

YAIY



Beacon



Nov-Dec 2007 - Spreading the Word throughout the world - yaiy.org

*the
day
after*



YAIY



Beacon



Volume 1

Number 6

TABLE OF CONTENTS

December 25



Mistaken Identification **3**
Much of the world identifies December 25 with Yahshua's birthdate. But who, or what, is really associated with this date? **by Elder Roger G. Meyer**

To Ask For Mercy

King David asked for mercy when he was in need. Can we not also do the same? **by Elder John Fisher** **9**



One In A Crowd **15**
Do you stand out in a crowd. If you do, is it for the right reason? **by Elder Buel Hallpike**



Christmas Truth or Xmas Traditions?

Does repetition of Xmas traditions make today's celebration of Christmas correct? The truth will amaze you. **by Elder Lionel Gets** **20**



Question & Answer

23

MISSION STATEMENT

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.

This magazine, **YAIY Beacon**, is published bi-monthly by Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua, 2963 Co. Rd. 233, Kingdom City, MO 65262.

This magazine is sent free of charge, made possible through the tithes and offerings of those who desire to see the light of truth shine in our day.

© 2007 Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua

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



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



Fax:
573-642-4104



Email:
beacon@yaiy.org



Internet:
www.yaiy.org

Cover: compliments of Keith Willard

Mistaken Identification

Well, it's that time of the year once again. What time you ask? It's time for gift buying, parties, wassail bowls, tinsel, lights, eggnog, displaying Yuletide spirits, mistletoe, holly's green leaves, red berries, candles, etc. It's time for commemorating the birth of our Savior you say. It's time for showing special interest towards the underprivileged you might add. All this, and more, is done in the name of celebrating the time of the birth of our Savior. At least that is what millions of people believe. Not only that, it is being taught by religious leaders around the world.

Fact Or Fiction

But, how much of this is really true and how much is fiction? One only needs to look into resources to find out more on this subject. And what one will find out is that this widely celebrated religious day is associated with sun worship, fertility rites, and even human sacrifices tied to paleo-Christian observances.

The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge tells us under "Christmas", p. 47 that "There is no historical evidence that our Savior's birthday was celebrated during the apostolic or early post apostolic times."

Timing Is Way Off

But, you say, didn't the wise men celebrate Christmas because they visited the babe in the manger?

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, Matt. 2:7-11.

These verses unequivocally tell us that our Savior was in a house and that the gifts referred to were given to our Savior, Yahshua, and not to others. They were given to Yahshua because that was the custom among peoples of that time when they came before a king. Matt. 2:2 tells us that Yahshua was called the "King of the Jews."



Historical facts reveal that shepherds did not feed their flocks by night from late October or early November until around late April or early May (around Passover) because of the severity of the winter cold and rains.

Either the common nativity scene is seriously flawed or the shepherds in the Middle East had a strange way of herding and caring for their animals. The animals surely would not be in the fields seven weeks later, and especially not at night when temperatures plummet.

Further evidence that the Savior was not born in December comes with the proclamation by Caesar Augustus that all citizens were to travel back to their hometowns to complete a census.

Why December 25?

The Bible does not give a December 25 birth date for our Savior Yahshua. In fact, it never says when He was born. "Christmas" is a contraction for "Christ's Mass," a Roman Catholic observance. It was designed to compete with a heathen feast called Saturnalia held in honor of the sun deity Mithras.

A book called "Mystery Religions in the Ancient World" (page 99) reveals how closely this Mithras figure was to the Savior Yahshua. Mithras was "the creator and orderer of the universe," hence a manifestation of the creative Logos

or Word. Seeing mankind afflicted by Ahriman, the cosmic power of darkness, he incarnated on earth. Shepherds reported His birth on December 25. After many deeds he held a last supper with his disciples and returned to heaven. At the end of the world he will come again to judge resurrected mankind and after the last battle, victorious over evil, he will lead the chosen ones through a river of fire to a blessed immortality.

Among the pagans, Mithras was the sun deity. His birthday on December 25 came at the winter solstice, when the sun returned once again and warmed the dying earth. Their new year began with this phenomenon, which is why our new year starts in the dead of winter. The true Scriptural new year begins in the spring in the month of Abib (meaning "green ear month," Deut. 16:1), when all things begin to green up.

Assisted by the Roman government, the church made a conscious effort to combine elements of this pagan worship into their own worship. In the fourth century, the church desired to bring the pagan Germans and Romans into its fold. December 25 was adopted as the birth date of our Savior who was born in a manger. They incorporated many heathen rites like the yule log and the fir tree, where the yule log, representing Mithras, was burned in the fire and from it an evergreen tree was to have sprung forth.

Bible scholars know full well that the Messiah was not born anywhere near December 25. Yet, when this is pointed out to people, the answer most often given is that they really don't care when He was born, just so long as a day is kept in memory of His birth. Yet, why should anyone celebrate a day that has its roots in paganism?

Nimrod

In the book *The Two Babylons*, Alexander Hislop shows that the yule log is the dead stock

of Nimrod, deified as the sun god, but cut down by his enemies. And the Christmas tree represents the slain deity come to life again. Yahweh warns against erecting Christmas trees in Jeremiah 10:2-5:

Thus saith Yahweh, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither is it in them to do good.

Winter Solstice Celebrations

In the northern hemisphere the winter solstice occurs when the sun reaches southernmost point in the celestial

point in the sky. After this time when the sun appears to be rising higher in the sky idolatrous worshippers would be celebrating the sun being born again.

According to *The World Book Encyclopedia*, in 354 CE the December 25th date was selected by Liberius, a bishop of Rome, "because the people of Rome already observed it as the Feast of Saturn, celebrating the birthday of the Sun."

Other sources show that this day was the Saturnalia, a festival of much revelry, dancing, merriment, and fasting. A king was appointed over the revels. Slaves were freed. Foes became friends. Friends feasted together. Evergreen decorated the houses. Songs were sung in honor of Saturnalia. Gifts were exchanged between friends. This festival was adopted by the church, who turned it into what was called "Christ's Mass."

All of this began 2,000 years before the birth of the Messiah!

In Central Europe a feast was held at the time of the winter solstice. A large wooden wheel was covered with straw so that no wood was visible. It was then dragged to the top of a steep mountain. Here a feast of merrymaking, games, and dancing was carried out all day. At the time of vespers, this symbol of the sun was set on fire and allowed to roll down the mountain.

This act was to represent the sun running from the sky, for according to the idolatry of pagan Germans, the sun was a large firewheel rolling through space. This, then, represented the celebration of the sun's birth.

Under the article "Christmas," by Cardinal McClosky, we read in the *Catholic Dictionary*:

"St. Chrysostom, in a Christmas sermon delivered at Antioch in the year 386, says, 'It is not ten years since this day (Christmas day on

To obtain a printout of the following booklet go to page 22

The Untold Story of CHRISTMAS



December 25) was clearly known to us.”

By this source it is evident that prior to 377 CE December 25 was not mentioned or used as the birth date of our Messiah Yahshua.

The Christmas Tree

Compton's encyclopedia, under the article *Tree and Decorations*, tells the following:

“The Christmas tree was introduced into England early in the 19th century and was popularized by Prince Albert, the German husband of Queen Victoria. The trees were decorated with candles, candies, paper chains, and fancy cakes that were hung from the branches on ribbons.

“German settlers brought the Christmas tree to the American colonies in the 17th century. By the 19th century its use was quite widespread. Trees were also popular in Austria, Switzerland, Poland, and Holland. In China and Japan Christmas trees were introduced by Christian missionaries in the 19th and 20th centuries. There they were decorated with intricate paper designs.

“The use of evergreens for wreaths and other decorations arose in northern Europe. Italy, Spain, and some other nations use flowers instead. Holly, with its prickly leaves and red berries, came into holiday use because it reminded people of the crown of thorns worn by [Yahshua] on the way to his execution and the berries symbolized droplets of blood.”

In the Middle Ages, the Germans and Scandinavians placed evergreen trees inside their homes or just outside their doors to show their hope for the forthcoming spring. The modern Christmas tree evolved from these evergreen trees that were regarded as a symbol of life.

Star, Gifts and Candy Cane

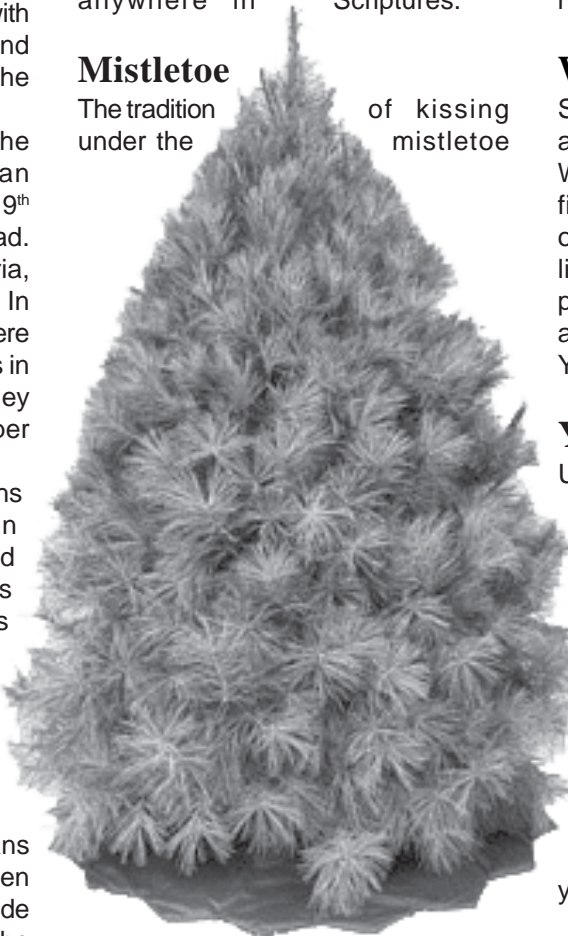
The star that is usually placed at the top of the evergreen tree is said to symbolize the star which appeared in the sky to guide the wise men to the place of the Messiah's birth.

