the field means the world). The command to True Worshipers is to come out from among them and be separate, 2 Corinthians 6:17, and do not associate with law breakers, 1 Corinthians 5:9-11.

The NIV translation of the Hebrew word *ratsach* (Strong's No. 7523) as "murder" is a much better translation than just "kill" in the King James and should eliminate confusion over whether it means kill or murder.

Do the New Age preachers who believe Scriptures must be positivized think the 6th Commandment can be stated more positively? What is positive about murder? The only way to positivize it is through love, for love is the fulfillment of the law, Romans 13:10. It is doubtful this is what New Age ministers have in mind when they talk about positivizing the Scriptures.

When the Body Temple Is Defiled

In Exodus 20:14, the 7th Commandment reads:

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Matthew Henry wrote in his commentary, "...we should be as much afraid of that which defiles the body as that which destroys it." How does this relate to committing

adultery?

But whoso commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding: he that does it destroys his own soul. A wound and dishonor shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away. For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance, Proverbs 6:32-34.

We know what the consequences of adultery can be. This Scripture is telling us that even if a jealous husband doesn't kill the offender, the shame and disgrace will remain with the adulterer for the rest of his life. But, in Matthew 10:28, we are told not to fear him who can kill the body, but rather fear Him who can kill both body and soul.

The body is the New Covenant temple in which Yahweh's Holy Spirit abides. Sexual immorality defiles that temple and Yahweh's Spirit cannot remain in a defiled temple. Romans 8:9-11 tells us that if the Spirit is not in us we are not Yahshua's. If we are not Yahshua's, we will come into judgment. Matthew 12:44-45 informs us the temple does not remain unoccupied when vacant. Non-sacred influences can enter.

Yahshua can forgive all sin upon repentance and cleanse the temple and if this happens Yahweh's Holy Spirit will return to reoccupy the temple and the person will be regenerated in the Spirit.

The first temple cleansing occurs at baptism in Yahshua's Name. The individual is cleansed and the Spirit indwells the baptized believer. When this happens the evil spirit, also called the spirit of disobedience, is driven out, but if the temple becomes defiled again by continuance in sin, Yahweh's Spirit will leave and the evil spirit will return to control the person.

This is why defilement of the body should be feared more than death of the body. If we lose Yahweh's Spirit we lose the seed of eternal life. Without His Spirit con-

trolling us, we are dead to righteousness and to eternal life.

John 8:3-11 is the account of the woman caught in adultery by the Pharisees and brought to Yahshua for punishment.

The subject of adultery seldom comes up without this story being offered as proof that we are all sinners and Yahshua will forgive our sins. No attempt is made to explain the relationship between the command to "go and sin no more" and Yahshua's answer to Peter's question in Matthew 18:22 which is "forgive your brother's sins seventy times seven."

How can sins be forgiven seventy times seven if there remains no sacrifice for deliberate sins? Hebrews 10:26. Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? Paul's answer to this question in Romans 6:1-2 is, "By no means!"

Yahweh's grace (the influence of the Holy Spirit in the heart) will not increase because His Holy Spirit cannot remain in the heart. That is why we should fear defiling the body more than death.

Do Not Steal

The Eighth Commandment reads:

Thou shalt not steal, Exodus 20:15.

An employee who takes an employer's honest day's pay without giving the employer an honest day's work is stealing. Similarly, an employer who doesn't give an honest day's pay for an honest day's work is stealing.

Ironic as it may be, many thieves claim to be religious. They go to church and comply with the religious formalities. They have the form of righteousness, but by their actions deny the power of it, 2 Timothy 3:5.

Stealing is taking something that belongs to someone else without the owner's permission. It doesn't make any difference whether what is taken is taken by force, secretly,

intentionally or unintentionally. If it is taken without the rightful owner's permission, it is stealing.

Many thieves desire to obey Yahweh's laws and believe they do, but do not understand that they unwittingly transgress the 8th commandment.

Paul, in 1 Timothy 5:8, refers to a man who neglects his family and squanders his time and money on selfish interests. A man's family has more than a right to expect his support; it actually owns the time and money it takes to support them adequately.

On the other hand, the woman who squanders money frivolously and demands a standard of living beyond the husband's ability to reasonably provide is stealing. Unreasonable demands or wasteful spending robs the husband of time and money that rightfully belongs to him.

It seems the problem with most people who are unwitting thieves is in understanding what belongs to whom. Some seem to think public property doesn't belong to anyone. But defacing or destroying public property is stealing. They rob the public of the funds needed to repair or replace the damaged property.

Vandals, shoplifters, and embezzlers are thieves even if they are never caught, and unless they repent and turn from their sin, they will end up standing at Yahshua's judgment throne, condemned to eternal death.

In the final analysis, Yahweh owns everything in creation. He has only given us permission to use His possessions to provide for our needs. As Job said, "Yahweh gives and Yahweh takes away," 1:21. Not only can He take our lives if He wishes to, but He can also take and destroy any of our possessions any time He wishes. He has not given us permission to keep all we gain by use of His property.

