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Beacon



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Put on the whole armor
of Yahweh, that ye may
be able to stand
against the
wiles of the
devil, Eph. 6:11.



YAIY Beacon

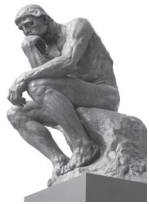


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Our Mission and purpose is to reach people around the world with the message of the revealed personal Names of Yahweh and His Son Yahshua the Messiah, as well as teaching the salvation truths that have been neglected for centuries.

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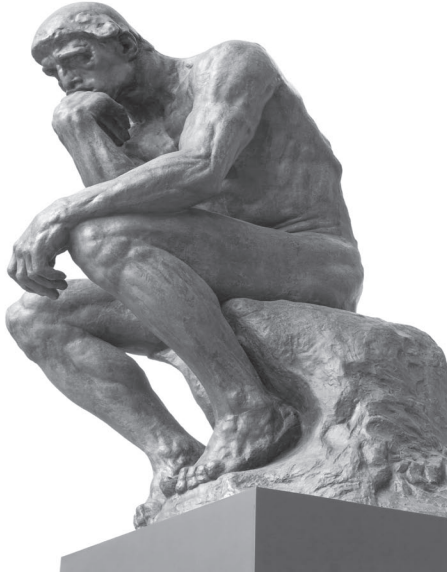


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Fight The Good Fight Overcoming Idleness

Topical search aids, like *The New Topical Textbook*, are great ways of getting a topic and researching it in Scripture. Since we can all get feeling a bit lazy and unmotivated, the topic of “Idleness” is a good subject to look into to see what the Bible has to say about it. In context, it will help us to see how to overcome it.

One of the ways of overcoming idleness is to get into the ring and fight, spiritually speaking, of course. Those of us in Messiah understand that we’re fighting a spiritual fight, not a physical one. Keeping that in mind, we can turn to Yahweh’s Spirit and His Word for help.

Don't Fall Behind

In an area describing gifts from the Spirit, we're told not to fall behind in doing things which are right and true, in Yahweh's sight and Spirit.

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Master. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer, Romans 12:9–12 NIV.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law, Gal. 5:22–23.

Even though a number of things are listed in these verses along with love, they all stem from the singular fruit of the Spirit, which is love. And, of course, we understand that Yahweh can be defined by the one word, Love (1 John 4:8). His Spirit accomplishes His will, in love.

It's easy to get overwhelmed today with every-

thing under the sun to do, but what is really important is to be able to build up the Body of Messiah in truth and to help it grow in stature to the maturity of the Messiah by conforming to Him. The ultimate maturity is to be able to give our lives to one another as He gave His life for us.

Since those in Messiah are few in number, it's important for us to come together for the sojourning Feasts, as we're enabled to do so. For those not able to come, it's going to be good to call or write them. This is one way to overcome idleness by spending time helping others. It's also good for us to do so.

Following in Yahshua's Footsteps

Paul, who followed in Yahshua's footsteps, said in Acts 20:32–35 ESV,

And now I commend you to Yahweh and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Master Yahshua, how He Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Are you feeling idle and slothful? Volunteer your time to help the brethren, sign up for activities at the Feast of Tabernacles. Save a second tithe so you can come to the Feasts and serve before Yahweh at His appointed times.

Can't come? Then send your greetings. Send something to be read to the entire congregation. Let them know they also have a brother or sister who is with them in the Spirit of Yahweh. And, vice versa,

we can send our greetings and love to those unable to make it, to whom we know are dedicated and if it had been possible, they would have been there where Yahweh has placed His Name.

For Elohim is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love which you have shown toward His Name, in that you have attended to the set-apart ones, and still attend. And we desire that each one of you show the same eagerness, to the entire confirmation of expectation until the end, in order that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through belief and patience inherit the promises, Hebrews 6:10–12 TS.

We've only touched upon a few Scriptures, but don't we already feel motivated to act? If we don't act, are we not going to suffer loss? "Cause and effect" is what we're talking about. We reap what we sow.

Blessings in Building

Proverbs 18:9 NIV says,

One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys.

If we're not building up and doing Yahweh's work, then we're essentially tearing down and doing the devil's work.

What is the end of it? It's not good for the sluggard, that's for sure. We have to get up and fight and work at doing what we need to do, otherwise we will be overcome by the world (rather than overcoming it).

I passed by the field of the sluggard and by the vineyard of the man lacking sense, and behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles; its surface was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, and received instruction. "A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to rest," then your poverty will come as a robber and your want like an armed man, Proverbs 24:30–34 NASB.

This was written by a man who was given wisdom, but the One Who is Wisdom takes this a step further in the parable of the talents, or coins as they are referred to in the New Century Version.

The king said to the men who were standing by, "Take the coin away from this servant and give it to the servant who earned ten coins." They said, "But sir, that servant already has ten coins." The king said, "Those who have will be given more, but those who do not have anything will have everything taken away from them. Now where are my enemies who didn't want me to be king? Bring them here and kill them before me," Luke 19:24–27 NCV.

This is a pretty graphic story. It brings home the point that we had better use what we've been given and not hide it away nor bury it somewhere where it can't be found. It also appears that this parable deals with those who decided that they didn't want to serve the King at all, but evidently did have the opportunity to do so.

In view of all this, make ev-

ery effort to respond to Yahweh's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with righteousness, and righteousness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone, 2 Peter 1:5–7 NLT.

Working Faith

When we come into the faith, are we growing? Are we making some mistakes along the way? Yes and Yes. The fact is, we are battling everything from fatigue to other flesh oriented things, because we are still in the flesh. But, we are to master those things which would be against Yahweh. And we are to focus on Him and rely on His Spirit to get us through.


Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, to obey it in its desires, neither present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to Elohim as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to Elohim. For sin shall not rule over you, for you are not under the law (i.e., under the penalty thereof) but under favour...For the wages of sin is death, but the favourable gift of Elohim is everlasting life in our Master Yahshua Messiah, Romans 6:12–14, 23 TS.

Overcoming is our lifelong struggle. But, we should remember we have the help we need in Messiah and in His Father's Spirit. In addition, we must walk in it and not resist it. We must walk in it, according to Scripture. This means we must be obedient to the Word of Yahweh, which is the very purpose of the Spirit as is prophesied in Ezekiel and also Jeremiah, not just for Judah, but for all of Israel and any who would join. See our mini-study called, "*The Hope of Is-*

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In-Depth Study

The Temple Tenth



rael." The message is:

Serve only Yahweh your Elohim and fear Him alone. Obey His commands, listen to His voice, and cling to Him, Deuteronomy 13:4 NLT. (See also Eccl. 12:13).

This is a little different from what you hear today, but this is the constitution of the coming Kingdom and it is for us now. It's what went on the side of the Ark of the Covenant into the Promised Land. And, it's not just for the physical people, but even the angels are to obey Yahweh.

Yahweh hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all. Bless Yahweh, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word, Psalm 103:19–20 KJV.

Spiritual Strength

How are the angels strengthened? Are they not strengthened by Yahweh? So where do we get our strength? It's the same source of Power that was and is in Messiah.

In Ephesians 6:10–13 NKJV, we read,

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Master and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of Yahweh, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of Yahweh, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Sort of sounds like a fight for our life, doesn't it? That's exactly what it is. We are enabled with the tools given us to overcome, but we have to gather them up and use them. They are available to us, but we must choose to pick up the pace

and to move forward in this fight we are in. Doing so will assure that we do not become idle.

Tools to Use

It's easy to compromise and it's easy to get lazy with Yahweh's Word in our lives. This may be why truth is the first tool to be mentioned among the tools at our disposal in the Book of Ephesians:

Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, Ephesians 6:14 NIV.

We should know what truth is. It's Yahweh's Word from Genesis to Revelation. A large portion has to do with the do's and the don'ts which guide us along the path of righteousness. Righteousness, according to Yahweh's ways, is not our own ways. What's the second

thing that's mentioned?

In Ephesians 6:15 NIV, it says,
And with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the evangel of peace.

What is the evangel of peace? What is the good news? Isn't it made up mostly of the fact that Yahweh sent His only begotten Son to live with man, so that we might have an appropriate sacrifice to forgive us of our sins? Knowing that breaking the law produces the death penalty, we need to have faith in the One Who can save us.