The gifts that are usually placed beneath the evergreen tree are representative of the gifts the three wise men brought and gave to the Messiah, and not to another person.

The white color of a candy cane is said to symbolize the virgin birth and sinless nature of the Messiah. The hardness of the cane is to represent the solid rock. The “J” shape of the cane is to represent the name of “Jesus.” The three red stripes are said to represent the trinity and the blood shed by the Messiah. These last two associations can not be found anywhere in Scriptures.

Mistletoe

The tradition of kissing under the mistletoe



descends from the customs of several different cultures. For example, it was a tradition of Greek festivals and marital ceremonies to exchange kisses under the mistletoe. In Scandinavia, mistletoe was considered a plant of peace, under which enemies could declare a truce or warring spouses kiss and make-up. In Europe, branches of mistletoe were

hung from ceilings to ward off evil spirits.

Although the mistletoe is considered to be the seed of love, the common name of the plant is derived from the ancient belief that the mistletoe grew from bird droppings. In ancient times, people observed that mistletoe appeared on a branch or twig where birds had left droppings. “Mistle” is the Anglo-Saxon word for “dung,” and “tan” is the word for “twig.” So, mistletoe actually means “dung-on-a-twig.” What a strange meaning for a plant that is supposed to bring love and happiness!

What Say You?

Some people will say that Christmas and Santa Claus are for the children. When the children grow up they will find out that Santa Claus is a figment of one's imagination. They are told a lie. He exists only in the minds of people. The same can be said to anyone that believes that our Savior Yahshua was born on December 25.

Yahshua's Time Of Birth

Using Scripture it is easy to get an approximation of when Yahshua was born.

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease... , Dan. 9:27.

Not only does this show that Yahshua died in the middle of the week, on Wednesday, but also that Yahshua's work of confirming the covenant lasted for 3 and one-half years.

Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Yahshua also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. And Yahshua himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, Luke 3:21-23.

Here we see that Yahshua was about thirty years of age when he began His ministering.

After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise, Num. 14:34.

And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year, Ezek. 4:6.

We know that Yahshua died on Passover which occurred at the end of March or the beginning of April. Tracing back three and one-half years would end up occurring at the end of September or the first part of October. This is certainly not December 25. Also, the end of September or the

beginning of October places the time during the Feast of Tabernacles.

Therefore, we can conclude that Yahshua was born about the same time in the year that He was baptized by John the Baptist - very near, if not during, the Feast of Tabernacles.

Satan's Substitute

The Feast of Tabernacles is a seven day festival, the first day being a high day. This feast is immediately followed by the Last Great Day, another high day. The total number of days involved is eight. What Satan has done is take a seven day period of time starting with December 25, celebrated as a holiday, and followed that seven day period of time with January 1, another holiday celebrated by churchianity. This eight day period of time is what Satan has substituted for the Feast of Tabernacles followed by the Last Great Day.

With many of the world today believing that our Savior was born on December 25, how perfect an imitation Satan has made to make the masses to replace a season holy until Yahweh by a pagan substitution. So, who should you follow, man or Yahweh? Each of us has that choice to make. As Deut. 30:19 says, "Choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

Don't Deceive

By telling a child that Santa exists and later the child finds out he doesn't, a parent is deceiving their child. Is it wise for a parent to deceive a fellow worker? No, it isn't because that parent might lose his job if the deception is found out. So, why does a parent lie to their child about Santa? What are the promises for all liars?

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death, Rev. 21:8.

And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or

maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life, Rev. 21:27.

But, what does Santa Claus have to do with Christmas?

Santa Claus

Of all the stories concerning the origins of Santa Claus most of them center on a person by the name of Nicholas, who was born around 245 AD in Patara, in present day Turkey. One story is about an angel who appeared to a cardinal appointing a new bishop for the Turkish town of Mira (now Kale). The angel told the cardinal to ordain the 30-year old Nicholas. Throughout his priesthood, Nicholas was recognized for his generosity to all those in trouble and he became known for the granting of wishes. It has been said that St. Nicholas climbed on the roof of a house and dropped a bag of gold down the chimney where it landed

To obtain a printout of the following mini-study go to page 22

Mini - Study

Is Christmas A Biblical Observance?

"Put the Savior back in Christmas," people cry. But was He ever there in the first place?

By far the most important celebration in the Western world today is Christmas. Billions of dollars will be spent this year on gifts, gift wrapping, candy, decorations, and greeting cards in a gigantic, annual spending spree that starts in earnest right after Hallowe'en—and shifts into overdrive the day after Thanksgiving.

Merchants hinging their hopes for the entire sales year on Christmas profits keep the momentum at a fever pitch. A nonstop flood of advertisements and promotions entice an exploitable public to continue spending themselves into debt at this time each year.

The more religiously disposed object to the commercialization of the "Savior's birthday." They can see that this annual celebration has little in common with any Biblical observance. On the contrary, Christmas today is little more than a mandatory ritual of gift exchanging done under the guise of family togetherness and pleasing children.

But the Bible believer must stop to ask himself, am I pleasing my Heavenly Father by my Christmas observance? If this is what He wants me to do, then surely I can find in His very Word—the Bible—at least one passage telling me to keep this holiday.

Shocking as it may be, you cannot find even one command in the entire Bible to keep this supposed birthday of the Savior! Furthermore, nowhere in the New Testament is there a single instance where someone observed Christmas. Not one of the Apostles observed December 25, nor did any of them ever in the Savior's 33 years on this earth throw Him a birthday party. Nowhere do we find His disciples giving a gift to Him on December 25. Nor did anyone else. Not even to one another.

1

To obtain a printout of the following mini-study go to page 22

Mini - Study

Is That in the Bible?

When I was a boy, my family belonged to a large church denomination. I went faithfully with them to church every Sunday.

In Sunday school class we studied church history and church doctrines. We were not encouraged to go very deeply into the Scriptures, but were expected to be content with the accepted church literature and the 20-minute sermon each week.

Yet, even at the young age of 12 there were questions that truly puzzled me. One that especially bothered me was this: how could the Savior be in the grave three days and three nights, as He promised in Matthew 12:40, if He were buried late Friday afternoon only to rise the following Sunday morning? I never was given a satisfactory answer.

My sister was contending with another problem. If Sunday is the Sabbath (Biblically the 7th), as the church taught, then why did her wall calendar show that Sunday is the first day of the week?

My parents had been struggling with these and other inconsistencies between what the denomination was teaching and what the Bible plainly said. They brought these questions to the minister at Wednesday night Bible studies. He no doubt was hoping they would stop raising all these discrepancies that he was having such a difficult time explaining.

We eventually left the church and finally found the answers to our questions after a long search and thorough study of the Scriptures.

Maybe you, too, are bothered by certain teachings that just don't harmonize with Scripture, or even contradict what you read in the Bible. No one you ask seems to have the answers. Your minister's best responses seem only half right and difficult to prove from the Word. You are left with nagging doubts.

Rest assured that you aren't alone. Many serious seekers of truth are wrestling with the same dilemma. Much of what is passed off as Scriptural is, in fact, a gradual development from centuries of human tradition and not what the Bible teaches at all. The Apostles, not to mention the Savior Himself, would be shocked to see how their clear statements have been twisted to fit false conclusions.

The "faith once delivered to the saints," spoken of in Jude 3, is quite different from what is preached today. Jude speaks of a small number returning to the true faith in these latter days. If the majority of churches had been teaching correct doctrine, then this prophetic verse would be unnecessary! Yet the Scripture says the true faith would be taught and established again just before the

in a stocking hung to dry, giving us a reason to hang up Xmas stockings today.

It is held by some scholars that the legends of Nicholas as gift-giving drew in part from pagan, pre-Christian sources. For example, The Teutonic god of the air, Odin, would ride through the air on a gray horse (named leipnir) each autumn – so did Nicholas; Odin had a long white beard – so did

Nicholas; a sheaf of grain was left in the field for Odin's horse – children left a wisp of straw in their shoes for Nicholas. Some attribute the characteristics of the German god Thor to Nicholas as Thor was supposedly elderly and heavy with a long white beard; he rode through the air in a chariot drawn by two white goats (called Cracher and Gnasher); he dressed in red; his palace was in the "northland;" he was friendly and cheerful; he would come down the chimney into his element, the fire.

Once the story of his deeds spread, he became known for helping those in trouble. He became known as the patron saint of children. Many churches and cathedrals were named after him, and next to the Messiah and the Virgin

Mary, Nicholas was the next most popular figure in Christianity. His popularity spread to the Laplands – to the people of the reindeer sleds.

In a French village during the 12th century, local nuns honored their patron on December 6, which became St. Nicholas Day. The nuns delivered candy to all the children who'd been good, leaving it for them in their shoes, and leaving switches in the shoes of the naughtier children. Because they seemed to cover so much territory, some began to say it was St. Nicholas himself who delivered the gifts.

On the eve of the feast of St. Nicholas, the bishop, himself, was said to come and visit children in their homes, giving gifts to those who had been good.



Detail from *First Celebration of the Festival of St. Nicholas by The New-York Historical Society*, Broadside by Alexander Anderson, December 6, 1810, commissioned by John Pintard, NY 1864-21, negative number 28883.

The many changing appearances of Santa - from the early 19th century to present day



His looks are changing, but it is still Saint Nicholas
Period Postcard



Saint Nicholas 1849
engraving by Boyd



"Merry Old Santa Claus," by Thomas Nast, Harper's Weekly, January 1, 1881.



Coca-Cola Santa by Haddon Sundblom Courtesy of the Coca-Cola Company



Nast Santa, Bishop Nicholas, Coke Santa, illustration by Renee Graef, *A Special Place for Santa* Roman, Inc., 1991. Permission pending.



