

YAIY



Beacon



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Yahweh makes grass grow for the cattle,
And plants for man to cultivate —
bringing forth food from the earth,
Psalm 104:14.

YAIY Beacon

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MISSION

STATEMENT

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

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How To Make Wise Decisions

Throughout our lives we are confronted with the necessity of making many decisions. The nature of these decisions varies considerably. Each decision which is made has a direct bearing, to some extent, on one's life. The impact of decision making can weigh a person down rather heavily at times. Each day everyone makes at least one decision, whether it be trivial or monumental in nature. The latter type are those of utmost importance as they are the ones which not only affect our present lives the most, but more importantly, they most likely will affect our future status in Yahweh's coming Kingdom.

Man's First Decision

Man made his first decision in the Garden of Eden. We read in Gen. 3 how Eve was beguiled by the most cunning of all Yahweh's living creatures and chose to eat of the forbidden fruit, as did Adam also. What a monumental decision they made — one which affected all succeeding generations of human beings! And because of this unwise decision, they were driven from the Garden of Eden so that they could not eat of the tree of life and live forever. Even then Yahweh gave a prophecy and a promise concerning Yahshua (verse 15), Who was to experience temporary sufferings but yet will completely destroy Satan and his works.

For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, Hebrews 2:14.

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of Yahweh was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil, 1 John 3:8.

Here an important lesson should be learned by each human being. Just because something is pleasing to the eyes (senses) in no way justifies a commitment on our part to partake of it, especially when the Scriptures command against it.

Noah's Decision

At a time in history when "the wickedness of man was great in the earth and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5), Yahweh chose to destroy all the creatures He had created. But because "Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh" (Gen. 6:8), Yahweh committed unto Noah and his family the construction of an ark. To the wicked incorrigibles of the Cain family, this building of a ship must have seemed quite futile. Because of their wickedness they did not know Yahweh nor could they have fully comprehended what was about to happen. Noah had to make this important decision to engage in the construction and receive the warning of the impending destruction of all life but his, his family's, and the animals saved in the ark. By faith in Yahweh, he obeyed. He built the ark and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith,

Thus did Noah; according to all that Yahweh commanded him, so did he, Genesis 6: 22.

By faith Noah, being warned of Yahweh of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith, Hebrew 11:7.

How important it is for everyone to obey all of Yahweh's Words!

And Then Came Abraham

Many people have, for one reason or another, moved from place to place in search of new and

better things. The decision to do so was most likely their own and the reason, many times, was of a personal, rather than a practical, nature. At times it may be difficult to do so because of the friends one makes and of the home that has been established. This type of decision Abram had to make. But his decision to relocate was not motivated by personal reasons, but because Yahweh told him to,

Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee, Genesis 12: 1.

So Abram, by faith, obeyed Yahweh's voice and left,

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went, Hebrews 11:8.

Are you willing to do as Abram did? If you have not thought about it, you should. Just as Yahweh called Abram out of the land of Chaldea, Yahweh is calling us to come out of Babylon, out of pagan worship, out of darkness into His marvellous light,

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, 1 Peter 2:9.


And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird, Revelation 18:2.

This important decision will be placed before us and we will have to decide which is stronger: our love for earthly treasures or heavenly treasures and our love for earthly friends or our love for Yahweh. This decision will indeed be crucial to you since earthly friends and earthly treasures are only temporary. We should set our goals on heavenly things which are permanent, which will last forever.

Is your status in this society so fixed that if you were to change your present mode of living to one of serving Yahweh that you would fear losing friends or loved ones? If so, then the desires of your heart are not oriented properly. In serving Yahweh, one will gain many new friends and many new loved ones whose friendship and love are of such a new and deeper dimension that you will be simply thrilled at the joy you will experience.

Abraham was also required to make a second, and even more traumatic, decision. The story unfolds in Genesis 22

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



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?

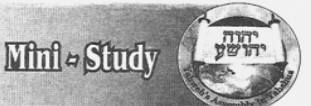
We hear people say that good ol' Uncle Ben has died. Is Ben really dead? Or do we go to his funeral just to mourn his lifeless body, while our uncle lives on, rolling around heaven, playing his harp and testing the aerodynamics of his wings?

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?

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Mini Study

Do You Have an Immortal Soul?

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

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

No Immortal Soul in Scripture

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

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

where Yahweh was to prove Abraham's obedience by requiring him to take his son, Isaac, to the land of Moriah and there to offer him as a burnt sacrifice,

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Hebrews 11:17.