And what is it that the saints have in common, as is mentioned in Revelation 14:12? They keep the commandments of Yahweh and keep the faith of Yahshua. "The truth and the evangel of peace" or Yahweh's written commands and the forgiveness of transgressions against those commandments through Yahshua's sacrifice, having faith that we are indeed forgiven and don't have the death penalty hanging over us.

Stop Sinning!

Does this mean we will never sin? No, but we have an advocate on High to appeal through for mercy and ultimately forgiveness. So don't give up, but rather stop sinning.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us, 1 John 1:9–10 KJV.

This is speaking directly to the brethren. The Apostle John continues to tell the household of faith through this letter:

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Yahshua Messiah the Righteous, 1 John 2:1 NASB.

So what he is basically saying, is, "Don't sin." But, if you have, you

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Mini - Study

Let's Pull the Mask from HALLOWEEN

Every October 31 children across the land learn how extortion works through one of the most popular of ancient, pagan festivals. We know it as Halloween, which is a shortened combination of the words "Hallowed" and "evening." But there is nothing holy about this night.

"Trick or treat!" the bantam, masked marauders cry as they go from door to door coercing goodies from mostly compliant residents. Along with blackmail, the chance to deface private property and get away with it is also a big part of the "hallowed evening." Shaving cream, soap, and toilet paper are essential in the bag of tricks some of the mischievous have prepared especially for this weird, annual rite.

Imagine trying to explain the whole thing to a visitor from another planet!

Not Just for Youth Anymore

Visit many offices and department stores on October 31 and you'll see adult employees dressed in silly or grotesque costumes, perhaps with painted faces and fluorescent green hair.

They are psyching up for the Halloween party that night — when they'll get the chance to act foolishly without embarrassment. It seems that as our world sinks deeper into New Age paganism, this heathen, high holy day of the occult has zoomed to the top of the holiday charts. In fact, among adults Halloween is becoming as popular as Christmas.

But is Halloween just a harmless time of fun for the whole family, where they can practice their pumpkin-carving skills and then head for their store's costume department to try on the latest in the grotesque?

It's time to rip the mask from Halloween and expose it for what it is. What we find underneath should concern anyone who professes a belief or faith in the Bible.

still have an advocate to plead your case. Ultimately, John does not powder cake the importance of not sinning, as he continues with wording that makes it clear that if one continues sinning, they essentially have never known Yahweh nor Yahshua, and are, in fact, a liar.

Why would he say that? Because these are brethren who claim to know Yahweh and His Son, but if they don't live according to Scripture and in the Spirit of Yahweh, then they are lying to themselves and everyone around them!

The Apostle Paul said similar things to the brethren to get them to wake up and repent, which is what they should have already done, by stopping all sin and doing what is right according to Yahweh's instructions found in the law, writings and prophets. It's the only Scriptures they had, but they also had the Spirit to see the world differently and to avoid the evils in the world. Paul, John, and everyone else were teaching from the Spirit of Yahweh and the Scriptures. And what does Paul tell some of the brethren?

Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of Elohim. I say this to your shame, 1 Corinthians 15:34 ESV.

The message was clear. It was also clear that we are dealing with some of the same problems today.

The Apostle James also agreed with John and Paul that those breaking Yahweh's laws and ways of doing things needed help, and could receive forgiveness if they came back and stopped sinning.

Brethren, if any among you may go astray from the truth, and any one may turn him back, let him know that he who did turn back a sinner from the straying of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins, James 5:19–20 YLT.

Why did they teach what they did? Because they knew that there

is always hope for an individual who will stop sinning. It's those who will not stop sinning that are done. There is a death ultimately waiting for those who continue in sin, but Yahweh is merciful toward those that do repent.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so Yahweh pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust, Psalm 103:11–14 NKJV.

Coming to the Messiah

So don't take things lightly, fight the good fight, don't become complacent or idle. Yahshua, the Messiah, came that we might have Life

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Mini Study 

The Meaning of Prayer

Many know by memory the Master's Model Prayer. Yet, do they think of what they are really asking when they repeat His words? Here is a lesson about prayer that bears repeating!

It has always been man's innate desire to reach out beyond himself to tap the unseen powers beyond his own sphere, in an effort to achieve results outside his reach.

Even primitive, pagan man acknowledged unseen powers or beings beyond himself. Because he was not able to see or prove the existence of such supernatural powers, he created icons of these imagined forces. With them he hoped to get a physical handle on powers of the invisible spirit world.

Some pagan practices involved carving a talisman or totem pole from wood or stone and then inviting a spirit deity to inhabit that humanly created object. Other objects might include a "good luck" bracelet, ring or brooch to ward away evil spirits.

The Bible tells us not to rely on icons, images or figures made by man for our worship or protection, neither are we to bow down to them. Yahweh is the only true Creator and Heavenly Father.

To Whom Do We Pray?

As far back as Adam, many Biblical examples reveal that man was able to converse with his Creator and He would respond.

We are not to take up the ways of the heathen, but to follow examples of righteous men given us in the Bible.

Our Savior told the woman at the well in John 4:24, "Yahweh is spirit, and they that worship Him must

in the New Covenant. He was the Sacrifice for our sins. We should remember that is and was through Him (as the Mediator, between man and Yahweh) that the instructions were written down in the Scriptures for us to live by. It's literally His Word. Knowing this, let's look at a warning from the Master.

In Luke 6:47–49 NASB, Yahshua says,

Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who has heard and has not acted accordingly, is like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great.

He's saying that it's not just faith alone, but actions, which are needed. We need to build upon Yahweh's Word and also have faith in Yahshua. We should not only be in the Word, but have the weightier matters of the law in abundance as well. It's through the Spirit of Yahweh and in Messiah that all this is attainable and achievable. It is within our reach. It is True Love which flows from Yahweh's Spirit.

Enduring to the End

Paul's statement to Timothy is where we get the term "fight the good fight," and if we are fighting, we won't be idle. So let's close with what he wrote to Timothy years ago, which is just as applicable today as it was then for all of us in Messiah Yahshua.

But you, O man of Yahweh, flee from all this, pursue righteousness, reverence, faith, love, endurance

<see **Fight** page 15>

Halloween

History has recorded for us the origin of Halloween. It all begins with a people known as the Celts. These people dominated much of western and central Europe in the first millennium BC. It is believed they settled in the British Isles about the seventh century BC. Their economy was pastoral and agricultural, and they had no city life. Each tribe was headed by a king and was divided by class into Druids (priests), warrior nobles and commoners.

In general, the Celts believed that the sinful souls of those who died during the year had been transferred to the bodies of animals. They believed that their sins could be expiated by gifts and offerings and that their souls would be freed to claim a heavenly reward. At this time of the year the days are short and the Celts simulated the light and heat of the sun by building large bonfires.

From Celtic and Anglo-Saxon times, October 31 was observed as the eve of the new year and a time of death and renewal.

Druids

Druidism is a religious faith of ancient Celtic inhabitants of Gaul and the British Isles from the second century BC to the second century AD. This religion included the belief in the immortal soul, which, at death, was believed to pass into the body of a newborn child.

The observances connected with Halloween are thought to have originated among the ancient Druids, who believed on that evening (October 31) Saman (Samhain), the lord of the dead, called forth hosts of evil spirits. The Druids customarily lit great fires on Halloween, apparently for the purpose of warding off all these spirits. Common to both the Druids and other pagan beliefs, it was a time when the dead came back to life to mingle with the living. Samhain was thought to be the judge of the souls who determined their future.

Celebrations, The Complete Book of American Holidays, p. 258, says that at this time the Druids offered sacrifices to their sun god and that it was common for horses to be sacrificed since they were sacred to the Sun God. There were also human sacrifices. Men, mostly criminals, were imprisoned in wicker and thatch cages shaped like animals or giants. The Druid priests set fire to the tinders and the men were burned to death. In the Middle Ages in Europe, black cats were still being thrown

to the flames in wicker cages, for they were thought to be the friends of witches or even transformed witches.