By medieval times Nicholas had become the most beloved patron saint of Europe, and through the Middle Ages, the story of Christmas in Europe developed to combine religious and pagan myths. An interesting observation, if one abbreviates St. Nicholas one gets Saint Nick.

It was Dutch sailors who came to the New World and would not give up St. Nicholas as their patron; when they settled, particularly around the New York area, their nickname Santer Klause (Sinter Klaas) became the name we know as Santa Claus. St. Nicholas is the national saint of Russia and Greece.

When Luther created the Protestant church, he realized it would be necessary to wean German children off of St. Nick, so he created Krist Kindle, a winged cherub, who also flew and brought gifts to good children – but which instead focused the celebration around the Messiah. He came on Christmas Eve which more closely coincides with the Winter Solstice, around which pagan religion celebrated the return of the sun's light.

In the Protestant areas of central and northern Germany, St. Nicholas later became known as der Weihnachtsmann. In England he came to be called Father Christmas. In France, Pere Noel. Italy had Bafana, out looking for the child, left gifts in her wake for other kids. The gnome Tompten was Sweden's figure, and in the U. S., Martin Luther's Krist Kindle became Kris Kringle.

After the reformation German Protestants encouraged veneration of the Christkindl as the gift giver on his own feast day, December 25. Because the Nicholas tradition prevailed it became attached to Christmas itself.

After the American Revolution, New Yorkers remembered with pride the colony's nearly forgotten Dutch roots. John Pintard,

influential patriot and antiquarian, who founded the New York Historical Society in 1804, promoted St. Nicholas as patron saint of both society and city.

The American author Washington Irving gave America their first detailed information about the Dutch version of Saint Nicholas. In his *History of New York*, published in 1809 under the pseudonym Diedrich Knickerbocker, Irving described the arrival of the saint on horseback each eve of Saint Nicholas (December 6). This Dutch-American Saint Nick achieved his fully Americanized form in 1823 in the poem *A Visit From Saint Nicholas* (better known as *The Night Before Christmas* by writer Clement Clarke Moore). This poem gave a big boost to the jolly elf image.

The New York Historical Society held its first St. Nicholas anniversary dinner on December 6, 1810. John Pintard commissioned artist Alexander Anderson to create the first American image of Nicholas for the occasion. Nicholas was shown in a gift

giving role with children's treats in stockings hanging at a fireplace.

In 1863, political cartoonist Thomas Nast began a series of annual drawings in Harper's Weekly which were based on the descriptions found in the poem and Washington Irving's work. These drawings established a rotund Santa with flowing beard, fur garments, and an omnipresent clay pipe. As Nast drew Santa until 1886, his work had considerable influence in forming the American Santa Claus.

Dozens of artists portrayed Santa in a wide range of styles, sizes, and colors, including Norman Rockwell on Saturday Evening Post covers. But it was in the 1930s that the now familiar American Santa image solidified. Haddon Sundblom began thirty-five years of Coca-Cola Santa advertisements which finally established Santa as an icon of contemporary commercial culture. This Santa was life-sized, jolly, and wearing the now familiar red suit. He appeared in magazines, on billboards,


and shop counters encouraging Americans to see Coke as the solution to "a thirst for all seasons."

In the book titled *Fossilized Custom*, the author, Lew White, states the following:

"In the late 1800's, a pharmacist put some cocaine in a sweetened, bubbling cola beverage, and named it Coca-Cola. By the 1930's, it was a major business, and had its own advertising department, strategists, and artists. One of the artists, Rosenblum, decided to attempt something new. The Dutch/Irish character called 'Santa Claus' was beginning to get a lot of attention, so he set his mind on aligning the Coca-Cola product with him. In Rosenblum's time, Santy Clause didn't look like he

To obtain a printout or to view the following booklet go to page 22


Biblical Holy Days



Yesterday Today Forever

<Mistaken see page 14>

To Ask For Mercy



A long time ago I got a speeding ticket, and in preparing to go to traffic court, I remembered something my dad had taught me. He said, “If you ever find yourself in court, and you’re guilty, ask to be tried by the judge; if you’re not guilty, ask for a jury trial.” He added, “If you are before the judge, guilty, say, ‘I plead guilty, your honor, and place myself at the mercy of the court.’” I thought this would be as good of a strategy as any, so I planned to say just those words. I mean, what did I have to lose? I was guilty of breaking the law.

My Day in Court

My day in court came, and I watched many people try to convince the judge that they were not guilty. I was guilty of speeding, so when the judge asked how I plead, I said, “Guilty, your honor; and I place myself at the mercy of the court.” Inside I smiled, thinking I may have won myself a lesser penalty by acting with humility – the key word, here, being “acting.” I thought I would stand out amongst the “common rabble,” that I would win mercy for my simple declaration of guilt and my feeble attempt to portray a “willing subject.” That is, until he asked me, “Is there any reason the court should grant you mercy?” I hadn’t planned on his retort. So, I began to nervously explain myself, immediately putting myself into the same category of those who had whined about their plight before my turn came. After listening to my rationale for a few minutes, he interrupted me with a

brief summary of my defense, and I agreed with his extremely abridged version of my story, uttering a simple, “Yes, your honor.” He reduced my fine by one half.

Years Later

At that time, 30 some-odd years ago, I’m certain that I did not have the “big picture” about the nature of mercy and judgment, or that this issue is, in itself, an historical, Biblical ... and eternal matter. I revisited that old faded scene recently, and I considered how I might otherwise have answered the judge’s question, “Is there any reason why I should grant you mercy?”

I could have said the following:

“Yes, your honor, there is. As you know, mercy, by definition, is not something that is deserved. On the other hand, a verdict of Not Guilty, based upon competent evidence, is not merciful, but simply, just. Mercy is the prerogative of the one who has the **authority** and **duty** to condemn in the light of evidence proving guilt; but, instead, exercises compassion upon the accused-found-guilty. Further, that prerogative **cannot** have anything to do with the depth or the nature of the crime having been committed. In fact, the greater the crime, the greater the depth of that authority’s mercy.”

Rather, mercy is a function of a judge’s ability to discern the depth of **sincerity** of the accused to genuinely repent of that unlawful action and make an oath in his heart that he

will not violate that law again. Mercy is the ability to see into one's heart.

Ultimately, mercy is an act reserved for the Creator of the Universe; yet, we are commanded to imitate Him; therefore, there can be no guilt in a man appointed to authority who chooses to grant mercy, even if he is wrong in his judgment. Rather, the burden of the whole matter lies within the heart of the man who committed the infraction. It is what comes out of our own mouths that condemn us, not the verdict of other men. The **accused** takes on the burden of the court by asking for mercy.

Also, I could have added:

"Your honor, it would be much easier for me to pay the fine, have my infraction 'concealed' or 'cleansed,' and be free to continue in such illegal behavior, unburdened by an oath to 'go and sin no more.' By asking for mercy, I am saying to you that I will never violate this law again. I am aware of the consequences for having contempt for the court by bearing false witness. I am also aware that other consequences are well beyond the power of **this** court of **this** land. The consequences of my request for mercy are, in fact, eternal.

"May I remind the court that it has been said, 'We shall be judged – as we judge others?' I understand the enormity of the responsibility that you have taken upon your shoulders, and I shall abide in your judgment whether merciful or harsh. It is said that enduring the punishment for a wrong-doing has no credit, but, that enduring punishment when one has committed no wrong is comparable to what the Savior did for us, and is therefore credible. I am guilty of wrong-doing, and there is therefore no honor for me even though I endure my punishment. But, consider how honorable it would be for a judge to grant mercy in the face of guilt! Certainly, this must be what is referred to as storing up treasures in

Heaven. Thank you, your honor, for hearing my plea."

The Burden of Asking for, and Granting, Mercy

Having written this defense, I found myself shaking in my boots at the thought of ever offering it, considering the consequences should I ever exceed the speed limit! I will have broken an oath that I made with my own mouth! How in the world could I actually do what I promised to do? If you were the accused in this scenario, would **you** make such a plea? Or, would you simply pay the fine? If you were the **judge**, how would you have ruled? Would you laugh at my presumption and grandiosity, recognizing the true condemnation found in the words, "Mercy granted! Case dismissed," and thereby passing the matter to a Higher Court? Or, would you exercise **true** mercy by throwing my **plea** for mercy out the window, knowing that my inevitable failure at obeying the law would invoke a worse judgment upon me? Are you ready to be a judge in the Kingdom?

I have to admit, writing this fantasy defense was fun. It was an exercise in

attempting to "win in court," a reflection of my hope in that real court battle. However, it served to point out to me the commitment that I am making to the Judge of all Judges, the King of all Kings and the Lawgiver of all Lawgivers, Yahweh, my Elohim, Savior and Shepherd. Having been immersed in the name of Yahshua, I have asked for His mercy to be applied to my sins. Have I not, in a sense, taken on His burden, in that I am vowing to abandon sinful behavior, in exchange for His forgiveness of my past sins?

Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light, Matthew 11:28-30.

How Can a "Burden" be Light?

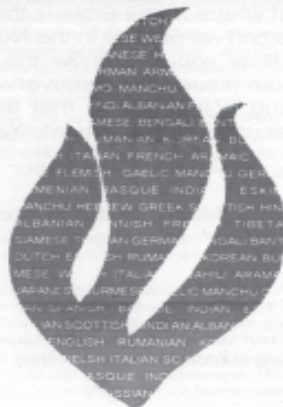
*Thus says Yahweh, stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; and you will find **rest for your souls**. But they said, "We will not walk in it." And I set watchmen over you, saying, "Listen to the sound of the trumpet!"*

But they said, "We will not listen." Therefore hear, O nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them. Hear, O earth: behold, I am bringing disaster on this people, the fruit of their plans, because they have not listened to My words, and as for My law, they have rejected it also, Jeremiah 6:16-19.