It should be remembered that Abraham waited 100 years before Isaac was born (Gen. 21:5) and that he loved him very much. As we know, Isaac did not die at this time, for the precise moment when Abraham was about to slay Isaac, an angel of Yahweh restrained him

because Yahweh knew that Abraham was willing to offer his son. And because Abraham obeyed the voice of Yahweh, he and his seed were blessed. Yes, indeed, what a decision Abraham had to make! But he did make the right one for Abraham obeyed Yahweh's voice (Gen. 22:18; 26:5) as we should.

The Moabites, descendants of Moab, the son of the elder daughter of Lot, were, generally speaking, not a martial people, as were the descendants of his cousin, Ammon. Their destructive capacity was not from the outside by physical force but from the inside by means of moral corruption and having their daughters seduce the Israelites into committing adultery, Numbers 25. This was not true of Ruth, a Moabitish woman, who married a son of Elimelech. Elimelech was from Bethlehem-judah who came with his wife and two sons to Moab because of a famine and lived there about ten years. When the three men died, Naomi, Elimelech's wife, contemplated returning to her native country. Ruth was very persuasive,

And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy Elohim my Elohim. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: Yahweh do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me. When she saw that

she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her, Ruth 1:16 - 18.

Ruth was permitted to accompany Naomi back to Bethlehem. Here we see that Ruth made a decision, like Abram did, to leave her parents and her native land, to journey to a country to take up residence among a strange people. Her venturing to a new country was for a good reason. When Naomi and Ruth came to Bethlehem, they stopped at the land which was owned by Boaz, a kinsman of Naomi. We read, in chapters 3 and 4 of Ruth, that Ruth became the wife of Boaz only af-

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Mini - Study



Is the KINGDOM Here Now?

A popular televangelist, as well as many others, proclaims that the "church" is the Kingdom. Is this true? Is the body of called-out ones the same as the Kingdom? Does Scripture tell us?

In the study of end-time events, the rulership of Yahshua upon His return to this earth is often referred to as the millennium. Several forms of millennialism or millenarianism (also known as chiliasm) are widely believed. These are found in three major views of the future thousand-year reign of the Savior. Variations are also found within each view.

POSTMILLENNIALISM The teaching that the Second Advent of the Savior will occur after the thousand-year millennium. As a result of the preaching of the evangel by the "church," a period of righteousness would be established upon earth. Since World War II, many have become disillusioned with society's moral and spiritual decline. The day when the knowledge of Yahweh will fill the earth as water covers the sea has been but a dream.

PREMILLENNIALISM The most popular view held by many evangelicals wherein the Savior will literally rule over the earth. This concept dictates that Yahshua must appear before the millennial kingdom is set up. Premillennialists believe in the literal interpretation of Revelation and Old Testament related verses.

AMILLENNIALISM A symbolical interpretation of Revelation 20. It says Yahshua will return to set up His reign after the present earth is destroyed in judgment and a new heaven and earth is established. Rulership of Yahshua takes place upon His return.

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Mini - Study



WHY BE BAPTIZED INTO THE NAME OF YAHSHUA?

Is baptism just an initiation into a church, or is it truly important for salvation? Did you know that there is a proper method for it, and Name into which you must be baptized?

The New Testament's basic message to mankind is that our salvation is anchored to Yahshua the Messiah, the One Yahweh sent to earth for a living example and the One Who died for the sins of the world. He became the Author of eternal salvation to all that obey Him, Hebrews. 5:9.

In Acts 10:48 we read, "And he commanded them to be baptized into the name of Yahshua," HNB. Some have rejected that simple command to be baptized into the saving Name of Yahshua, much as Naaman refused the prophet's command to dip in the Jordan River to be healed of leprosy. Naaman argued in his rebellion that other foreign rivers are just as good, 2Kings 5:1-14.

At times those claiming humbly to follow the Bible have "reasoned" as did Naaman initially that it is neither necessary nor logical to be immersed into Yahshua's Name when they already have been baptized in the name of "Jesus" or perhaps in the titles of Father, Son and Holy Ghost years ago while in the churches. But titles are not names. We find no power or promises in titles.

ter Boaz purchased all that belonged to Elimelech and his sons after Naomi's nearest kinsman had chosen not to exercise his legal right. Compare Ruth 4:5 - 10 with Deut. 25:5 - 9. Ruth, a Gentile woman from the land of Moab, was the great-grandmother of David. Here we see an important fact established in that Ruth, a foreigner or stranger, was permitted entry into the natural legal line in the genealogy of Yahshua. This is analogous to our times in that all people of any nationality, Jews and Gentiles alike, are permitted the opportunity of entering into Yahweh's Kingdom.