What we now call Halloween was not so-called by the Druids. They celebrated what was called the Feast of Samhain. When the feast was over, villagers donned masks and costumes to represent the souls of the dead and paraded to the outskirts of town to lead the ghosts away.

In some areas, food was set outside for the spirits so that they would leave the house untouched. The trick-or-treat custom of today only re-enacts this ancient superstition.

Catholic Church Involvement

The celebration in the Roman Catholic Church, which would later merge with the Feast of Samhain, was known as All Saints' Day. This celebration "originated in the 7th century when the Pantheon at Rome was wrested from the barbarians, made into a cathedral, and renamed the Church of the Blessed Virgin and All Martyrs. Thus, from honoring all gods (which is the meaning of the Greek word 'pantheon'), the Pantheon became the center for glorifying all saints," Funk and Wagnalls Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, p. 363.

To increase the popularity of catholicism (increase their membership) the Catholic Church merely incorporated these pagan beliefs into the catholic beliefs.

Even though this day to honor all "the holy saints" was originally observed on the eve of May 13, Pope Gregory IV, in 835, decreed that November 1 should be universally observed as the day to honor the dead and to call it the Roman Catholic All Saints Day. This is why October 31 is called "Halloween." It is the evening before the day when one was to hallow all the saints.

Pumpkins

The use of large, or small, pumpkins, with a somewhat grotesque face carved on it, is representative of Samhain, the god of the dead, who would ward off evil spirits that night.

The phrase "jack-o-lantern" comes from an old Irish tale. It seems an Irishman by the name of Jack was fond of playing tricks on the devil. Being annoyed by this, the devil threw Jack a live coal from

hell and with this coal in a carved out pumpkin, Jack was forced to walk the earth forever.

The distribution of soul cakes was encouraged by the church as a way to replace the ancient practice of leaving food and wine for roaming spirits. The practice, which was referred to as “going a-souling,” was eventually taken up by children who would visit the houses in their neighborhood and be given ale, food, and money.

In 18th-century Ireland, a match-making cook might bury a ring in her mashed potatoes on Halloween night, hoping to bring true love to the diner who found it. In Scotland, fortune-tellers recommended that an eligible young woman name a hazelnut for each of her suitors and then toss the nuts into the fireplace. The nut that burned to ashes rather than popping or exploding, the story went, represented the girl’s future husband. (In some versions of this legend, confusingly, the opposite was true: the nut that burned away symbolized a love that would not last.) Another tale had it that if a young woman ate a sugary concoction made out of walnuts, hazelnuts and nutmeg before bed on Halloween night, she would dream about her future husband. Young women tossed apple-peels over their shoulders, hoping that the peels would fall on the floor in the shape of their future husbands’ initials; tried to learn about their futures by peering at egg yolks floating in a bowl of water; and stood in front of mirrors in darkened rooms, holding candles and looking over their shoulders for their husbands’ faces.

Witches

The word “witch” comes from the Anglo-Saxon “wicce” meaning “wise one.” Witches are said to use living talismans through which they derive their mystical powers. Witch hunting during “Halloween” became almost a national pastime

in the early colonial times.

The ABC’s of Witchcraft, p. 48, reports that the broomstick is a symbol of the male organ on which the witch mounts and leaps high around the fields to “teach” the crops how high to grow.

The skeleton is called the witches’ “horned god.” Under “skull,” the *Dictionary of Lore and Legend* says, “symbol of death, often with crossed bones beneath.” Like the head of Osiris in Egypt, the skulls of ancestors are worshipped in order to establish connections with the spirits of the dead.

But the Scripture gives a strong warning about this.

When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their Elohim? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? (Isa. 8:19-20, NIV).

Halloween

Webster defines Halloween as “the evening of October 31; the eve of All Saints’ Day; All hallows Eve: observed especially by children in costumes who solicit treats, often by threatening minor pranks.” Have not most of us heard the phrase “trick or treat” uttered by children on this day? One can easily observe parents driving their children from block to block so they go door to door uttering this phrase in hopes of receiving candy and goodies from people.

Webster places the following definition on the phrase “trick or treat”: “A children’s Halloween custom, in which they call on neighbors, using this phrase, and threaten to play a trick if a treat is not given.” Is it children only who follow this custom? If one is truly observant, one will see young adults doing the same. Is this not extortion?

Webster defines extortion as an act or instance of wresting or wringing (money, information, etc.) from a person by violence, intimidation, or abuse of authority.

On this day when a homeowner opens the front door and hears the chant “trick-or-treat,” doesn’t he quickly reach for the bowl of prepared treats to give away? The homeowner may simply believe no harm will be done if he gives free gifts. But, by doing so he only promotes the celebration of the pagan beliefs of setting out gifts to ward off the evil spirits.

Let The Scriptures Be Our Guide

Many parents will say to let their children go out on Halloween night and enjoy some innocent fun. They’re not hurting anyone. Can the origins of Halloween be anything but pagan? Allowing children to participate is nothing short of saying pagan ways are alright. But what does Yahweh say in Jer. 10:2?

Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

Yahweh further says in Deut. 18:12-13:

For all that do these things are an abomination unto Yahweh: and because of these abominations Yahweh your Elohim does drive them out from before you. You shall be perfect with Yahweh your Elohim.

We are to strive towards perfection. We shall not achieve perfection until Yahshua returns to set up the Kingdom. Matthew 5:48 says,

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Just because an act seems innocent in no way guarantees Yahweh’s approval. Halloween is just another occasion enshrouded with pagan connections.

Elder Roger G. Meyer



Building Yahweh's Sanctuary

The Bible has something to offer us far beyond that which we now possess. Yahweh promises us that we can rise far above our present realm to attain much more than that which the present world has to offer. But, it begins with acknowledging that He is the Almighty Yahweh. He rewards those who seek Him,

But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to Yahweh must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, Heb. 11:6.

Yahweh, the Mighty One of Israel, is ours by His sovereign grace. He is not served by men's hands as if He needed anything from us.

Elohim, Who made the world and everything in it, is Sovereign of heaven and earth, and does not live in temples made by men. Nor does He need anything that men can supply by working for Him, since it is He Himself Who gives life and breath and everything else to everyone, Acts 17:24-25 TEV.

Yahweh is the first cause of everything that has life. He is the source of all power and it is from Him that we live and move and have our being, Acts 17:28.

Yahweh offers us more than physical life. He gives us the opportunity to be His people by taking hold of His covenant.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as Yahweh our Elohim shall call, Acts 2:39.

Grab Hold of the Covenant

He offers everlasting life to all those who willingly accept His terms of obedience,

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

We have nothing to give Him in return. He has created all things. He made the universe. All is His. We are not able to offer Him anything because He has it all. Even our lives—our very being belongs to Him.

To those who willingly have taken hold of the covenant offered by the Heavenly Father Yahweh,

it is essential that we consider His promise that He would dwell among His people. Revelation 21:3 tells of the fulfillment of this prophecy:

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of Yahweh is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and Yahweh Himself shall be with them, and be their Elohim.

Yes, they shall be His people and He will be their Mighty One. This is also prophesied in places like Zechariah 2:10-11 and 8:3,

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Yahweh. And many nations shall be joined to Yahweh in that day, and shall be My people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that Yahweh of Hosts hath sent Me unto thee, Zechariah 2:10-11.

Thus saith Yahweh; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of Yahweh of Hosts the holy mountain, Zechariah 8:3.

You Are What You Value

In His sermon on the mount in chapters 5-7 of Matthew, Yahshua emphasized the life we should live. These are often referred to as guideposts for life in the Kingdom. Notice especially verses 19-21 of Matthew 6 TEV:

Do not save riches for yourselves here on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and robbers break in and steal. Instead, save riches for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and robbers cannot break in and steal. For your heart will always be where your riches are.

If we treasure the things in this life, most of our time will be spent with earthly things. We will be concerned and preoccupied with the materialism of life. This means involvement in the interests and pleasures the world has to offer.

It can be in the field of sports or recreation. These by themselves are not bad and are here for our enjoyment. But by having all our time taken up in dwelling on these pursuits night and day, precious little time is left for the preparation for the Kingdom of

Yahweh. Much time can be spent in social whirl—nightclubs, partying and actively seeking pleasure with others—to the detriment of neglecting the eternal Yahweh.