When Yahshua invited us to take His yoke upon us, He was not just uttering poetic words, taken from the Book of Jeremiah [whose name in Hebrew, *YermeYah*, means "Yah Will Rise"]. Does Jeremiah's name not point to the One Who Shall Rise [Who came in the name of *Yah, Yahshua Ha Mashiach? HalleluYah!*]. By referencing this verse in Jeremiah's writings, Yahshua is

To obtain a printout or to view the following booklet go to page 22

Deciphering The Biblical Gift of Tongues



encouraging us, the "Congregation" in the "Nations" of Earth, to "Ask for the ancient paths," to "Listen to My words," and to not "Reject My Law."

In essence, Yahweh is saying to us, "Look what I've done to My people who have disobeyed Me!" By pointing to the Israelites of old, He is proving that no one, on their own, can obey His Law. He sent His anointed Son, Yahshua, to prove that only a Perfect One can refrain from sin. In other words, we, in ourselves, are without hope for eternal life. Only Yahweh's mercy can save us from eternal condemnation and death. And, again, it is by virtue of His mercy that He has shown us His lawful means in which we **will** obtain mercy. He has offered us a New Covenant, a one-way covenant that HE writes upon our minds and our hearts.

The English name, John, is the Hebrew name, *Yahchanan*, which means the Mercy of Yah. It was the "Mercy of Yah" who cried in the wilderness, "Prepare the **way** of Yahweh; Make straight in the desert a highway for our Elohim!" John the Immerser thus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, whose name is *YeshuYah* and means "Yahweh Saves."

"Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your Elohim. "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from Yahweh's hand double for all her sins." The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of Yahweh; make straight in the desert a highway for our Elohim. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; the glory of Yahweh shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of

Yahweh has spoken," Isaiah 40:1-5 NKJV.

The Revealing of the "Salvation of Yahweh"

Prepare for the Revealing, the Revelation, the Coming of the Salvation of Yahweh. All of mankind shall see Yahshua, the Anointed Redeemer from Yahweh.

For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says Yahweh, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah — not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says Yahweh. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Yahweh: I will put My laws

in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their Elohim, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know Yahweh,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more," Hebrews 8:7-12 [This is a quote from Jeremiah 31:31-34] NKJV.

It is interesting to note that the author of the book of Hebrews, two chapters later, clarifies for us the depth of Yahweh's will in the keeping of His Law.

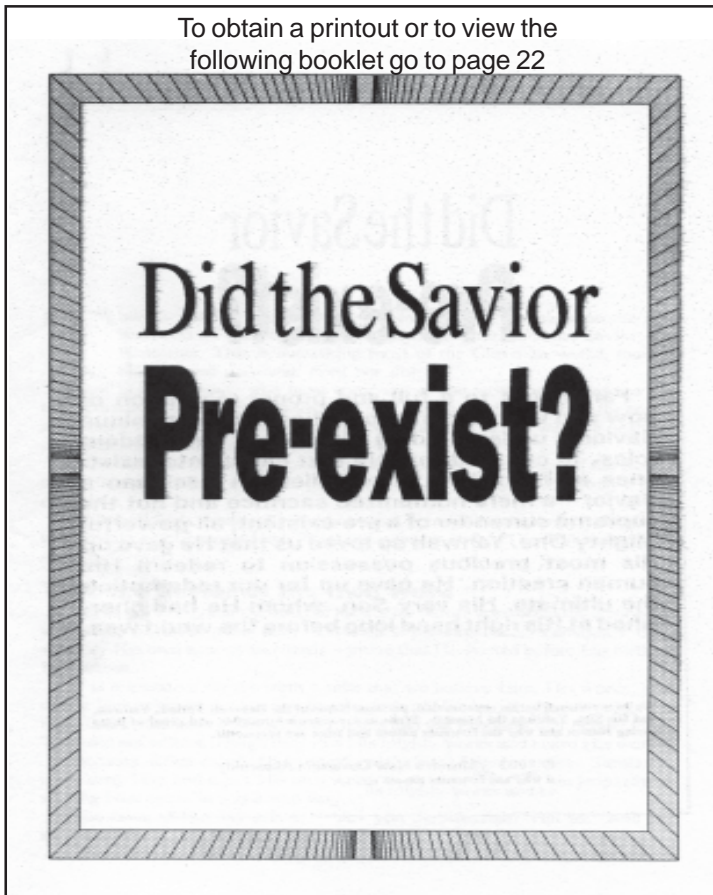
*This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says Yahweh: I will put My **laws** into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,* Hebrews 10:16 NKJV.

The Law of the New Covenant is the Same Law of the Old

The First Covenant was broken because Israel abandoned their oath to follow Yahweh. The New Covenant is made BY Yahweh, who places the Law in our minds and writes the Law on our hearts by means of His Holy Spirit. It is the gift of His Holy Spirit that allows us to understand the importance of the Law of Yahweh and which empowers us to abide in it. The "burden" that Yahshua asks us to place upon our shoulders is "light" and "easy" to bear, not because it represents an easier, lighter burden, but because the burden is supported by the strength of Yahweh's Spirit. How strong is His Spirit?

I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, "Move from here to there" and it will move. Nothing will be

To obtain a printout or to view the following booklet go to page 22



impossible for you, Matthew 17:20 NIV.

Yet, for all the strength that Yahweh's Spirit affords to those who abide in Yahweh's Law, the physical manifestation of that strength is literally nothing, compared to something much more powerful.

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing, 1 Corinthians 13:2 NIV.

Is not the greatest strength that Yahweh manifests toward us, at least as far as our eternal salvation is concerned, His willingness to forgive us? He is full of Mercy; He is Longsuffering, and He is Lovingkindness itself.

A Higher Standard of the Law

Knowing this, how can it be said that keeping the Law of Yahweh is impossible? Scripture says that keeping the Law of Yahweh is easy. Ironically, Yahshua sets a higher standard on keeping the Law for those who **receive** the New Covenant signed in His blood! He is willing to grant **mercy** to those who are willing to **ask** for mercy and who know full well the obligations they are taking on.

You have heard that the ancients were told, "You shall not commit murder" and "Whoever commits murder shall be liable to judgment." But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of judgment; and whoever says to his brother, "You good-for-nothing," shall be guilty before the Sanhedrin; but whoever says, "[Shut up, you idiot!]," shall be guilty enough to go into the Gehenna [the Lake] of fire, Matthew 5:21-23.

Can One's Salvation be Lost?

*Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Yahshua, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the House of Yahweh, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. **Anyone** who has **rejected Moses' law** dies without mercy on the*

*testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much **worse punishment**, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of Yahweh underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant - by which he was sanctified - a common thing and insulted the Spirit of Mercy? For we **know** Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says Yahweh. And again, "Yahweh will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living Elohim, Hebrews 10:19-31 NKJV.*

Now, what could be **worse** than being **killed!** How about being killed again? The "second death" is mentioned four times in the Book of the Revelation of Yahshua Ha Mashiach:

*Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the **second death**, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book*

To obtain a printout or to view the following mini-study go to page 22

Mini - Study

Tongues: Past, Present, and Future

Over the years many devoted and sincere people have thought and felt they were being empowered by the Spirit of the Heavenly Father. They thought they were given "witness," as is spoken of in Acts 2:4, (i.e., empowered to speak in tongues).

And many today feel, think, and act as if they too are being led to speak in "tongues."

Are they speaking in tongues as described in the book of Acts, or is it just an act? Or is it something else all together?

Let's go back in time to a period when fiery symbols and sounds came from heaven, when even wind filled the inside of a home. A time when human limbs were made whole; a time when someone who was born blind could be made to see; a time when someone who could hear nothing, could then hear the sweet sounds of birds and the simple sound of water being poured into a basin.

It was a time when Yahweh's Spirit was poured out in abundance, and it is a time still to come.

To obtain a printout or to view the following mini-study go to page 22

Mini - Study

Why Biblical Law?

A lesson from the Potter

THE POTTER stretched his wetted hand over the lump of clay as he started rotating the large stone wheel. Turning it slowly with his feet, he formed the revolving mass until a rounded shape began rising from the miry clump.

Adding water from time to time, the potter skillfully smoothed out the softened clay, eliminating minor imperfections.

What was once a shapeless blob on the wheel soon became a sleek, pliant jar in the deft hands of the potter.

Next would come the firing of the kiln to bake permanently the shaped clay into a usable jar.

We in the Hands of the Maker

Have you ever considered looking at mankind through our Creator's eyes? He evidently sees humans as vessels of clay that can eventually be transformed into something wonderful and precious.

Paul addresses this concept in Romans 9:21, "*Has not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?*"

We are clay in the hands of the Master Potter. He can mold of us whatever He wills. We are all individuals, each different from all others. We are unique beings on this earth,

of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire, Revelation 20:14-15 NASU.

Don't Give Up!

Going back to the Book of Hebrews, starting at verse 32 in chapter 10, we read:

But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven [the words "in heaven" are not found in the Greek manuscripts]. Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. for you have need of

endurance, so that after you have done the will of Elohim, you may receive the promise: "For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." But we are not of those who draw back to destruction, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul, Hebrews 10:32-39

Trust Yahweh, and Also Honor the King

I began this discussion with reference to a court hearing, involving a speeding ticket. Our Assembly endured a court battle of immensely greater proportion for two years, not knowing the outcome. However, we kept strong by believing that Yahweh was working His will in this matter, and we determined long before its conclusion that no matter what happened, it would be for the betterment of our lives.

Submit yourselves for Yahweh's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of Elohim that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bound slaves of Elohim. Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear Yahweh, honor the king, 1 Peter 2:13-17.