A Foolish Decision

Samuel, judge of Israel and prophet of Yahweh, grew old. The elders of Israel became discontent, because Samuel's two sons, who also were judges over Israel, did not walk with Yahweh but perverted judgment. The elders desired to have a king who would judge them and build an army like neighboring nations. The elders could not wait patiently for Yahweh's King, the Messiah, but wanted one immediately so that they would be like all the other nations. See 1 Samuel 8. In verses 10 - 18 Samuel tells the people what it

would be like to have a human king. But the people could not be dissuaded. They were being influenced by the outside world and desired to be like them — of conforming to their ways rather than the ways of Yahweh. They began to think that the ways of man are better than the ways of Yahweh.

But history itself points a finger at the fallacy of this reasoning. Even though we are to obey the laws of the land we can only permit the world to influence us up to the point where our religious convictions are threatened. Then we must take a stand — we must make a choice: to follow Yahweh or man,

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey Yahweh rather than men, Acts 5:29.

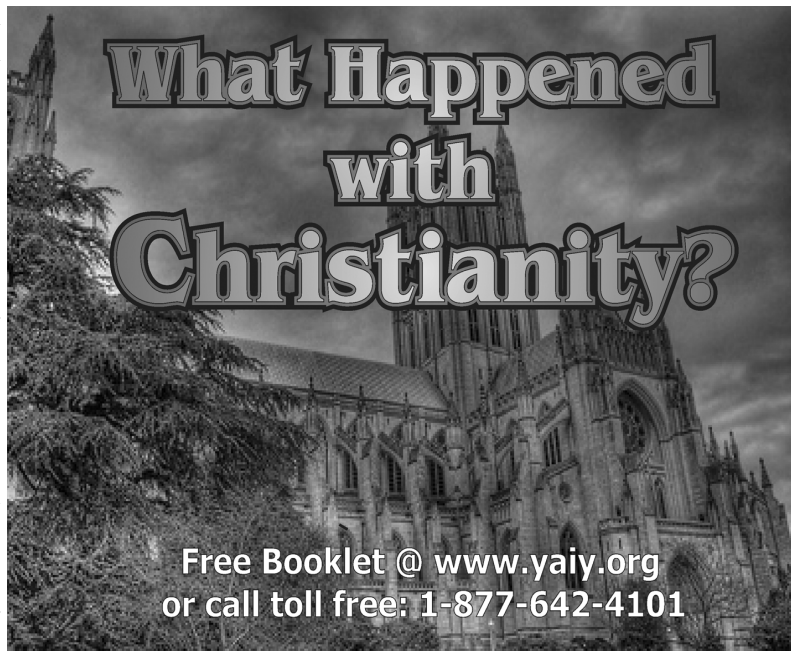
Knowing that we are not to love this world but rather are to overcome this world, the choice should be obvious. Read 1 John 5:4 - 5; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26;

Rev. 3:5, 12, 21; and Rev. 21 :7.

Let Yahweh Make Your Decisions

There are certainly many other examples of decision making which are recorded for us in the Scriptures, some made by a single person, some by a nation, with the results of some being good while the results of others were not so good. History also records for us how futile and disenchanting the results of decision making can be if it is based on man's reasoning rather than letting Yahweh be the leader. One should use the Scriptures as lessons by which to guide our lives. One should desire to follow the example given by Yahshua's life so that He will abide in us and help us in making the decisions which are best for us in the long run. Even though our lives may seem unbearable at times because of the sufferings we must

go through, we know that if we are obedient to His Word to the end then we shall reign with Him in His glorious Kingdom. This is the ultimate reward of those who look to Yahweh for the wisdom to make right decisions.



Elder Roger G. Meyer

In the Likeness of Elohim

Creation of Man

In Genesis 1:26 - 28, we read,

*Then Elohim said, "Let Us make man in Our **image**, in Our **likeness**, and let them rule [Strong's #7287, which means "to tread down" or "subjugate"] over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So Elohim created man in His **own image**, in the **image of Elohim** He created him; **male and female** He created them. Elohim blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."*

Own Image

Own Image – Strong's # OT:6754, *tselem* (tseh'-lem); meaning **to shade**; a **phantom**, i.e. (figuratively) **illusion** [an impression, appearance], **resemblance** [similarity, having a relationship]; hence, a **representative figure** [an envoy, delegate or agent], especially an idol [an icon, statue].

Likeness

Likeness – Strong's #OT:1823, *demuwth* (dem-ooth'); from OT:1819; **resemblance**; concretely, **model, shape**; adverbially, **like**. Strong's #OT:1819 *damah* (daw-maw'); to **compare**; by implication, to **resemble, liken, consider**.