The Apostle John wrote that we should

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him, 1 John 2:15.

This can include materialism like cars and boats, activities, entertainment or any pleasure that we carry to excess. Appreciation of these by itself is not wrong, but it is wrong if such things interfere with a strong relationship with our Creator.

We are to be temperate in all things,

And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible, 1 Corinthians 9:25.

We must discipline ourselves to enjoy what Yahweh has given us here on this earth, but to make certain we have reserved time and energy in preparing for the Kingdom.

We are to

Do our best to win full approval in Yahweh's sight, as a worker who is not ashamed of his work, one who correctly teaches the message of Yahweh's truth, 2 Timothy 2:15, TEV.

All through the Bible a basic teaching is that we should seek those things that are above, and to keep our minds fixed on things heavenly and not on earthly goals.

If ye then be risen with Messiah, seek those things which are above, where Messiah sitteth on the right hand of Yahweh. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth, Colossians 3:1-2.

This is especially true for those who have been immersed into the Body of Messiah. We are to have put to death those earthly, fleshly desires and live in anticipation of the return of the Messiah to share

in His glory.

Yahweh's Plan for You

The vast majority of those in the world are not aware of the potential awaiting the human race. They are too absorbed in accumulating the wealth of the world, seeking power over men or seeking the pleasures of the world. To those who heed the call, however, Yahweh is working out a magnificent plan that is available through His Son. He has called you as you read this magazine and have come to an understanding of the truths He has given to His people.

What is it that Yahweh wants from His creation? What are the goals He has in mind? Certainly He can create whatever He desires whenever He wishes. He could create a grand series of mirrors

that would reflect His glory and His goodness, and He could bask in such satisfaction for ages on end. Or He could create living creatures like the brute beasts who would instinctively give obeisance to Him continually. They would have no willpower or thought of their own, but would automatically worship and adore Him, continually doing His pleasure.

Instead, He created mankind for a higher purpose. We are a creation a little lower than the angelic throng, and He put us in charge of the earth. From this human creation He selected Abraham and promised that through Abraham's seed would He make His plan known. Eventually, He selected the children of Israel as His special people.

In the song of Moses we read of the special care that Yahweh took of Israel in dividing up the earth and establishing the bounds of the earth according to the number of the people of Israel,

When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, Deuteronomy 32:8.

In verse 9, we come to realize that ALL of Yahweh's creation was made so that from throughout the universe He could have a treasure for Himself.

For Yahweh's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance, Deuteronomy 32:9.

Deuteronomy 32:9 says that the treasure is His people. Of all He has created, the most precious thing to Yahweh is His people—fleshly and spiritual Israel.

Exodus 19 tells how Yahweh calls attention to His deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage. He alludes to the miraculous way in which the plagues were used to deliver the children of Israel from bondage, and how they were redeemed from death by the blood

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Mini Study



The New Covenant WHAT IS IT?

A covenant is often described as "An agreement between two or more parties outlining mutual rights and responsibilities." The Old Testament lists several covenants between individuals such as David and Jonathan; King David and Abner; King Solomon and Shemei, one of his subjects, but our interest is in the Covenant with Yahweh. The common word for covenant in Hebrew is berith; in Greek it is diatheke, meaning "last will and testament," both are understood as covenants.

It is Yahweh Who initiates His covenants; first with Noah, (Gen. 9:8-17), then Abram (Gen. 15 and 17), and later with Abraham's descendants, the Israelites of Exodus (19-24). It is this covenant which holds our interest, for it is the same covenant Yahweh made years ago with ancient Israel which the present-day Jews give lip-service, but do not fully keep. Yahweh emphasizes He will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel (10 tribes) and the house of Judah, (2 tribes). Note that in giving the house of Israel the law at Sinai, Yahweh considered Himself Israel's husband (Ezek. 16:8).

THE NEW COVENANT

The book of Hebrews has the most to say about the New Covenant:

"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith 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 continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith Yahweh." (Heb. 8:7-9 AV)

Comprehending Israel's failure at Mt. Sinai is the key to knowing what the New Covenant was to correct. History provides a record of Israel's failure in keeping the Old Covenant. Within 40 days Israel broke the Covenant they had

applied to the doorposts and the lintel. And now He brings them to the foot of Mount Sinai where He says:

Now therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My Covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people for all the earth is Mine, Exodus 19:5.

His people will obey His voice and be a treasure above treasures in His eyes. He is even today seeking those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth,

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him, John 4:23.

You May Become A Kingdom Priest

Exodus 19:6 promises that His people will be to Him a kingdom of priests and a nation reflecting His holiness.

And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Yahweh's holy mind envisages a people who can be in fellowship with Himself, to whom the secrets of Yahweh can be revealed and in whom the call to obey His will should find fulfillment.

While the Old Testament gives the account of ancient, fleshly Israel, the application to those who voluntarily take hold of His covenant has even greater blessings and promises than Israel was given. Under Moses, Israel was blessed as a polity. Those born into the nation of Israel automatically became partakers of the covenant as long as they followed the laws given them by Yahweh. But, Yahweh found fault with them because of the rebellion on the part of Israel,

For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith Yahweh, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, Hebrews 8:8.

The new covenant with the sanctified ones is spoken of in Hebrews 10:14-16:

For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Spirit also is a witness to us: for after that He had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith Yahweh, I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them, Hebrews 10:14-16.

He has pruned His tree and cut off unprofitable Israelites so that the gentiles can be grafted in,

And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, Romans 11:17.

Israel was redeemed by the

blood of the lamb applied on their doorposts and lintel as the destroying angel came through Egypt on that first Passover night. Though Israel was saved from destruction while in Egypt, they still had to be delivered from Egypt. Just as we are saved from destruction in our headlong pursuit of sin, we cannot continue to be partakers of the world's ways represented by Egypt.

Israel's next step was to be immersed in the cloud and in the sea as they followed Moses. As spiritual counterparts, we also are to be immersed in water, signifying our willingness to bury our wills and submit to Yahshua. He is the One we are to follow, prophesied to be raised up like unto Moses,

For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall Yahweh your Elohim raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you, Acts 3:22.

It is Yahshua we are to listen to and follow.

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In-Depth Study

Passover



A Memorial for All Time

Israel's Command a Lesson for Us

Israel was miraculously delivered from Egypt through the Red Sea, and they finally arrived at Mount Sinai. During the forty days and forty nights on the mountain, Moses received instructions from Yahweh. The commandment was given

That they take for Me an offering; of every man whose heart maketh him willing you shall take My offering. And this is the offering which he shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass; and blue and purple, and scarlet and fine linen and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and seal-skins, and acacia wood; oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for sweet incense, onyx stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate, Exodus 25:2-7.

Notice that Yahweh Himself gave the pattern of the tabernacle. He also chose the materials for the building. He gave the charge to His people to build His building. No tax or levy was introduced. It was voluntary because each individual was prompted to do what he could to have the tabernacle built. These gifts were viewed as a whole as a unified offering made by the people. So it is today. Yahweh showed Moses the physical pattern when he was on the mount. We, however, recognize this as a pattern for the spiritual habitation of Yahweh that we are to become.

Yahweh Does the Selection

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to Yahweh by Yahshua Messiah. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of Yahweh: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy, 1 Peter 2:5-10.

These verses show that Yahweh uses chosen ones that He selects for His spiritual temple. We are likened to living stones, coming to Yahshua, the cornerstone to be built into a spiritual temple, and

to proclaim the wonderful works of Yahweh.

Ancient Israel left Egypt with much treasure as they had "spoiled the Egyptians." Because they were in the wilderness, there was no opportunity to increase their wealth by trading cattle or to harvest crops and sell them for gain. When the tabernacle was about to be built, Moses told the children of Israel,

Take you from among you an offering unto Yahweh; whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of Yahweh, Exodus 35:5.

Then follows the list of materials that are required for the tabernacle. It must be noted that the materials that were used for the construction were those very items that were brought out of Egypt. This even includes the precious stones to be set in the ephod and the breast-

plate, Exodus 35:9.