The last word in this verse, "king," as far as our court case was concerned, was the Judge of the Kingdom of Callaway County. From our perspective, it is he to whom this verse is referring. We knew we must honor his decision. We determined that if we won the court case, we would exclaim, "HalleluYah!" and would praise Yahweh, realizing that He has, in His righteousness, divided our assembly according to His Truth, His will and in His wisdom, to accomplish His purposes.

We also determined that if we lost the court case, we would exclaim, "HalleluYah!" and would praise Yahweh, realizing that He has, in His

righteousness, divided our assembly according to His Truth, His will and in His wisdom, to accomplish His purposes.

You who are slaves must accept the authority of your masters. Do whatever they tell you – not only if they are kind and reasonable, but even if they are harsh. For Elohim is pleased with you when, for the sake of your conscience, you patiently endure unfair treatment. Of course, you get no credit for being patient if you are beaten for doing wrong. But if you suffer for doing right and are patient beneath the blows, Elohim is pleased with you. This suffering is all part of what Elohim has called you to. The Messiah, who suffered for you, is your example. Follow in His steps. He never sinned, and he never deceived anyone. He did not retaliate when he was insulted. When he suffered, he did not threaten to get even. He left His case in the

To obtain a printout or to view the following mini-study go to page 22

Mini - Study 

This Is the ELIJAH MESSAGE

Ancient prophets along with the Messiah Himself foretold that an EliYah would come to restore all things before the Second Coming of the Savior. What that means directly affects you and your salvation!

Bible students around the world are increasingly aware of the many events foretelling the end of the age and the imminent appearance of the Messiah. We are witnesses to growing lawlessness, shameless immorality, and a general spiritual decline at every level of society. All of which only confirms Bible prophecy. (See 2Tim. 3:1-5.)


At the same time, a continual diluting of the Bible's strong moral message has changed the reason many attend church. No longer a place for self-examination leading to a repentant change in one's life, church is now a place to learn about how to be prosperous and successful. Solid Bible teaching has given way to man-centered, "New Age" doctrines that promote self help.

The Bible: an Ignored Book

Sins are condoned and overlooked under the guise of grace, love, and forgiveness. A lopsided emphasis is placed on the Savior's blood covering all sins when nothing is said about fruits worthy of repentance or making restitution for wrong.

Swept aside today is the Bible's clear message

To obtain a printout or to view the following mini-study go to page 22

Mini - Study 

DO YOU HAVE AN IMMORTAL SOUL?

Is there a part of us that is immortal—a soul that never dies? Many believe so. At funerals for the "dead," we hear that the person's soul has departed the body and is now up in heaven watching the proceedings down below. Exactly what is a soul? Do animals have souls? In this study we will examine what the world believes about the soul, and then what the Bible reveals.

Christianity 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 L-rd" 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

hands of Him who judges righteously. He personally carried away our sins in His own body on the torture stake so we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. You have been healed by His wounds! Once you were wandering like lost sheep. But now you have turned to your Shepherd, the Guardian of your souls, 1 Peter 2:18-25 NLT.

His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire, Luke 3:17 NASU.

Punishment – or Blessing?

We knew that HIS barn was not necessarily our assembly hall. It mattered not whether we obtained the material possession of the building in which we once worshipped. It did not matter if the court made a judgment against us, against our will and against our protest. What WE wanted mattered NOT, in comparison to what Yahweh wanted. We believed that the outcome of the trial would be the outcome that He caused to happen. If we had chosen not to be of this mindset, then it could only be reasoned that we were against Yahweh.

The question for us at that time was this, "Would losing the court case be Yahweh's way of punishing us, or would it rather be His way of providing discipline for us?" If the former, then with Bible in hand, we would have needed to examine the sins that we had committed that had stirred His wrath against us. If this defeat were, instead, His way of taking us away from a place from which He has removed His name ... and His way of leading us to a new place where He would place His name, then we needed to gird the loins of our wisdom, strength and faith and follow His fire by night and His mist in the day to the destination that He would make for His flock.

Blessing!

Having emerged victorious in having our assembly building and all of our equipment redeemed to us, may we never forget that it was Yahweh's will



to continue His work through us, the members of the newly-named Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua.

YAHWEH is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley

of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the House of Yahweh for ever, Psalm 23 KJV.

HalleluYah!

Elder John Fisher

<Mistaken from page 8>

does now. The original character was an Irish transplant, coming from people who had based their beliefs on Druid magic, and elves. The 9th century poem, *The Night Before Christmas*, had catapulted our Christ Elf into the spotlight because the character was so appealing. Rosenblum used his artistic imagination to change Santy Claus into what we think he looks like today. Before, Santa was no more than 2 feet tall, skinny, and wore green. He had a long white beard, and for all practical purposes he was a leprechaun/elf character with magical powers to grant wishes, watch you without being seen, and so on. The alignment with the hearth is other pagan syncretism, right down to the stocking hung by the chimney with care. To make this night visitor charming and more human, Rosenblum made him a full-sized man, jolly and plump, to better assume the distinctive shape of the Coke bottle. He also used the appealing red and white product to clothe Santa in. The drooping wizard hat was a must."

What Say You?

Some people will say that Christmas and Santa Claus are for the children. When the children grow up they will find out that Santa Claus is a figment of one's imagination. They are told a lie. He exists only in the minds of people. The same can be said to anyone that believes that our Savior Yahshua was born on December 25.

Elder Roger G. Meyer

To obtain a printout of the following mini-study go to page 22

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



One In A Crowd

Introduction

Going against the tide of popular opinion is not necessarily a good thing. There are many persons in our society who refuse to abide by the accepted standards of civil behaviour and rightly incur the outrage of the rest of their community.

On the other hand, achievers of all categories and in all eras of history have been blessed with the ability to pursue their objectives even when they went against the normal beliefs, attitudes, thinking and practices of their contemporaries. Indeed the records conclusively prove that if you would excel in any field you must be prepared to be different from the majority. Popular opinion takes the easy option, and stagnates around custom and tradition. Pioneers, however, are always impelled to peek beyond what is already known, and venture into uncharted territory. Without such people we would continue to think the earth is flat, countries would not have been discovered, and we would be still rubbing our flints together to get some spark!

There can be no more worthwhile endeavour than seeking to be the very image of our Heavenly Father, moulded into His likeness, exhibiting His characteristics, and shedding the radiance of His glorious light wherever there is darkness. It is only then we can attain the pinnacle of our true potential in this and our later life.

Why is it that most persons fall short of this high ideal? Is it possible that if more believers had the enthusiasm, motivation, courage and pioneering attitude of early discoverers that they would explore the boundless uninhabited spaces of Yahweh's possibilities? The majority of believers are content to read the Bible as mere spectators, having great admiration for its heroes, without daring to believe that the Elohim of those past times is the same One whom we serve. It is clear from the Bible that whenever persons dared to stand alone in their belief, obedience, trust and confidence in Yahweh, unusual things always happened. Nevertheless, most believers today have not taken this cue and prefer the safety of the crowded coastline to the loneliness of venturing out into the vast deep with Yahweh. Great benefit awaits those who treat the Bible more as a practical workbook that teaches us how we can become our best possible selves in this life as well as hereafter.

It is time for spiritual navigators to set sail. Let us start by looking at some of the characteristics of a few Bible personalities who in today's parlance would be described as being "a cut above the rest." Perhaps by studying and applying the principles that caused these persons to have had unique experiences, we, too, may discover to our utter amazement that "*with Yahweh nothing will be impossible,*" Luke 1:37.

Woman with Issue of Blood

A vast crowd thronged Yahshua on His way to heal Jairus' daughter, Mark 5:22-34. There were people all around Him, many perhaps jostling to get as near as possible to this Man whose fame of His miraculous healing power had spread throughout the region of Decapolis and beyond.

Amidst the crowd was a 'certain woman' – a special, different woman, who was there on a mission. She had not come to be a spectator, but to be a recipient of this great power about which she had heard. Her need was urgent. She was desperate. She knew of no other who could have helped her. She had been hemorrhaging for the past twelve years, went to many doctors, who could not help, spent all she had to try to bring about healing, yet instead of improving, her condition worsened. She was at her wits' end, drained physically, emotionally, financially and socially.

Amidst her gloom, she found one ray of hope. Yahshua, the healer, was passing by her way that day. This was her life-saving opportunity, not to be missed!

She mused: "*If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well,*" Mark 5:28. Her confidence in this Healer was so great, that she knew she did not need to trouble Him. Just touching His clothes would have been enough. Though feeble and writhing in pain she knew she should spare herself no effort to grasp this chance for a change. No sacrifice was too great. She would have to shove her way past more able-bodied people. She could not focus on the hindrance that stood in her way, but only the cure that she so desperately needed.

One can imagine that last inch that separated her from her healing, as, filled with great expectation she strained every sinew, to touch His garment. Then it happened! No guessing. No hoping.

Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction. And Yahshua, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My clothes?" But His disciples said to Him, "You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" And He looked around to see her who had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction," Matt 5:29-34.

Mingling among that vast crowd were no doubt many others who also needed healing. They were hoping that Yahshua would have touched them. But this one woman could not wait for His touch. Her desperate situation demanded desperate, unusual methods. She would stop at nothing until she touched Him. Hers is the only recorded case of healing in that large multitude.

Strive Ahead

If we are to receive from Yahweh and Yahshua an extraordinary life-changing experience, we will need to do something out of the ordinary that others cannot be bothered to do. The experience of this frail, decrepit, and unnamed woman has some secrets for those who are not satisfied to be on the periphery of Yahweh and Yahshua's great power. Let us no longer be mere spectators, admiring this woman's courage and inner strength. Let us instead unlock every fibre of lesson we can glean from this account, for our benefit, and then apply it to our circumstances on our voyage to discovering the depths of Yahweh's abundant supply.