Now, I find it interesting that Elohim created mankind in **His** image, but He commanded us that we should **not** make an image of **Him** – or anything in Heaven; or upon the Earth or in the sea. And especially, we should not worship any image. It seems that there are a lot of things about us that are just like the Father, and some of those character traits are forbidden for us to express, such as:

Jealous

*You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, Yahweh your Elohim, am a **JEALOUS** El, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who **hate** Me, Exodus 20:5.*

*For you shall not worship any other **el**, for Yahweh, whose **name** [whose **character**] is **JEALOUS**, is a **JEALOUS** El, Exodus 34:14.*

What IS jealousy? Synonymously, it is envy, covetousness [greed, acquisitiveness, avarice, selfish, meanness, miserliness], resentment, protectiveness, suspicion, distrust.

Origin of Jealous

Jealous - Strong's #OT:7067, *qanna'*, to be zealous, i.e., (in a bad sense) envious or angry and Strong's #NT:2206, *zelo'o*; to have warmth of feeling for or against, heat, "zeal" (in a **favorable** sense, ardor; in an unfavorable one, jealousy, as of a husband [**figuratively**, of Elohim], or an enemy, malice); to be hot, i.e. (figuratively) be fervid (earnest).

Example of Jealousy

Let me paint a picture of jealousy that may be closer to home, so we can understand some of the dynamics of this emotion. You remember when you were a teenager? Remember the first person you fell in love with? How you shared your deepest – and most cherished thoughts – with them? How you bared your soul to them about things that were important to you? How you fantasized about marrying this person? About devoting your whole life to this person? About raising a family, about all the plans to go to college, get a good job, play with your kids? Did you ever do that? What excitement we felt! Just thinking of our "one and only" brought a warm feeling.

Remember when you saw your "one and only" flirting with someone else? Remember being turned down for a date because he or she was

... “busy”? Remember getting that “Dear John” letter? Remember that warm feeling that preceded those murderous thoughts? THAT’s jealousy. But, what exactly was going on in your mind? Were you not imagining that you were losing someone very valuable to you? Was it not a catastrophe for you? When we imagine any catastrophe, what do we FEEL?

I remember seeing the images on the TV on September 11, 2001. What a catastrophe! Seriously, I began to pack my belongings to head for the hills. I felt afraid. Does Yahweh ever feel afraid? Are we valuable to Him? Is it a catastrophe for Him to lose us? Isn’t jealousy the fear of losing someone you love? Why should it be any different for the One Who created us in His image?

Yahweh’s People

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

For Yahweh’s portion is His people; Jacob is the allotment of His inheritance, Deuteronomy 32:9 NASU.

Blessed is the nation whose Elohim is Yahweh, the people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance, Psalm 33:12 NASU.

Israel is the tribe of His inheritance; Yahweh of hosts is His name, Jeremiah 10:16 NASU.

Many nations will join themselves to Yahweh in that day and will become My people. Then I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent Me to you. Yahweh will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem, Zechariah 2:11 - 12 NASU.

He also delivered His people to the sword, And was filled with wrath at His inheritance, Psalm 78:62.

For Yahweh thy Elohim is a consuming fire, even a JEALOUS Elohim, Deuteronomy 4:24.

Thou shalt fear Yahweh thy Elohim, and serve Him, and shalt swear by His name. Ye shall not go after other elohim, of the elohim of the people which are round about you, Deuteronomy 6:13 - 15 KJV.


When Yahweh chose His People for His own BRIDE, and they vowed to honor Him, to keep His covenant, to be FAITHFUL to Him; and then they flirted with other peoples and made covenants with them and took up their ways; and they abandoned their first love and broke His covenants. Let me ask you, was Yahweh angry? Now, was He JUST angry? Or, did He imagine LOSING His inheritance? Was He catastrophizing? Did He feel betrayed? Discounted? Is it reasonable to believe that Yahweh FEELS? Afraid? Powerless? Yahweh?

Remember when YOU felt afraid, powerless, discounted and putdown – and even ashamed – when the one you loved said, “Good-bye, I no longer love you, my heart belongs to another”?

Example

I remember a couple who came in for marriage counseling. They came in together; she sat next to him; she had bruises on her arms, neck and face; a split, swollen lip. I knew what happened, nevertheless I asked the inevitable question, “What happened?” I knew what had happened, which they proceeded to explain; but I knew something that they didn’t

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Mini Study

IS ‘ELOHIM’ A PAGAN TITLE?

The Hebrews referred to Yahweh as El. The Canaanites did the same to their mighty one. So who has rights to it—Yahweh or an idol?

It is no secret that the Sacred Name Yahweh has been disguised, supplanted, and removed from our English Bibles. This gross mistake lies with the translators who through ignorance or by design substituted Kyrios and Theos for Yahweh’s Name in the Greek texts.

They also translated the Hebrew titles “El” and “Elohim” into English as “god” and “God.” Some believe that one must not use the terms El and Elohim in reference to the Heavenly Majesty because they are considered pagan.