They Eagerly, Joyfully Helped

Verses 21-25 in Exodus 35 tell of those whose heart was stirred up to help in the building of the place of worship of Yahweh.

And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought Yahweh's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments. And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered, offered an offering of gold unto Yahweh. And every man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and red skins of rams, and badgers' skins, brought them. Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought Yahweh's offering: and every man, with whom was found shittim wood for any work of the service, brought it. And all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, both of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine linen.

They brought the necessary things according to the pattern given to Moses. It was all voluntary. They wanted to help establish a meeting place where Yahweh would dwell, where He would be with them. They did it with a willing heart, for they recognized Yahweh would be all things to His people. He would be whatever they needed at any given time. They eagerly did what they could with great joy and anticipation.

Certain ones were given special tasks commensurate with their abilities. Women spun blue, purple, and scarlet linen, and some with goat's hair,

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Mini Study



The Early Assembly's Activities: Looting and Binding in Acts 15

The success of the jubilant Apostles in converting many Gentiles to the Messiah was not popular with everyone in the Jewish community. Some felt Gentiles who had converted to the Messiah were not being taught in the ways of Judaism. The problem comes to light in this fifteenth chapter of Acts. Simply stated it was that Gentiles became followers of the Savior and were baptized without having the background of Judaism. More than that, the Gentiles were not circumcised!

Note that it was not the leaders of Judea who questioned the activities of the Apostles, but common people. "And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, [and said], Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." (Acts 15:1) These "certain men" had troubled a number of assemblies, verse 24. "Certain men" even today contend all males are to be physically circumcised even though baptized. We understand men need not be circumcised, but infant children should. Baptism is circumcision made without hands.

It is interesting that the problems of the true believer are brought about by some self-righteous people who have set their own standards of righteousness, and go about striving to get followers after their way. But that is another topic.

Peter had been teaching since Pentecost that calling on Yahweh's Name was the important lesson to be learned from that momentous day when the Holy Spirit was given. Peter had taught in Acts 2:21, "Whoever calls upon the name of Yahweh shall be saved," (quoting from Joel 2:32). Nothing said about being an initiate of Judaism. Paul taught in Romans, Galatians and

And all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, both of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine linen. And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' hair, Exodus 35:25-26.

Today, Yahweh places in the *eklesia*—the assembly—His spiritual counterpart, people with special gifts for the growth and edification of the assembly,

Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men... And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, Eph. 4:8, 11.

These gifts are for the perfecting of the saints, the living stones of 1 Peter 2:5,

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to Yahweh by Yahshua Messiah.

Paul also points out the Body of Messiah is given various manifestations of the Spirit to benefit the Assembly,

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit. To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongue. But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will, 1 Corinthians 12:8-11.

Each member of the Body has his special gift to be used to build up the Body just as ancient Israel had certain ones who were able to accomplish the necessary task with the curtains, the smelting of silver and gold as well as the brass. When they all work together

as a team, each contributing whatever he has been given, Yahweh's dwelling place is completed,

But now hath Yahweh set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him, 1 Corinthians 12:18.

Ancient Israel was very zealous in bringing for the work of the service of the sanctuary and brought these items every morning,

And they received of Moses all the offering, which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it withal. And they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning, Exodus 36:3.

Zealous were the people to see Yahweh's temple completed. Moses had to proclaim that

For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and

too much, Exodus 36:7.

Yahweh Requires Only What He Gives

The lessons of Israel in constructing a physical sanctuary for Yahweh to dwell in are apparent for us today. First, Yahweh does not demand of His people what He has not first given them. He asks that a part of what He has given be used for building His sanctuary. Second, no delay through want of the requirements can occur in the service of Yahweh:

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith Yahweh of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it, Malachi 3:10.

Ancient Israel thought it a great honor to contribute to Yahweh, to make His presence among them a sure thing. That same principle still stands today. In the first sanctuary recorded in Exodus, all giving was voluntary. The people gave willingly and more than enough. Later in Leviticus, Yahweh let it be known that He expected a 10 percent tithe to be used exclusively for His sanctuary and His worship.

The people paid a tithe to the Levites who in turn gave a tithe to the priests. Because the Book of Deuteronomy will be the guidebook of the Kingdom, the tithe will be a part of the Kingdom.

Much has been written in an attempt to show that we on this side of Calvary are no longer obligated to tithe. Some teach that because the Levitical priesthood has been superseded by the Melchisedek priesthood, the tithe is no longer a part of our requirement in the Body of Messiah.

Those who follow this line of reasoning suddenly feel that it is no longer necessary to support any work that is striving to proclaim the Good News of the coming King-

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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

dom. The attitude seems to be that tithing is out, doing nothing is in.

Yet, the proclaiming of the Good News is a work dedicated to building a spiritual temple, an abode where Yahweh dwells, just as ancient Israel built a physical sanctuary. The need is still there in building a spiritual habitation for Yahweh,

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

Early Assembly

In the early Assembly there were many converts from Judaism who accepted the truth of the Apostles' teachings. Even the priests became converts and Acts 6:7 and Acts 9 tell of the conversion of Saul. These early Jewish converts had been accustomed to paying their tithe. It was a way of life with them. Did becoming followers of the Messiah mean they no longer had to give their tithe? Or did Paul say that to be a follower of the Messiah even more was required of them?

Acts 4:32-37 tells of the dedication of those who believed,

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Master Yahshua: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, the son of consolation), a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Here we read that they shared whatever they could so that the proclamation of the Good News could be carried out. Some sold possessions to raise money, verse 34. No wonder the early Assembly grew and multiplied with such dedicated followers who were willing to give of their possessions and ultimately gave their total commitment for the cause of the Kingdom and their desire to do all they could in Yahweh's service. Read Acts 7 to read that Stephen was the first to show his total commitment.

Notice that Paul, in 1 Corinthians 9, speaks of financing the Word. In verse 9 he quotes from Deuteronomy 25:4:

Thou shall not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.

He then goes on in verses 10-11 to show that this really applied to Paul and those that preach the Good News of the coming Kingdom:

Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

Paul brings in the Old Testament here in his admonition to the people at Corinth, chiding them for their unwillingness to support him as he preached the coming Kingdom. He upbraids them for being irresponsible and taking advantage of him and his efforts to build up the Body of Messiah. In fact, he says he has the right to expect some physical payment for the spiritual meat he has given them. Because they are so selfish, he says he would not take any of their help. He would rather die first!

Paul expected the Corinthians to help him financially to pay for the work he did among them. This is clear from 2 Corinthians 11:7-9

where Paul says that in essence he was robbing other groups to preach to them at Corinth.

Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the evangel of Yahweh freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service, 2 Corinthians 11:7-8.

Brothers came from Macedonia to help Paul so that he did not have to ask the Corinthians for money:

And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself, 2 Corinthians 11:9.

New Testament Admonition the Same

Whether it was ancient Israel constructing the sanctuary for the habitation of Yahweh, or whether it is Paul preaching the Good News to gain converts in building a spiritual temple—those who are benefiting from Yahweh's Word are expected to support those who are doing the work.

The Old Testament shows that a proper guide is 10 percent of the increase, and it is to be used for Yahweh's glory. Paul told Timothy,

The elders who do good work as leaders should be considered worthy of receiving double pay especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says "Do not tie up the mouth of the ox when it is treading out the grain," and, "the worker deserves his wages," 1 Timothy 5:17-18 TEV.

Proverbs 3:9 tells us to

Honor Yahweh with your substance and with the firstfruits of thine increase.

It is an act of worship to honor Yahweh's work with offerings to edify and build up the Body of Mes-

siah. It is our duty to live a life in accord with Yahweh's will and be a shining light to others.

But, it is also our responsibility to do all we can to proclaim the Good News of the coming Kingdom. By so doing, we aid the lost sheep that are seeking the truth of the Scripture that is lodged in the Ekklesia, the Body of Messiah. It was the Ekklesia that was to be the agent on this earth that would be proclaiming Yahweh's truth. By adding members to the Body of Messiah, we are helping others find salvation through the faith. By this we show that we have love for the brethren when we sacrifice to help others understand the great and precious truths we are privileged to know.

What are You Putting First?