We must be fed up with continuing the way we have always done in the past that has brought no results to our circumstances. If you keep on doing the same things, you will keep on getting the same outcome. Ask yourself the question: "Am I presently

receiving Yahweh's best?" You serve an infinitely powerful Elohim. Have you tapped in to His boundless resources yet? The writer is not simply referring to material or physical blessings. There is so much more of Yahweh's blessings than the material or physical things, which will perish one day. For example, have you begun to reflect the very image of your Father? How can you settle for anything less and yet call yourself His child? How desperately do you really want to be like Him?

We must come to the point where we stop seeking other solutions, having learned that we are incapable of changing ourselves, and that no one else can help us. We would have abandoned the arm of flesh that had consistently failed us, or kept on giving the same inadequate results.

We must be quite clear in our minds about the One for whom we are

seeking. No other person or thing in that crowd mattered in the least to the woman. Her gaze was fixed, and her motive clear. Only Yahshua would satisfy the deep longings of her heart. She needed Him as desperately as the air she breathed. For without Him she would die. Apart from your need for Yahshua, any other need is of secondary importance. Let your focus be first and foremost on the Giver before the gift.

Cast yourself in reckless abandon upon Yahweh, knowing there is no other port of call. Without Him, you have nothing. With Him you have everything.


Hold On

A casual, superficial, lack-lustre, token-gesture touch without purpose will not bring the desired results. There were many persons touching Yahshua that day, but their touch was ineffective. By contrast when the searching fingers of this desperate woman took hold of His garment, something in her united with and ignited the power in Him. The result was a miracle.

There are many believers claiming to be touching Yahshua, yet nothing happens. Strange things will begin to happen in your life when like Jacob you hold on to Him refusing to give up until He blesses you - with His presence, image, passion, mission, revelation power ... all of Him.

Yahweh does not change. You cannot literally touch Yahshua's garment today as that woman did, but you can reach out in other ways to touch Him, such as prayer, fasting, worship, praise, thanksgiving and your continual heart's cry. Be clear, resolute and persistent in reaching out to Him. Never give up or give in. Never be complacent. The crowd settles for anything, or even nothing apart from the excitement of being there. The 'one in the crowd' settles only for Yahweh's best. When the best comes you will know; there will be no guessing, make-belief or apologizing for Yahweh. Something from Him would have flowed into you and changed you. Until then, and even afterwards, your heart's cry will be "Nearer Yahweh to you."

To obtain a printout of the following mini-study go to page 22

Mini - Study 

Hebrew/Aramaic Origin of the New Testament

*Textual analysis and scholarship supporting
an original Hebrew New Testament*

We of Yahweh's New Covenant Assembly accept both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, and generally follow the King James translation because many reference works are based upon that version.

We do not accept, however, the substituted names and common titles of our Heavenly Father and His Son. We also object to the Hellenized names given to the Hebrew worthies in the New Testament, such as Hezekiah appearing as "Ezekias" (Mat. 1:9), and Judah (Yahudah) as "Judas" (Mat. 1:2).

Beyond just names, churchianity itself is tainted with Greek thinking, Hellenized creeds, and unscriptural practices derived from Greco-Roman infusions through a Greek-translated New Testament.

Scholarship is increasingly validating the case for a Hebrew original New Testament. We include some of their documentation in this short study.

Examining all the evidence, we conclude that the New Testament was inspired in Hebrew (or Aramaic) and then later translated into Greek. The testimony to this is voluminous and logical. One needs only to consider that the writers were themselves Hebrews, and "while the language is Greek, the thoughts and idioms are Hebrew" (*Compassive Bible*, appendix 94).

Beginning on page 7 is a list of scholars and their treatises supporting an original Hebrew New Testament. This list is by no means comprehensive. Other enlightened experts have come to the same realization that the New Testament was originally a collection of Hebrew works. The Bible's Hebrew writers were led by the Holy Spirit to write in their native Hebrew language, just as Paul (Shaul)

Promises Kept

Yahweh has promised: *"You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart,"* Jeremiah 29:13.

It is full time that we stop paying token acceptance of His promises and really believe Yahweh's word, searching for Him, and reaching out to touch Him with a desperate zeal and confidence akin to that one woman in the crowd, who was the only one that received from Yahweh.

We must want a change so passionately that we will not even consider the hindrances, however large or strong, that stand in our way, such as the less motivated people who do not feel what we feel, and do not have our desperate need.

Keep Pressing On

We must press beyond the obstacles, letting everything that stand in the way be a greater motivation to press and keep on pressing through, never giving up until we receive the prize. We need to have this attitude and stubborn determination whenever there is a need in our lives like overcoming our weaknesses, hurts, anxieties, fears and so on. For all these, the Bible's panacea is to seek after and passionately desire Yahweh's kingdom and His righteousness. Until we see His face, we will accept no substitutes or hindrances. Nothing and no one will stop us from receiving the crown that awaits us. We will be the one in the crowd who is willing to be different and will win the prize.

Dare to be that woman
With the issue of blood
Who surged ahead of others
Who in her way had stood
Until she touched the Master
Who alone could cure
And end years of disaster
When she lost all she had in store

Woman with Alabaster Flask of Oil

When Yahshua was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask

of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor." But when Yahshua was aware of it, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this (evangel) is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her," Matthew 26:6-13.

This woman did something that no one else present, including His own disciples, would have done. In doing so she had made of herself a spectacle and target of criticism. Instead of praising, the disciples ridiculed her for having lavished like water upon their Master, such expensive fragrant oil. She had been moved by something far greater than the value of the oil to sacrifice that which was precious to her. This oil was perhaps the best she could offer in a personal, loving expression of how much she valued Yahshua. She had obviously felt that for Him no gift was too precious and no price too dear. She received a higher commendation from Yahshua for her lavish unselfish, loving deed than many others, even including the disciples, were not so privileged to have obtained. Yahshua promised that her fame would be worldwide, wherever His message was preached.

One lesson here is that if we genuinely desire the best from Yahshua, we should be first willing to give Him our best. As long as our gifts are second rate, we will receive second-rate blessings. If we want to change from mediocrity to Yahweh's excellence, we must be willing to pay the price. Excellence does not come cheaply. Great achievements cost great sacrifice, painstaking toil and perseverance.

Yet, it is most important to note that this woman did not give in order to receive Yahshua's praise. She

asked for nothing, but the privilege to minister. When we pour out ourselves freely from a heart of love, Yahweh takes note and repays us. This woman gave, expecting nothing in return. What better and more symbolic gift could have been given to the One who was about to pour out freely the most precious blood as a gift from a heart of love? This woman's gift is comparable to the intended gift of another hero, Abraham, who was prevented in the last second from offering his only son Isaac as a sacrifice of love and obedience to Yahweh. Outstanding people of Yahweh are the ones who are willing to deny themselves totally to Him for the sheer joy of pleasing Him.

This is yet another lesson we will apply when we move on from being spectators to participants. When, like the woman with the aromatic oil, you have poured out your richest fragrance in service to Yahshua, you will be criticised for your unique exuberance, but you can be sure that although you did it only from a heart of love, He will shower His radiant approval upon you.

Dare to be that woman
Who with costly oil
Lavished it upon the Master
Seeking no reward for her toil.

Peter Walking on the Water

In the fourth watch of the night Yahshua went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Yahshua spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." And Peter answered Him and said, "Master, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Yahshua, Matt 26:25-29.

When the disciples saw a figure approaching them walking upon the water they were petrified. "A ghost approaching us!" was the frightening thought of these panic-stricken men.

Yahshua assured them that it was He. Nevertheless, perhaps still not recovered from their fright, all but one of them clung to the safety of their boat. Peter on the other hand seized the moment. "What better place to be than with my Master?" he must have thought. He asked Yahshua to confirm it was He, by commanding Peter to come to Him. Yahshua obliged, Peter complied, and was soon out of the boat walking like Yahshua upon the water.

It is true that when Peter took his eyes off of Yahshua and considered the boisterous wind, he began to sink. But that cannot erase his unique feat of having been the only person apart from Yahshua who has ever walked on water. He achieved this by leaving others in the boat, while he ventured out into uncharted waters, daring to do the impossible at the command of Yahshua. What had astonished others had motivated Peter. He did something about it with eyes fixed upon Yahshua, and found himself doing like his Master.

The lesson here is that anything is possible when we take our eyes off circumstances, doubts and fears, then ignoring the crowd, obeying Yahshua, with eyes firmly fixed upon Him. It teaches us that great things will happen when we gaze upon and reach out to Yahshua, preferring to abandon ourselves recklessly to the 'uncertainty' of His will than to remain in the 'safety' of any alluring alternative.

Dare to be like Peter
To leave the boat-based crew
And tread upon the water
As he saw his Master do.

Daniel Choosing the Den of Lions

Daniel's jealous conniving conspirators could find no fault with him "*except concerning the law of his Elohim,*" Daniel 6:5. Anxious to get Daniel removed from his high office, they inveigled Darius the king to sign a decree that "*whoever petitions any (deity) or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions,*" Daniel 6:7.

Daniel fearlessly defied the consequences of praying to Yahweh. In fact he invited attention to his defiance by praying with his windows wide open for all to see. While they only had it in their power to react, Daniel held the initiative and took the challenge to them, in similar fashion as David with Goliath.

When the king realized that Daniel was to be victim of his decree, *he "was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him,"* Daniel 6:14. But he could not for the law was unalterable.

Daniel was cast into the den, victorious even in adversity with the knowledge that the lions' most savage onslaught could not have torn or touched his commitment to Yahweh. What stubborn resolution! Like the Hebrew boys he was inferring that even if the Elohim whom he served did not deliver him, his obedience to Yahweh was non-negotiable. How happy his conspirators must have been to see such display of foolhardiness, as they would have regarded such bravado.

Yahweh was with Daniel. The lions seemed as though they had been were divinely sedated until after Daniel's exit, and his conspirators took his place in the den.