But is the Hebrew word “El” or its plural “Elohim” so evil and wrong that we are condemned for employing it as a title to refer to Yahweh? If so, then why does the first verse in the oldest Hebrew manuscripts available refer to our Creator as “Elohim”? “In the beginning G-d [אלהים = Elohim] created the heaven and the earth.” (Gen. 1:1)

‘Elohim’ A Word Given by Yahweh

If Yahweh refers to Himself as Elohim in the very Book He inspired Moses to write, then is not Elohim a term sanctioned by Yahweh Himself? If the inspired texts—breathed from Yahweh’s very own mouth—occasionally refer to Yahweh as “Elohim” (meaning “Mighty One”), how can it be wrong for us to refer to Yahweh as an Elohim?

How can one arrive, then, at such an absurd conclusion that it is wrong to use “Elohim”? One

know, the answer to which their very presence was begging, “Why did this happen?” It happened for the same reason that Yahweh brought down destruction onto His own People. Why? Because He LOVED them! How similar we are to our Creator!

“I AM! ... angry with you, My Bride, because I LOVE you, because I CARE about you; if you weren’t SO important to Me, if you weren’t My treasure, I wouldn’t be so upset! But, when you promise to love Me, when you say with your mouth that you will obey Me; and then you abandon Me and reject Me, I feel disconnected and alone. When you disobey Me, I feel powerless. When you leave Me for another and commit adultery, then it looks to Me like I’m not important to you and like you’re not in My LIFE, and I feel worthless and ashamed. It looks to Me like I don’t MATTER to you, and I feel discounted. And, when I believe that you will never be in My life again, I feel afraid to think that I’m losing you. And, I’m angry! Not to push you out of My life; but, LISTEN! I’m angry at you so you know how important you ARE to Me, so you will come back to Me, so you will once again set your heart to obey Me and honor the vows you made to Me, so we can be One, again; and live forever in the home which I have prepared for Us. And, I’m acting out My anger so that My anger will come to an end – so that I don’t destroy you com-

pletely, so that, when you finally have nowhere to go but to return to Me, you will embrace Me. Then, will I feel the intimacy I long for. Then, will I feel honored and worthy. Then will there be peace between us. Then will I want you with Me.”

When I spoke these words to the couple sitting in front of me, as the husband to the wife, they realized WHY the husband had done this horrible thing to his wife. ... And they cried for a while, understanding that they did love each other; and they had hope – to RENEW their vows and RESPECT each other. ... And, I cried, too, knowing the task now set before me. For, I knew that there would be setbacks. I knew they had a lot to learn about themselves, who they were, what a relationship requires, how to express anger so that the relationship is not destroyed but raised up. Now, did they live happily ever after? No. Did they continue to work on their relationship, discovering ways they could express their anger, openly and honestly, out of mutual respect, accepting the other’s right to think and feel according to their own process? Yes, they did. They came to realize that love is not to feel happy. Love is to feel safe and secure, satisfied, innocent, worthy, empowered, and bonded. These are the feelings of love.

Basic Requirements

The keys to the creation of these feelings are: HONESTY and ACCEPTENCE. Honesty

requires an understanding of how we create our feelings, especially our anger – to the extent that we simply cannot blame others or hold others responsible for it. Honesty is the process of describing to others how we are creating our anger at them.

Acceptance of another person comes from understanding ourselves. Once we know that others don’t make us angry, we come to understand that we don’t upset others, either. If someone is angry with me, it is invariably something going on for them. Now, does that mean we can be as mean as we want to others and thereby avoid any responsibility for their pain? Yahweh forbid! **We are commanded to sacrifice for others.**

Then Yahshua said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his stake [or, figuratively, “expose himself to death”], and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works, Matthew 16:24 – 27 NKJV.

Honesty and acceptance are the two rules or qualities of good communication. Bad communication, contrarily, is filled

with dishonesty and rejection; lies and judgment; threats and discounts and pride and silence. Honesty is manifested when we can display our anger devoid of the corporal attempt to cause the other to feel afraid, guilty, ashamed, disappointed, powerless, disconnected or guilty. In other words, without blaming, threatening, judging, guilt, shaming, commanding, demanding or removing the right for another to think, feel and act according to their own desires.

Acceptance is manifested when we can listen to another, no matter how judgmental, threatening, blaming, sarcastic or demanding they may be acting – and NOT take it personally. I know. That’s asking a lot. But, is this not the ultimate respect we can pay to someone?

It’s interesting to me that we were created in the image of Yahweh. I see that we have all the same feelings and character of our Creator. And, we are commanded to love others to the degree that He loved us. I mean, He died for us! What on earth could be so important that we find ourselves making others’ lives miserable so that we can have OUR way? When we fight to have our ways, are we not saying that “Me, getting what I want is more important than eternal life”? In my professional opinion, that’s crazy!