If Yahweh willed, He could rain money from heaven to supply the means to proclaim the truth of the Bible. He could see to it that His people had gold mines in their backyards from which to draw and finance the proclamation of the Good News. But, He did not do this for several reasons. Yahshua told us to seek first the Kingdom of the heavens ("But seek ye first the Kingdom of Yahweh, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you," Matthew 6:33), and everything else would be added unto us. We are all being taught a lesson. Yahweh is teaching us to put Him and His kingdom above everything else. He wants us to show to Him and to the world that we are willing to seek Him and will sacrifice of our substance and time to prove our sincerity.

Yahweh would not need His human instruments to do His work if He desired to warn the world Himself. He could thunder the Word from the heavens and the entire earth would shake as He spoke. But He has left that up to His people to study and proclaim the Good News to the world around them.

We are to do what Israel failed to do. By so doing we learn lessons and teach others at the same time. It is our goal to build the spiritual habitation of Yahweh on this earth by becoming stronger in the faith and help others find the way to life eternal.

To carry out this goal, it is necessary that those who are called voluntarily help in this endeavor, just as ancient Israel responded to the call to provide supplies to those laboring in building the habitation of Yahweh. We are to take of the increase Yahweh has given us in the world and use it to build the spiritual temple He is looking for. It is an act of worship to honor Yahweh's work with offerings to edify and build up the body of Messiah.

Nothing is free in this world. Everything has its price. Just because

some receiving this magazine did not contribute does not mean there is no expense involved. Someone else paid for putting it in the hands of those who do not.

We are grateful to Yahweh for having put in the hearts and minds of His people the desire to support us in publishing scriptural literature, and to do personal visitations so others may learn of the truth of the Bible and become converted, taking hold of Yahweh's covenant. This is what is needed to build the spiritual temple where Yahweh can dwell among His people.

**Elder Donald R. Mansager
(deceased)**

<from **Fight** page 6>

and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. In the sight of Elohim, Who gives life to everything, and of Messiah Yahshua, Who, while testifying before Pontius Pilate, made the good confession, I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Master Yahshua Messiah, 1 Timothy 6:11-16 NIV.

Have we considered our idleness lately? Are we doing enough? Are we doing what Yahweh instructs and, in fact, commands us to do? Is there more we can do? Do we sense the spiritual fight we are in? Do we need help? Are we enduring to the end?

Fast and pray. Call upon Yahweh. He will provide the help we need. Let's not lose our first love. Make Yahweh, though Yahshua, a priority once again. In doing so we will overcome the idleness that Scripture warns us against having.

Elder David Brett

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Mini Study



A Matter of Death and Life

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



What is the Truth About the Christmas Story Myth?

Have you ever asked yourself the question: "Why do I celebrate Christmas?" The most obvious answer is "I was raised in a family which always celebrated Christmas." If this is your answer, have you ever thought about the basis for such an answer?

Many reference books will say things similar to the following, which is from the Encyclopedia Americana under the article, *Christmas*:

"The feast commemorating the birth of [Yahshua], [is] observed by the Christian church annually on December 25. The name is derived from the medieval Christes Masse, the Mass of Christ. The celebration was not observed in the first centuries of the Christian church, since the Christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth. In the 5th century the Western church ordered the feast to be celebrated on the day of the Mithraic rites of the birth of the sun and at the close of the Saturnalia, as no certain knowledge of the day of [Yahshua's] birth existed. Among the German and Celtic tribes the winter solstice was considered an important point of the year and to commemorate the return of the sun they held their chief festival of Yule, which, like other pagan celebrations, became adapted to Christmas.

"Most of the customs now associated with Christmas were not originally Christmas customs but rather were pre-Christian and non-Christian customs taken up by the Christian church. Saturnalia, a Roman feast celebrated in mid-December, provided the model for many of the merry-making customs of Christmas. From this celebration, for example,

were derived the elaborate feasting, the giving of gifts, and the burning of candles. Lights also played an important part in most winter solstice festivals. The giving of gifts has varied considerably, many people's exchanging presents on other days and reserving Christmas solely for religious observances. The Teutonic Yule feast also provided customs for the Christmas festivities, such as the yule log and wassail bowl. The origin of the Christmas tree was not in wide usage until the 18th century. The Saxons made use of ivy and holly, and mistletoe in such festivities as a Celtic remnant."

From this article one can glean the truth about the origins of many of the customs directly associated with the celebration of Christmas by the world today.

Earl W. Count, in his book, *4,000 Years of Christmas*, page 18, says "Mesopotamia is the very ancient Mother of Civilization. Christmas began there, over four thousand years ago, as the festival which renewed the world for another year."

Santa Claus

To the parents of children celebrating Christmas, what did you tell them about Santa? In retail stores at this time of the year one can hear parents telling their children "You'd better be good or Santa will not bring you anything!"

Whether one calls him Santa Claus, Saint Nick, Kriss Kringle or Sinter Klaas, they all come from a reference to Saint Nicholas, who was born around

245 AD in Patara, in present day Turkey. He was ordained a bishop of Myra (a Turkish town, now named Kale), and throughout his priesthood, he was known for his generosity to all in trouble and for the granting of wishes.

Want to know how the tradition of hanging stockings on the fireplace mantel started? The answer should not surprise you as 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 in a stocking hung up to dry.

Want to know how the tradition came about for him to be a gift giver? Pagan, pre-Christian sources says that the Teutonic g-d 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. The German g-d Thor was supposedly elderly

and heavy with a long white beard; he rode through the air in a chariot drawn by two white goats named 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.

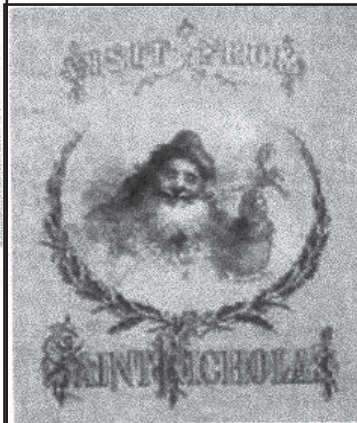
As his notoriety spread, many churches and cathedrals were named after him and next to the Messiah and the Virgin Mary, Nicholas was the next most popular figure in Christianity as his popularity even spread to the Laplands — to the people with the reindeer sleds.

In France, the nuns delivered candy to all the children who'd



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, SY 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.



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.

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.

In Greece, he is known as the national saint and in Russia he was a patron saint of young people and sailors.

Very likely you are familiar with the formation of the Protestant religion when it broke from Catholicism. Luther wanted to remove the stigma of the traditions associated with St. Nicholas and he created a winged cherub called Krist Kindle to replace St. Nicholas. Luther intended any celebration using this cherub to be concentrated during the Winter Solstice, the time when pagan religions celebrated the return of the sun's light.

However, it really didn't work out that way as the people in Germany thought this cherub would fly around bringing gifts to children and called its name der Weihnachtsmann. Other countries in Europe had their own name for this cherub: Father Christmas in England, Pere Noel in France, Bafana in Italy, and Tomptsten in Sweden.

What about in the United States? John Pintard, an influential patriot and antiquarian Dutchman, founded the New York Historical Society in 1804, promoted St. Nicholas as the patron saint of both society and city. The American author Washington Irvine published, in 1809, his *History of New York*, which included detailed information about the Dutch version of St. Nicholas using the pseudonym Diedrich Knickerbocker. This Dutch-American Saint

Nick was fully Americanized in 1823 when poet Clement Clarke Moore wrote *The Night Before Christmas*, which portrayed the jolly elf image of Saint Nick.

In 1810, artist Alexander Anderson created the first American image of Nicholas in a gift giving role with children's treats in stockings hanging at a fireplace.

In 1863, political cartoonist Thomas Nast produced a series of annual drawings for Harper's Weekly until 1886 showing a rotund Santa with a flowing beard, fur garments and a clay pipe.

The drawings of Santa Claus' image solidified with Norman Rockwell's Saturday Evening Post covers and with Haddon Sundblom's thirty-five year collection of Coca-Cola Santa advertisements.

A Decorated Christmas Tree

The modern Christmas tree evolved from the use of evergreen trees being placed in the homes of Germans and Scandinavians in the Middle Ages and were regarded as a symbol of life. The star placed at the top was to represent the star

which guided the three wise men to the location of the young Child.