We are reminded in Malachi 3:8 that we are robbing Him if we do not give Him back 10 percent of the increase gained by the use of what He owns. Robbery is stealing and stealing is the transgression of the law, or sin, as we read in 1 John 3:4:

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

Tale-telling Comes Under 'Sin'

Here is the Ninth Commandment:

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor, Exodus 20:16.

Now let's look at Proverbs 6:16-19:

These six things does Yahweh hate: yes, seven are an abomination unto Him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood. An heart that devises wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaks lies, and he that sows discord among brethren.

The 9th Commandment is clear. Yahweh hates a false witness. Could that be the reason for commanding His people not to give false testimony against a neighbor? Or, is it because all false witnesses are liars? If they are, then they belong to the father of lies, John 8:44, and are controlled by satan's evil spirit of disobedience.

In Proverbs 25:18 Yahweh says a man who gives false testimony against his neighbor is like a man with a club or a sword. Surely lies can hurt a person in ways that are worse than a physical wound, but false witnessing may not involve telling actual lies about a person.

Few commentaries on the Ten Commandments miss the close relationship between bearing false witness and talebearing. Talebearing or gossiping betrays confidences, destroys reputations, separates

friends, and aggravates whatever was done amiss, whether intentional or unintentional.

Even if there is truth in the tale, it is generally told in a way that is unfavorable to the person spoken of. Nothing gets many listeners' attention quicker or arouses more interest than an opening remark like, "Did you hear the latest about...?"

Generally, the speaker doesn't have firsthand knowledge, but is merely repeating and embellishing some tidbit heard from someone else. Even if there is some truth in the latest, it is often so shaded and belittled by criticism that the listener receives a false impression of the person under discussion.

Understand that just listening to gossip makes you as guilty of transgressing the 9th Commandment as the speaker. This truth is also reflected in man's law, which holds the receiver of stolen goods as guilty as the thief. It takes two to gossip and if no one would listen there would be no gossip.

Words Justify or Condemn

There are two faults in human nature that displease Yahweh and cause more people to transgress the Ninth Commandment more than any of the nine others. They are: jealousy and self-righteousness.

Jealousy often springs from an inferiority complex that makes some people think it will make their own faults smaller if they can enlarge the faults of others. A self-righteous person believes he is so righteous he has the right to judge and condemn other people's mistakes and sins. He thinks he can make himself glow in the dark by rubbing the glow from the reputation of others.

Look at Matthew 12:34-37,

O generation of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good

man out of the good treasures of the heart brings forth good things and an evil man out of the evil treasures brings forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned.

This applies to violators of the Ninth Commandment as well as to blasphemers and other sinners. We all will have to account for careless and idle talk about others. It is not just ministers and Bible teachers who must bridle and tame their tongues, James 3:1-12.

Anyone who desires to be right with Yahweh must keep a tight reign on their tongue. If we love our neighbors as ourselves we will not bear false witness against them or indulge in gossiping about them.

Do Not Covet

And, the Tenth Commandment:

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's, Exodus 20:17.

The words "covet" in the KJV and "desire" in the NIV of 1 Corinthians 12:31 are translated from the same Greek word that means "desire." The same Hebrew word translated "covet" in Exodus 20:17 is translated "desire" in the KJV of Exodus 34:24 and "covet" in the NIV. Obviously, both the Hebrew and Greek words translated "covet" mean "desire." The definition of "covet" is to desire inordinately or wrongfully; to eagerly wish for something.

Micah 2:1-2 reads:

Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! When the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they op-

press a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.

This is reinforced by James 4:1-3,

From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? You lust, and have not: you kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: you fight and war, yet you have not because you ask not. You ask, and receive not because you ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts.

1 Timothy 6:9-10 reiterates the same thought:

But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

These Scriptures refer to inordinate, wrongful desiring and wishing for what belongs to others. Covetousness violates the 10th Commandment, and can lead to violations of other commandments such as lying, cheating, stealing, and even murdering for gain.

Paul urges us in 1 Corinthians 12:31 to earnestly desire the greater gifts. He means spiritual gifts that lead to love, joy, and peace of mind that comes from contentment. It is not earnestly desiring that is wrong in Yahweh's eyes; it is what we desire and how we go about obtaining it that is either right or wrong.

Seek the Kingdom First

It is not sinful to desire better material possessions or a better living standard if we work to obtain them lawfully and in ways that are not contrary to Yahweh's will. We must not ask amiss, meaning for help in transgressing Yahweh's laws. We can even pray for His help in obtaining our desires. Without desires no one would have any

ambition and there would be no progress either toward better living or the more important spiritual growth.

The 10th Commandment completes the summary of the law that details Yahweh's will for His people. Anyone who does not believe Yahweh will abandon the generation of His people that comes under His wrath in the last days does not understand the prophecies of the great tribulation and the pouring out of His wrath at the end of the age.