He that loves his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal, John 12:25 KJV.

However, there is ONE characteristic of Yahweh that we

have been given, that we are forbidden to display: Condemnation, or, vengeance.

For we know Him Who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says Yahweh. And again, "Yahweh will judge His people," Hebrews 10:30 NKJV.

And, here we are, mankind; puffed up with jealousy, pride, envy, anger and fury, standing before Yahweh, set-apart as His inheritance. Tell me! Just how merciful and longsuffering is our Elohim?

After all the destruction He brings upon us, His people, there is yet hope.

Therefore thus saith Yahweh

ELOHIM; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be JEALOUS for My holy name, Ezekiel 39:25.

Then will Yahweh be JEALOUS for His land, and pity His people, Joel 2:18.

Elohim is JEALOUS, and Yahweh revengeth; Yahweh revengeth, and is furious; Yahweh will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserveth wrath for His enemies, Nahum 1:2.

Paul, speaking to believers, says in 2 Corinthians 11:2,

For I am JEALOUS over you with Elohim [like JEALOUSY]: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Messiah.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of Yahweh; and every one that loves is born of Yahweh, and knows Yahweh. He that loves not knows not Yahweh; for Yahweh is love. In this was manifested the love of Yahweh toward us, because Yahweh sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved Yahweh, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if Yahweh so loved us, we ought also to love one another, 1 John 4:7-11 KJV.

Praise Yahweh. In the name of His Messiah, Yahshua, HalleluYah!

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WHY BE BAPTIZED INTO THE NAME OF YAHSHUA?

Is baptism just an initiation into a church, or is it truly important for salvation? Did you know that there is a proper method for it, and Name into which you must be baptized?

The New Testament's basic message to mankind is that our salvation is anchored to Yahshua the Messiah, the One Yahweh sent to earth for a living example and the One Who died for the sins of the world. He became the Author of eternal salvation to all that obey Him, Hebrews. 5:9.

In Acts 10:48 we read, "And he commanded them to be baptized into the name of Yahshua," HNB. Some have rejected that simple command to be baptized into the saving Name of Yahshua, much as Naaman refused the prophet's command to dip in the Jordan River to be healed of leprosy. Naaman argued in his rebellion that other foreign rivers are just as good, 2Kings 5:1-14.

At times those claiming humbly to follow the Bible have "reasoned" as did Naaman initially that it is neither necessary nor logical to be immersed into Yahshua's Name when they already have been baptized in the name of "Jesus" or perhaps in the titles of Father, Son and Holy Ghost years ago while in the churches. But titles are not names. We find no power or promises in titles.

Elder John Fisher (deceased)



The Christmas Fantasy

Consider the common nativity scene. There is a manger with Mary hovering over the Babe; Joseph is standing nearby; a short distance away, shepherds with their sheep and cattle gaze from snowdrifts. Three figures of royalty approach carrying gifts of various types; their camels patiently wait off to one side. A huge star shines from a tin reflector overhead.

This scene will be pictured in many cities, churches, and homes this coming Christmas season.

So What's the Problem?

Perhaps the most obvious mistake in this popular rendition of the Messiah's birth is that the three figures representing the wise men from the east are coming to a manger. Matthew 2:11 plainly says that the wise men came to a house and saw the young child. Notice, the Son of Miriam was no longer in a stable, and He is now called a child, not a babe.

Another error in our scene is that the Bible nowhere says that the shepherds saw the star, for the star was the sign given to the wise men. The wise men saw the star about two years later, because Matthew 2:16 tells of Herod's slaying all the young boys from two years old and under in his wholesale effort to include Yahshua in his edict of death. Therefore, almost two years had elapsed since the birth of the Messiah.

Not only did the shepherds not see the star, but the wise men were also not present to hear the angelic host make the announcement, for they had to follow a star to find Him. There is nothing in Scripture that states there were three

wise men. There could have been 33. Merely because the wise men presented three gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, tradition holds that there were three of them. They have even been given names, although the Bible does not name them.

Scriptural Command Missing

If these nativity scene blunders were the only errors in the Christmas celebration, perhaps they could be corrected. However, tradition is strong, and even when these simple misconceptions are pointed out to people, they choose to continue on their merry way.

Most of the world insists on keeping this festival not scripturally commanded.

We are commanded, however, to remember the Messiah's death, 1 Corinthians 11:25. Instead of remembering His death once a year at Passover, the world celebrates annually what it thinks is His birth — in the dead of winter.