Candy canes were hung on the branches where the red and white colors symbolized the blood shed by the Messiah and the sinless nature of the Messiah.

German settlers brought this use of an evergreen tree to the American colonies in the 17th century. In a short period of time this use also appeared in Austria, Switzerland, Poland and Holland. Christian missionaries introduced the Christmas tree into China and Japan.

Holly, with its prickly leaves and red berries, was used because it reminded people of the crown of thorns worn by the Messiah on the way to His execution and the red berries symbolized droplets of blood.

On the internet, under "Christmas," we find the quote:

"It is a widely held belief that Martin Luther, the 16th century Protestant reformer, first added lighted candles to a tree. Walking toward his home one winter evening, composing a sermon, he was awed by the stars twinkling amidst the evergreens. To recapture the scene for his family, he erected a tree in the main room and wired its branches with lighted candles."

Babylon, Mystery Religion, page 164, tells us:

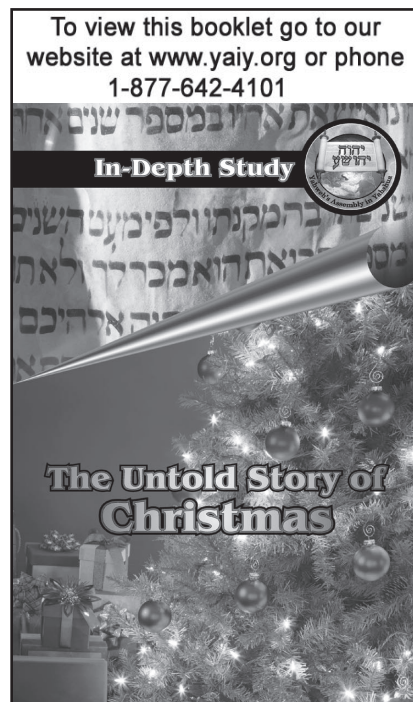
"In connections with the customs of the Christmas season, we will mention the Christmas tree. An old Babylonish fable went like this: Semiramis, the mother of Tammuz (Ezek. 8:14), claimed that overnight an evergreen tree sprang up from a dead stump. The dead stump supposedly symbolized her dead husband, Nimrod; the new evergreen tree was the symbol that Nimrod had come to life again in the person of Tammuz!"

Funk and Wagnalls Standard Reference Encyclopedia, vol. 6, page 2118, tells us that "the use of Christmas trees probably originated among the Romans of pre-Chris-

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In-Depth Study

The Untold Story of Christmas



tian times from whom it spread to the Germanic peoples and thence to the peoples of the British Isles.”

Alexander Hislop wrote in *The Two Babylons*, page 97:

“The Christmas tree, now so common among us, was equally common in pagan Rome and pagan Egypt. In Egypt that tree was the palm-tree; in Rome it was the fir; the palm-tree denoting the pagan messiah, as Baal-Tamar, the fir referring to him as Baal-Berith.”

Yule Log

On page 98 of *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop, we read the following:

“Now the Yule Log is the dead stock of Nimrod, deified as the sun-god, but cut down by his enemies. “If the mother was a tree, the son [Nimrod - son of Cush, Gen. 10:8, and founder of Babylon] must have been recognized as the ‘Man the branch.’ And this entirely accounts for the putting of the Yule Log into the fire on Christmas eve.

“Nimrod was the divine child born at the winter solstice as a new incarnation of the great god (after that god had been cut in pieces), on the purpose to revenge his death upon his murderers. Now the great god, cut off in the midst of his power and glory, was symbolized as a huge tree, stripped of all its branches and cut-down almost to the ground. But the great serpent, the symbol of the life restoring Aesculapius, twists itself around the dead stock, and lo, at its side up sprouts a young tree - a tree of an entirely different kind, that is destined never to be cut down by hostile power - even the palm-tree, the well-known symbol of victory.”

Now, who is Nimrod? Nimrod was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah, Gen. 10:1-8. Nimrod's wife, Semiramis, is called the queen of the heavens under the name of Astarte (queen of the heavens — Astarte — Easter).

The word “yule” is the Chaldean

name for an “infant” or “little child.”

The Christmas Goose

In *The Two Babylons*, page 101, we read:

“The Christmas goose was an essential article in the worship of the Babylonian messiah, as that worship was practiced both in Egypt and at Rome. In Egypt, the favorite offering to Osiris was a goose and that the goose could only be eaten in the depth of winter.

“A picture of a woodcut shows that the goose in Asia Minor was the symbol of Cupid, just as it was the symbol of Seb in Egypt. In India, the goose occupied a similar position; for in that land, we read of the sacred ‘Brahmany goose,’ or goose sacred to Brahma,” *The Two Babylons*, p. 101.

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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.

Mistletoe

Closely connected to the tree growing from a dead stump is the mistletoe.

The use of the mistletoe bough is from Druidic, Norse and English traditions and superstitions. Kissing under the mistletoe is of English origin. It was derived from Babylonian Mysteries dealing with a representation of the messiah, "the man the branch" — Nimrod.

The Chosen Date

In order to gain members, the Catholic Church adopted the rites and celebrations of pagan peoples. At the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D., they set December 25 as the date of our Savior's birth. Even the national Roman Catholic monthly magazine, U. S. Catholic, has admitted that Christmas is indeed a pagan holiday that is a grotesque counterfeit.

Let Scripture Speak

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, Jeremiah 10:2-5.

As have been listed throughout this article, there are many customs associated with Christmas that have their origins in pagan worship. Yahweh wants us to turn our backs on such customs. By not celebrating Christmas you will find out that you will not miss (myth) Christmas.

Elder Roger G. Meyer

QUESTION & ANSWER

Q **Doesn't leaven in the two loaves offered at Pentecost (Lev 23:17) symbolically mean that the Holy Spirit is now in those that receive the Holy Spirit? After all, it was at Pentecost in the New Testament that the Holy Spirit was first given and these two loaves are first fruit offerings!**

A Nowhere in Scripture does it say leaven is the Holy Spirit or that His people are to be "leavened." In fact, we are likened to and to be like the salt of the earth, Matt. 5:13. Dan Israel in his book, *Christianity Unmasked*, points out the fact that "Salt resists the action of leaven..."

There is another, more appropriate, "symbolic," answer to what the leaven represents in the two loaves. And, that is, it represents something similar to "imperfection."

We have to understand that we are not yet perfect (Job 9:20; 1 John 1:8-10; 2:1), but that is what Yahweh has wanted from the very beginning and still wants us to strive for today:

Thou shalt be perfect with Yahweh thy Elohim, Deut. 18:13.

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect, Matt. 5:48.

If one thinks about it, the opposite is actually true of His people. We are "imperfect" and yet, we can, and are, to strive for perfection.

Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of Elohim, Romans 12:2.

We are to grow in "grace and knowledge," 2 Pet. 3:18.

The process is ongoing and Satan accuses the brethren along the way, day and night, Rev. 12:10. Does he accuse the brethren without cause? Are the brethren perfect? Are you perfect?

Could it be that the unleavened showbread (Ex. 25:30), being symbolic of the 12 tribes of Israel, is actually a representation of what we are to be? Paul urges us,

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may

be (for this is what we are to be) a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Messiah our passover is sacrificed for us, 1 Cor. 5:7.

Yahshua was perfect and without sin; He was without corruption; He was without false teachings; He was without malice, and He was without any other negative or wicked attribute, Heb. 4:15; 9:28; 1 John 3:5. We are to follow in His footsteps knowing He was right in everything that He did, because He followed the Father's lead in everything, 1 Cor. 11:3; 1 Pet. 2:21-22; John 5:30.

Paul, in 1 Cor. 5:7, was speaking to those who allowed a sin-sick individual, who was having relations with his stepmother, to be among them. Paul stressed the point with the brethren. Let's read the actual account up to verse 7, to get a clear picture:

It is reported commonly that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not so much as named among the Gentiles - that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I indeed, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him that hath so done this deed, in the name of our Master Yahshua Messiah, when ye are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Master Yahshua Messiah, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Master Yahshua. Your glorying is not good. Do ye not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 1 Cor. 5:1-6 NKJV.