There were others in the kingdom who would have submitted to this decree or might have prayed secretly. Not so with Daniel. He was not part of the compromising crowd. His passion and commitment for serving Yahweh was much greater than any concerns he may have had for his own safety. Yahweh would remain supreme in his life even to the end.

The lesson is clear. Our loyalty to Yahweh is to be paramount and unswerving, above all other considerations at all times. This is why the emphasis of our heart's longings must not be for solutions to our problems or for changes in our circumstances, but for the Living Elohim who is above all, and over all. Yahweh will accept no competition for our allegiance, not even when we are

in the midst of the severest testing. By putting Him first, He will put us first.

Dare to have a purpose
To stand alone for Yah
With a Daniel type of focus
That no threat of death can bar.

Boy Who Gave His Lunch

A great multitude had been following Yahshua. Among that crowd was a lad, of whom very little is known, except that he gave his lunch consisting of "*five barley loaves and two small fish*" to Yahshua, and through his sacrificial gift, five thousand men as well the women and children were fed. (John 6:5-13)

It is remarkable how a lad would have given up his lunch, not knowing what would have happened, and if he would have been able to have any of his lunch back. Like a hungry dog ready to snap at anyone who dared to take its meal, this lad could have protested vehemently. Furthermore, even the disciples thought that this lad's lunch was but a drop in the ocean of empty bellies waiting to be fed. Their doubts could have served to fuel this lad's wrath by showing to him the futility of surrendering his lunch.

Yet, we hear of no objection from him, when many similar lads would have been at least disgruntled. We do not know anything of his belief in Yahshua, but this much we know, and it is enough, that he gave his all to the Master, who in turn blessed it, and distributed it to His disciples. Thereafter, food simply kept on flowing until all had eaten, and there were even twelve baskets of the fragments of the five barley loaves remaining.

If one lunch surrendered to Yahshua satisfied the needs of so many, can we begin to understand what would happen if believers totally surrendered (abandoned) their lives to Yahshua? It is hard to think that among so many people, including children, only one person brought their lunch with them. However, we can safely say that only this lad's lunch was available for the Master's use. Would we be willing to put our lives into Yahshua's hands, even when the moment was

inopportune, or possibly fraught with danger?

One lad gave his lunch to the Master
Causing vast multitude to eat
If our lives to Him we surrender
Who knows the needs He would
meet?
The little things so dear to us
That are our earthly treasure
May be the stuff we must
Sacrifice to gain Yah's fullest
measure.

Moses at Mount Sinai

When *"all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking...they trembled and stood afar off,"* Exodus 20:18.

Perhaps the signs they witnessed reminded them vividly of the awesome power and holiness of Yahweh, in contrast with their proven weakness and sinfulness. They were filled with fear, knowing they had no prospect of survival in the hallowed presence of their omnipotent, omniscient, sovereign.

You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not Yahweh speak with us, lest we die", was their plea to Moses, Exodus 20:19.

Filled with their guilt of sin, and dominated by fear, they missed this unique, historic and monumental opportunity to get close to Yahweh: *"The people stood afar off."* Moses thought differently. Leaving the crowd behind, *he "drew near the thick darkness where Yahweh was,"* Exodus 20:21.

The vast majority did not experience first-hand the benefits of drawing close to Yahweh. In fact, when Moses delayed in returning from the mountain, they drew farther away to the point at which they had become just like the heathens in making a molded calf to worship, which had been forbidden by Yahweh. By contrast, Moses positioned himself to hear from Yahweh and received even more of Yahweh's laws directly from the mouth of Yahweh.

You cannot expect to hear directly from Yahweh whilst maintaining a

distance from Him. It is only by getting close that you will learn His thoughts and radiate the glory that comes from personally abiding in His presence.

Will you dare to be like Moses
In drawing close to Yah,
Or will you, like the people
Choose to stand afar,
Drifting even farther
Than you had been before
When you could be closer
And receive from His precious store?

Conclusion

In each of the above examples, whereas the majority of persons did nothing more than set the scene by their presence, one person among them stood head and shoulders above them, grasped the moment and did something spectacular. These heroes all had one thing in common. They had a purpose that was far greater than any other consideration that could have stood in their way. Their purposes revolved around pleasing, obeying or being intimately close to Yahweh or Yahshua. They all demonstrated the phenomenal benefits to be experienced by placing confidence in Yahweh and Yahshua. They were all ordinary persons with an extraordinary connection or insight to the Omnipotent Power.

They are perfect examples of what Yahweh can do in lives that are wholly yielded to His will. Yahweh longs to do the same for His people today. In Daniel 11:32 we are told, *"The people who know their Elohim shall be strong, and carry out great exploits."*

2Chron 16:9 tells us: *"the eyes of Yahweh run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him."*

Ps 84:11 assures us: *"No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly."*

If we really believe the Bible, it is time that we put it to the test, and totally surrender ourselves into the hands of the Omnipotent One who asks in Jeremiah 32:27 *"Is there anything too hard for Me?"*

We have no strength of our own. In ourselves the best one of us is weak and helpless. We can only demonstrate amazing strength when we trade in our weakness for Yahweh's power. This is not achieved by a once for all decision, but by daily spending unhurried quality time in the presence of the Master Potter.

Yahweh is the same as He has always been. As He was to the woman with the issue of blood, He will be to you, whatever your need may be. There is no reason to live a second-rate empty life, when the Giver of abundant life is waiting with outstretched arms to transform you.

What limitation you place upon yourself, by choosing to be one of the crowd, instead of being the one in the crowd who puts Yahweh first! Why should you continue to rely on yourself or others, when our infinitely greater Elohim desires to take control and lead you into vast unexplored, unimaginably places to display His greatness in you?

It is not about searching for the miraculous. If you do you will never find it. The woman with the issue of blood wasted all she had and suffered for a long time while she searched in vain. It is about seeking for the Miracle Maker, Yahweh, with all your heart, as for a precious, priceless treasure and then continually abiding in Him. His transforming presence will change you into His best. There can be nothing better. *"But seek first the kingdom of Yahweh and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you,"* Matthew 6:33.

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me, John 15:4.

You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart," Jeremiah 29:13.

The simple choice is yours. Will you continue to be just 'like the rest' or will you instead choose Yahweh's best?

Elder Buel Hallpike

Christmas Truth or Xmas Traditions?

This has to be a deep study as we go into this intriguing subject which has deceived the whole of Christianity and its surrounding world. Many students of the Scriptures have been confused by the writings of the church fathers throughout time. Let us ask questions and investigate this subject through their writings, history, prophecy, and the Sacred Scriptures.

There is no official date for Yahshua's birth, but in 354 A.D. the Bishop of Rome started observing the "Christes Masse" festival on Dec. 25th. The date coincided with an established celebration of the Teutonic tribes in Northern Europe as a time for rejoicing at the sun's return to the earth after the winter solstice. This festival for the sun god, or "Sol invictus" was officially recognized by the emperor Aurelian in 274 A.D. By celebrating Yahshua's birth during the season of pagan ritual, the Christian church grasped the opportunity to turn heathens from sun worship to worshipping the "sun of the spiritual world."

Because of the Teutonic taint — the customs which were originally pagan — associated with Christmas time, the holiday was banned by the Puritans from 1642—52. An official document condemned Christmas in the American colonies in 1659 and this jolly season was outlawed. In the 19th century, German and Irish immigrants brought to America the Christmas customs and traditions of their home countries and renewed the holiday's popularity. By 1836, Christmas was a legal holiday in Alabama, and in most of the other states by the end of the 1800's. Excerpts from an article in the Bradenton Herald, Dec.24, 1978.

The Legend of the Xmas Festival

The display of the nativity through the Xmas holidays pictures Mary, Joseph, and the babe with the three wise men and the shepherds. The Xmas legend which has been practiced for centuries is misrepresenting. The World Book Encyclopaedia tells how the three wise men and the shepherds followed the star to Bethlehem to the inn where the Messiah was born. Scripture only mentions the wise men, not "three", that followed the star. The shepherds received a sign from heaven by an angel sent from Yahweh.

The Son was born and wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. And in the same country shepherds were abiding, keeping watch over the flock by night. The angel appeared and the high esteem of Yahweh beamed round about them, they were sore afraid. The angel announced the birth of the Messiah unto them. The sign that was given unto the shepherds: you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising Yahweh. Now the shepherds went into Bethlehem; they came with haste and found Mary, Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger, Luke 2:7—16.

When the Messiah was born in the days of Herod the king, there came wise men from the east inquiring where he, the King of the Jews, was born ... Herod, when he had privately called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. (Notice it was some time later that they found the child.) ... And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother. (Note that the family was not at the inn, but residing in a house.) And the wise men fell down and worshipped him, and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh, Matt. 2:1,2, 7, 11,

The World Book Encyclopaedia states that the custom of giving gifts began in memory of the gifts that the shepherds and wise men presented to the Messiah, but the shepherds did not present gifts to the babe.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising Yahweh for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them, Luke 2:20.

History and Scripture do not reveal the exact date of the Messiah's birth. The World Book Encyclopaedia, article on Christmas reads, "For more than 300 years, people observed his birthday on various dates. In A.D.354, Pope Liberius of Rome ordered the people to celebrate on Dec.25th. This date was chosen because the people of Rome were already observing it as the feast of Saturn (the name of a Roman god), celebrating "The birthday of the sun. (BAAL)".

The word "Christmas" is derived from two words, Christ and mass. The word "Christ" was a Greek appellation given to the Saviour, and "mass" was derived from an Anglo-Saxon word "moessa" meaning holy day or feast. The word Christ-mas itself shows us that it is a mixture of paganism and so-called Christianity.

Christmas is celebrated in most all countries as the birthday of Messiah. People take part in religious ceremonies, in observing "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men." Many celebrate in social drinking and parties, the firing of loud fireworks, etc. Many people lose their lives at this time of year. The customs of exchanging gifts and decorating is commercialised religion. Stories have been told from generation to generation about the origin of Christmas.