Heathen Roots in Its Trappings

Each year as the Christmas season approaches, newspapers are full of historical evidence showing how the customs surrounding this season all sprang from paganism.

Jeremiah warns us, "Learn not the way of the heathen." Anyone perusing their newspaper will find numerous articles showing that many of the customs of Christmas have roots in pagan practices.

Bible scholars know full well that the Messiah was not born anywhere near December 25. Yet, when this is pointed out to people, the an-

swer is that we really should not care when He was born, just so long as we keep a day in memory of His birth. Yet, just why we should be celebrating a day that has its roots in paganism is summarily shrugged off.

Any good reference work will confirm the pagan origins of the customs of Christmas. Special notice should be given the following:

Wassailing bowls were used by those observing the Bacchanalia to the deity Bacchus in Greece and Rome. Mistletoe was used by the ancient Druid priests as a symbol of the pardoning of sin. A kiss was evidence of reconciliation. Reindeer can be traced to the Scandinavian mythology of Odin's horse Sleipnir, the fastest horse in the world with his eight legs.

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

Nimrod, deified as the sun-god, but cut down by his enemies. The Christmas tree is the slain deity come to life again, p. 98. Yahweh warns against erecting Christmas trees in Jeremiah 10:2 - 5.

Christmas cookies trace to pagan Babylon and Egypt where round wafers of the sun were ingested, signifying the partaking of the "unconquerable sun" into their lives. The holly wreath, with its circular design and a candle or light within, memorializes sun worship.

No Field Day for Shepherds

There is no doubt that Christmas, along with many of the so-called "holy days" in Christianity, has its roots in paganism. But the truth about Messiah's birth is not so well known. Rather than December 25, the Savior was more likely born in late September or early October.

Luke 2:8 tells of the shepherds in the open fields near Bethlehem watching their flocks at night. Shepherds would not have their sheep on cold, rain-lashed hills in December. Scripture shows that December is a cold, rainy season in that region. Ezra 10:9 speaks of those in Jerusalem sitting outside in early December trembling because of their deeds and in "great rain."

Winter weather did not change much from that day until the Messiah's time. Shepherds took their sheep into the open fields just before Passover

in the spring and brought them in again during the Hebrew eighth month — about the middle of November — when the rainy season began. This is according to Henri Daniel-Rops' book, *Daily Life in the Time of Jesus*.

Christmas Before the Messiah

In view of these facts, how did December 25 become the celebration of our Savior's birth? According to *The World Book Encyclopedia*, in 354 CE the December date was selected by Liberius, a bishop of Rome, "because the people of Rome already observed it as the Feast of Saturn, celebrating the birthday of the Sun."

Other sources show that this day was the Saturnalia, a festival of much revelry, dancing, merriment and feasting. A king

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In-Depth Study

Yahweh's Food Laws

Clean or Unclean?

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In-Depth Study

The Untold Story of Christmas

was appointed over the revels. Slaves were freed. Foes became friends. Friends feasted together. Evergreens decorated the houses. Songs were sung in honor of Saturn. Gifts were exchanged between friends. All of this began 2,000 years before the birth of the Messiah.

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

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

Can it be mere coincidence that the Savior's supposed time of birth and this pagan celebration occur not only in the same month, but on the very day?

Pagans Were Pleased

In the fourth century, the catholic church desired to bring the pagan Germans and Romans into its fold. They took the festival of Saturnalia, which was held on December 25, and turned it into a mass of the church. They named it Christ's Mass.

Initially there was a fierce internal fight over this turn of events. The pope bitterly opposed what he called "the introduction of a heathen festival into the Christian church." Even the thought of celebrating the birthday of Messiah was correctly rejected at first.

Nearly 300 years passed before there was any mention of celebrating the birth of Messiah. Notice the admission of the Catholic Dictionary under "Christmas," by Cardinal McCloskey:

"St. Chrysostom, in a Christmas sermon delivered at Antioch in the year 386 says, 'It is

not ten years since this day (Christmas day on December 25) was clearly known to us.'"

Therefore, if Christmas was not celebrated until fewer than 10 years before 386 CE, it is plain that the first commemoration of the Messiah's birth did not take place before the year 377. For more than 300 years after His birth there was no celebration of December 25 as the Messiah's birthday. But to appease pagan converts, their heathen celebrations were brought into the church and given new meaning. The customs and practices remained basically unchanged.

Once the door was opened to pagan celebrations, the practices and flavor of the early church became more and more heathen. It made no difference whether the Bible countermanded pagan practice. Pleasing the pagans became customary.

Candles, bells, round wafers, tonsorial haircuts, crosses, statues, steeples, and many more symbols from paganism are vividly described in *The Two Babylons*, Loizeaux Brothers publishers.