The Jews were abandoned when they rejected His Son as the Messiah and refused correction. Yahweh will also abandon gentiles in the last days who say they worship in Spirit and Truth, but quench the Spirit and refuse correction.

Believers who wish to avoid being abandoned and punished when Yahweh pours out His wrath will allow the Spirit to help them to overcome temptations and demonstrate their love by obeying His laws as the Spirit opens their minds to understand them.

Believers are commanded to grow in knowledge and understanding. Hence, they must not refuse to listen to teachers who speak in accord with this and find something far greater than human fulfillment: the law and the testimony. If they don't meditate upon what they hear they will not grow, but will continue following their sinful natures, repeating the errors of their forefathers.

Yahshua came to show us that with the help of the Father's Spirit, Which He gives us at baptism, it is possible to obey Yahweh's law. He tells us to seek Yahweh's kingdom and righteousness first and our needs in this life will be given to us, Matthew 6:33.

Elder Ralph Henrie (deceased)



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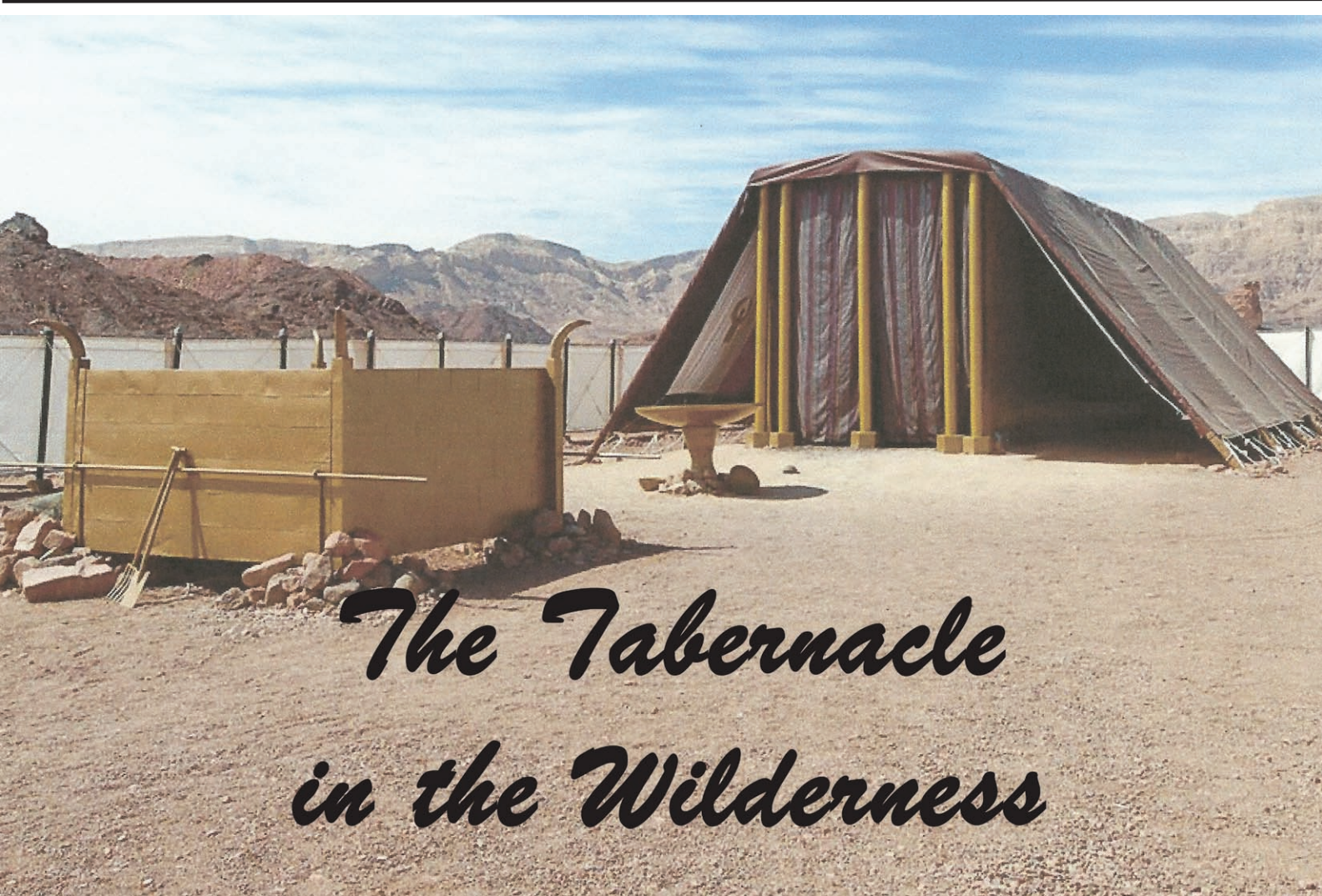
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