The Christmas Tree

Please find out yourself and read in the Old Testament that many years before Messiah was born, pagans really worshipped the tree.

Thus saith Yahweh, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good, Jer 10:2-5.

These verses warn us not to learn the way of the heathen, and not to be followers of their customs because they are vain, useless, hollow, idle, empty, fruitless, senseless, pointless, futile, wasted, to no avail, and many more examples could be used in place of the word "vain." We ask you once again to read for yourself this entire chapter from your own Bible, and take note. Is not this a full description of the modern day Christmas tree? This festival affects most industries,

because of the millions who buy products of all kinds for gifts.

In Revelation 18:8, 15 and 17 we read that by "great Babylon the merchants of the earth were made rich. Time will come that the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her, for no man bought her merchandise any more. Her plagues shall come in one day" (the fall of Babylon). "In one hour, so great riches have come to nought."

History and Scripture bears witness that our Saviour was not born December 25th in mid-winter.

In Luke 2:1-16, we read Mary and Joseph had to go from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth into Bethlehem of Judaea to register for taxation. This journey would have been very difficult in the mid-winter as the only transportation in those days was by animal such as camel, horse, ass or oxen or by foot. Also, taxes were usually paid in the fall of the year. Neither do shepherds tend their flocks in the open fields at this time of year.

The Xmas dinner with all its trimmings is also of paganism. When the mid-winter festival of celebrating in honour of their idols came around each year (December), it was known as the Saturnalia. Saturn was but another name for Nimrod, Tammuz, or "the hidden god". This was a vile and immoral feast. It was a feast of drunkenness and debauchery (excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures of every kind). The merry-making of this very season passed into the Roman Church and on down to our present civilization.

So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans which things I hate, Revelation 2:15.

The Nicolaitans were members of an early religious sect, and followed the doctrine of Balaam. Their leader was Nicolas and Nicolas was a proselyte of Antioch, Acts 6:5. The word proselyte means one newly come (Greek). A new convert to some religious sect. Nicolaitane is a compound word of Nike and Laos in Greek. Nike is the name of the goddess of victory in Greek, whose function was to proselyte or evangelize for Zeus.

Laos is the Greek word for laity, devotees, of followers.

But I have a few things against you, because you have them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before My children, to eat things sacrificed unto idols and to commit fornication, Revelation 2:14.

Therefore without any guesswork or speculation, we can identify Nike-Laos, Nike-Laity, or Nicolaitans with the fellow St. Nika-Laos, or Santa Claus, who appears every year in the month of December to remind us that the birthday of Zeus, Jupiter, Mithra, Nimrod, Baal, Addon, Apollo, Tammuz, and Bacchus, is the 25th, and is to be memorialised.

Is it not strange that there have been five popes named Nicholas. Saint Nicholas (C.E.300) was one of the most popular saints of the Christian church. He was extremely kind, and often going out at night taking gifts to the needy. Children were so fond of him and his habit of bringing gifts, that the custom of celebrating his feast day was maintained as we see each year when that season comes around.

In Matthew chapter 2, we read there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, asking where, He that is born to be King of the Jews could be found, because they had seen His star, and have come to worship Him. King Herod with his associates were troubled over this news, and enquired of the chief priests and scribes of the people demanding them to find out where the expected Messiah should be. They concluded even in those days using the Scriptures that He should be in the area of Bethlehem of Judah, Micah 5:2.

Then Herod privately called in these wise men to obtain the time of the sighting of this star they had seen, so he could estimate the child's age. So he sent them to Bethlehem to search out the child and return to him with information of His whereabouts so he will be able to go and "Worship." When they left the king the star reappeared and led them to the house where the child and the mother were. There they fell down and worshipped

Him and gave him gifts consisting of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Almighty warned them in a dream not to return to Herod but to return to their own country by a different route.

Later, Joseph was told to flee to Egypt with his wife and the young child. Then Herod made orders to slay all children up to two years old in the country. This illustrates the wise men were not at the birth place of Messiah but quite a few months later, if not a year after His birth, at His parents house.

The three types of gifts are very symbolic. The wise men must have had a very deep understanding with regard to our Saviour, These gifts revealed the threefold office as King, Priest, and Prophet which He was commissioned to perform.

Gold Represents Headship

Scripture	Comments
Dan. 2:37,38	O King you are the head of gold
Luke 1:31-34	Yahshua given power and authority
Eph. 5:23	Yahshua head of the body
Col. 1:18.	Preeminence in all things
Isaiah 9:6	The government shall be upon His shoulders
Zech. 9:9	King of salvation.
Mark 11:10.	The Master: Hosanna in the Highest

Frankincense is the Symbol of High Priest

Scripture	Comments
Exo. 30:34-38	Only pure frankincense for temple use
Rev. 5:8	It represents the prayers of the saints
Psalms 141:2	Let thy prayers be as incense
Luke 1:1-11	Praying without at the time of incense
1 Cor. 5:7	Messiah our Passover
Heb. 10:12	At the right hand of Yahweh

Heb. 8:6	There is a new, and better covenant now
1 Peter 2:5	Offerings acceptable to Yahweh
Heb. 7:25	The altar of incense served as intercessor for our sins, but
Rom. 8:26	Yahshua as our offering became our High priest and makes intercession for our sins

Myrrh is the Symbol of Yahweh's Spirit

Scripture	Comments
Exo. 30:23-25	Anointing oil of pure myrrh
Luke 3:22	Yahshua received the Spirit
Rev.19:10	He was the Spirit of prophecy
Luke 4:1	He was filled with the Spirit
Acts 3:22	Yahweh shall raise up your Mighty One for a prophet
Isaiah 61:1-3	The Spirit of Yahweh was upon me
Luke 4:18,19	I will put my words into his mouth
Exo. 28:41	Aaron and sons were anointed

Exo. 29:7	Anointing oil for the high priest
Psalms 133:2	Oil ran down Aaron's garment
Lev. 8:12	Anointed with the Spirit to preach
Heb. 1:2	In these last days Yah has spoken unto us through His Son
Matt. 23:37-39	He foretold the destruction of his people in Jerusalem, His death and resurrection to fulfil the plan of salvation

Looking unto Yahshua the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the torture stake, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of Yahweh, Heb 12:2.

Conclusion

On reading this article, you might ask: "Now what is there to replace this 'family traditional season' which, as you see, Almighty's people should never have celebrated, if they remained in the knowledge of the Truth." This is a very common question and a typically human one where we all want a replacement for anything we supposedly lost.

Well, how wonderful our Creator is. In His wisdom He gives us a set of Feast days in which we obtain far more meaning of our Saviour Yahshua the Messiah, when we observe them as He instructs us. They are all carefully listed down in your own Bible, Leviticus chapter 23.

Please note when you read this chapter, it will inform you that they are the Feasts Of Yahweh. They are not just Jewish feasts.

Note: Judah is only one of the tribes of Israel and Moses was to speak to all the children of Israel.

To obtain copies of our free literature do one of the following:

1. Go to our website: www.yaiy.org
 - a. navigate to Free Literature
 - b. click on the literature of your choice
 - c. print it out; or
2. Email us (Beacon@yaiy.org) your choice of literature and we will reply with your choice as an attachment; or
3. Use our toll-free line (1-877-642-4101) to order (maximum of 3 pieces by regular mail without charge)

Elder Lionel Gets

Question & Answer

Q Please explain why Paul had Timothy circumcised?

A Thanks for the letter and question on Acts 16:1-3. I think the answer is partly found in Acts 21:24. Paul was good about being like others to save others:

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

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

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

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

Q Can you explain Exodus 35 for ? [kindling a fire on the Sabbath]

A The question of Exodus 35 is an age-old query concerning kindling fire on the Sabbath. We must keep this chapter in context. Chapter 35 of Exodus picks up the construction (continuation of chapter 30:18) of the Tabernacle and the fixtures. This required an extremely hot fire first to smelt the metals for various needs such as the vessels, lamps, sockets, grates, etc., all of which are mentioned in the verses that follow in this the 35th chapter:

“And Moses collected all the assembly of the children of Israel, and said to them, These are the things which Yahweh has commanded, to do them. Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a Sabbath day of rest to Yahweh: whoever does work on it shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your dwelling upon the Sabbath day,” Exodus 35:1-3.

Scholars admit there was a tendency to start fires toward the ending of the Sabbath so that when the sun had finally set, they could have a roaring fire ready for smelting of metals, and they could commence their labors at once. (Note the next verse goes into detail of the metals needed for utensils.) They were not to take precious Sabbath time to get a fire started late on the Sabbath even in the primitive days of their wandering.

In Israel's primitive situation, building a fire meant gathering the necessary wood, which may have required much searching, as some wood burns hotter than others. Trees would then have to be cut in manageable lengths.

This 35th chapter is protective of the Sabbath very much like the 16th chapter where Israel is to bake and prepare all foods ahead of time so there would be a minimum of toil on the Sabbaths:

“And he said to them, This is what Yahweh has said: Tomorrow is the rest, the holy Sabbath, of Yahweh: bake what ye bake and cook what ye will cook; and lay up for yourselves all that remains over, to be kept for the morning,” Exodus 16:23.

Yahweh is very clear in telling us that we are to spend the entire Sabbath in worship and communing with Him. We are not to use the time for our own pleasure or doing our own thing. This is the Bible's only prescription concerning the kindling of a fire on the Sabbath.

YAHWEH'S ASSEMBLY IN YAHSHUA
2963 CO. RD. 233
KINGDOM CITY, MO 65262

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
KINGDOM CITY, MO
PERMIT NO. 7

MOVING? Help us save 75¢ per issue by
sending us your new address!



**Valentine's
Day**

**Does It
Have
Pagan
Origins?**