We are to strive for purity in all facets of our life; we are to make sure the doctrine we teach is correct. To do otherwise is to miss the mark. Something that we used to do quite often was to live a way contrary to Scripture, but we are to put away the old "leavened" man and are to be a new "unleavened" man in our thoughts, words, and actions.

As we strive to overcome the world, we prepare to be changed from mere mortal to having immortality as we are changed into spirit beings at Yahshua's return, 1 Cor. 15:52. Being without the slight-

est hint of leaven – a spiritual priesthood completely free from error of any kind – being truly perfected as Messiah is and as Yahweh has always wanted us to be.

So, though we strive to be perfect and unleavened, we truly won't be perfect and unleavened until we are changed into spirit beings. Yahweh is accepting an imperfect people, even a whole multitude (that one man cannot count) will be accepted in the end days, Rev. 7: 9, 14.

This is an unmistakable hope that we have and I believe a proper explanation of the leaven found in the two-loaf first fruits offering. Yahweh looks at the heart and will accept an imperfect people who will be in a perfecting process along the way to the last trump in which true perfection will come to the people of Yahweh, that is, after they are changed in a twinkling of an eye.

Paul said of himself, I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection! But I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Messiah Yahshua saved me for and wants me to be, Phil. 3:12 NLT.

The implications of this "symbolic" meaning of leaven in the two-loaf first fruit offering is indeed profound. It teaches us that the brethren, in or of an assembly, that may be teaching a false doctrine or two "unknowingly" (i.e., they haven't studied enough; they have been misled by a teacher's misunderstanding; they just haven't come to the proper conclusion, etc.) will have the opportunity to enter into the Kingdom since Yahweh truly looks at the heart, the intent, the motive, and the sincerity of an individual, 1 Sam. 16:7.

Revelation chapters 2 through 3 give clear teaching that it is those brethren in each Assembly of Yahweh who "overcome" the world and Satan's destructive ways "to the end" that will be given rewards, including eternal life, Rev. 2:7, 10-11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21.

Be warned, however, that there will be different levels of rewards besides the basic rewards for Yahweh's people. This will be due to variable factors, such as a few different doctrines and the effort that one puts into "The Work." Yet, there will be sincere brethren who overcome and make it into the Kingdom who didn't work as hard and who maybe didn't study as much as they should have, but will still have Yahweh's Spirit within them which helped them to overcome the world, themselves, and Satan.

Matthew 5:19 says,

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven:

but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Verse 20 shows that even the least of these entering the Kingdom will have exceeded the righteousness of the Pharisees, no doubt through Yahshua the Messiah, as we are told in Isaiah 64:6 that our own righteousness is as filthy rags before Yahweh.

The obvious point we get out of Matt. 5:19 is that both the one who may be mistaken on a doctrine can make it into the Kingdom as the one who is unmistakable in doctrine.

We also get the sense of different levels of rewards with the parable of the talents found in Matt. 25:14-30. The one who doesn't get anything, is the one who does nothing...which is another warning for us that we need to be about our Father's business.

We must be careful when getting into "symbolism" as it can take a person away from true Scriptural teachings. The idea of "leaven" being the "Holy Spirit" is unjustified in Scripture.

In addition, any that might try to include Yahshua as a leavened first fruit by referencing Scriptures such as 1 Cor. 15:20-25 and James 1:18 need to understand that Yahshua was a wave sheaf (first fruit) offering, Lev. 23:11-14. In other words, Yahshua was an "unleavened" offering. Noteworthy also is that Yahshua's ascension was on the first Day of Unleavened Bread, John 20:14-18. In verse 15, Mary Magdalene thought He was a "gardener" and Bible scholars have commented that He may have been gathering a wave sheaf of barley. It is nearly two months (50 days) later before the two loaves with leaven, representing Yahweh's people, are offered.

Again, we are not perfect, but we are to strive for perfection. The two loaves are initially offered as leavened at Pentecost, but will be unleavened once changed at the last trump, 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16.

Q In Exodus 33:20 we learn that no man can see Yahweh's face and live. Therefore, Moses was shielded by Yahweh in the cleft of the rock. In Deut. 4:12 we learn that Yahweh spoke to the children of Israel, but they heard His voice only. Yet in Exodus 24:10-11 it states, "and they saw the Elohim of Israel; and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the very heaven for clearness, and upon the nobles of the children of Israel He laid not His hand: and they beheld Elohim, and ate and drank." In Numbers 14:14 it states: "for they have heard that Thou, Yahweh, art among this people, that thou Yahweh art seen face to face..." KJV. Do these statements seem contradictory?

A They do indeed seem puzzling. Yahweh of the Old Testament “spoke” to certain ones such as Adam, Eve, Cain, Noah, who may not have seen His physical presence. Moving through the Bible, in Revelation we are given added insight or clarification of His appearance. To Abram “He appeared,” Genesis 12:7. To Hagar He appeared as an angel (Genesis 16:7-13). A well was there called Beer-lahai-roi (Do I live after seeing Elohim?) With Jacob He appeared with human features. “And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen Elohim face to face, and my life is preserved.” (Gen 32:30).

As we read through Scripture, we learn more of His appearance and character as we go along, and we note His many attributes. Only certain ones are privileged to see Yahweh in His subdued glory, but even Moses could not look upon the full face of Yahweh, Exodus 33:18. Nevertheless, the glory of Yahweh’s presence radiated a glory to the face of Moses which was covered by a veil.

As we read the Old Testament we are given references to Yahweh, but not a clear description of His actual appearance. Rather, we are given lessons of His character, His love for mankind, His wisdom, patience, and all the things that make up His righteous personality and holy character.

It is not until we get into the New Testament that we get a clearer picture of Yahweh, for the Savior admits He looks just like the Heavenly Father:

Yahshua saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou [then], Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works, John 14:9-10 AV.

(Yahshua) Who is the image of the invisible Elohim, the firstborn of every creature, Col. 1:15 AV.

In whom the deity of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Messiah, Who is the image of Elohim, should shine unto them, 2 Cor. 4:4 AV.

The book of Revelation gives us a clear picture of the glorified Savior Who appears as a bright, blinding LIGHT! Yahshua is the fullness and intention of Yahweh! It is Yahshua Who will be our judge and give immortality to the Firstfruits, 2 Peter 1:4. He looks just like the Heavenly Father Who has never left the Spirit realm. Here, in Revelation, we see the blinding light and fullness of Yahshua Who takes vengeance on His enemies:

His head and [His] hairs [were] white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes [were] as a flame of fire;

and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and His countenance [was] as the sun shineth in His strength, Rev. 1:14-16 AV.

We do not fully understand nor see clearly, but through faith we are promised we will see the faces of both Yahweh and Yahshua and come to a full understanding in the coming Kingdom, and we will then have glorified bodies just like that of Yahshua:

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known, 1 Cor. 13:12 AV.

Q “Lights and Perfections” does not clarify for me the meaning of the Urim and Thummin. From Ex. 28:30, Numbers 27:21 and Deut. 33:8-11, it was something over the High Priest’s heart which somehow had something to do with judgment.

A The Companion Bible explains the Urim and Thummim were probably two precious stones that were placed in the bag of the breastplate of judgment. Called “Lights” and “Perfections” the stones were drawn out and made a judicial decision of guilt and innocence by the high priest. When the land was divided “by lot,” judgment of Yahweh was by the “Urim” and “Thummin.” The technique whereby guidance was made plain has not been recorded, according to the New Bible Dictionary, J. D. Douglas. There are no negative answers recorded.

Q I wonder why Yahweh prohibited planting a grove of trees near the “altar of Yahweh,” Deut. 16:21. Perhaps that would encourage pagan worship too close to camp?

A The Bible uses the word “grove” as an euphemism for the sacred pillar or pole:

Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of Yahweh thy Elohim, which thou shalt make thee, Deut. 16:21 AV.

This reference to “grove of trees” refers to the pagan custom of cutting the top off a tree and fashioning it into a phallic symbol used in Baal worship of the Asherah. The following is an example:

For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree, 1 Kings 14:23 AV.



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