It's the Same Old Story

Yahweh condemned ancient Israel for taking up the customs of the pagans around them. He consistently warned them about rejecting Him and His way of life. Israel, however, seemingly had a deep-seated desire to search for any offbeat worship and incorporate that into their worship of Yahweh.

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Mini - Study

It's 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.

The Old Testament is replete with the history of how the Israelites would follow pagan worship around them so that Yahweh had to send a prophet to bring them back to Himself. After such a reformation, the drift into heathen customs would start again.

Yahweh would leave them to their own devices, which would usually bring calamity and tribulation. Finally, He sent His beloved Son to this earth. He, too, was rejected. And a heathen custom was established for Him, also.

Does the wild revelry that is so common in the Christmas celebration bring honor to Yahshua? Does it reflect His teachings? Or is it rather in keeping with the spirit of a pleasure-mad, fun-seeking people of the world?

Yahshua clearly said that He has chosen all His followers to come out of the world, John 15:19. His people are not to take part in the world's heathen celebrations.

Perhaps you will say you observe the customs of Christmas for the sake of the children, not for religious reasons. Even though you disagree with the paganism attached to Christmas, it is impossible to join in its celebration without showing that you condone it.

Obviously the central figure in Christmas isn't the Messiah anyway, but a jolly fat man in a red suit known as Santa Claus. He is the one who receives credit for many of the gifts children receive at this time of year.

The average child knows little about the Savior whose birthday this pagan holiday is supposed to commemorate. Everywhere he looks — in stores, magazines, newspapers, television shows — he sees credit passed on to Santa Claus. Most children, like Virginia, come to believe there really is a Santa Claus.

Stocking Market Up

What about exchanging gifts? People like to receive gifts, and a principle of being a follower of the Messiah is to be generous to others, right? But is gift giving at Christmas done in the spirit of love, or is it done

grudgingly, or to avoid embarrassment? "Yahweh loves a cheerful giver," Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 9:7.

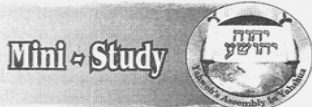
Giving gifts at Christmas is often done merely out of feelings of obligation rather than out of love and the simple joy of giving. Children learn to ask, "What did you get?" not "What did you give?" Gifts are given because someone gave one last year and thus are put on a list. It is not really the giving of a gift out of the sheer joy of giving to someone. If you doubt that, don't give any gifts this Christmas and see how many will drop you from their list next year. Gift giving is merely a gift exchange.

Everything about Christmas is wrong: the name, the time, the purpose, the goal, the result, the worship. How can a True Believer celebrate Yahshua's birthday when nowhere does the Bible encourage command, or cajole us to remember anyone's birthday? Furthermore, in each of the only three possible birthdays mentioned in the Bible, someone died.

When one celebrates Christmas, he puts his stamp of approval on a heathen custom, much as Israel did of old and were punished for it. Let us leave Christmas to the nonbeliever. Say with Joshua the son of Nun, "As for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh" Joshua 24:15.

Elder Donald R. Mansager
(deceased)

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Mini Study

**Scripturally
Clean Food**

Many believe that all food is now okay to eat. They point to what Yahshua said and what Peter saw. Here is what the Bible says.

Not only does the Bible reveal what our behavior should be in this world, but we also are told what foods are appropriate to maintain proper health and vigor.

"A sound mind in a sound body," is an ancient cry of the Greeks that holds true today. If our body is in good health, we feel good, our vigor is improved, our thinking is clearer, and our disposition more pleasant.

Food has a direct bearing on our health and well-being.

The food we eat is the fuel needed to keep us going just as gasoline is needed to fuel the engine of an automobile and provide needed power. Water, kerosene, milk, or orange juice, won't work in a car. The human body also requires the right foods for good health.

Good Nutrients Removed

Food processors have educated many through their advertising programs of the better nourishment in eating whole grains. White bread sales continue to fall as shoppers become aware of the wholesome virtues of whole grains. In the past the wheat germ was removed from the flour because it

Halloween

Origins – the Celts

History has recorded for us the origin of Halloween. Halloween's origins date back to the ancient Celtic festival called Samhain (pronounced sow-in). The Celtic people lived over 2,000 years ago in the area now called Ireland, the United Kingdom and northern France. By the first century B. C. they spread over much of Europe.

The Celts believed that November 1 began their new year as it marked the end of summer and harvest time and the beginning of the dark, cold winter, a time of year often associated with human death. The Celts believed that the night before, October 31, stood as a boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead.

During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, typically consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other's fortunes.

From Celtic and Anglo-Saxon times, October 31 was observed as the eve of the new year, a time of death and renewal, and was called Samhain, believed as the time when the ghosts of the dead returned to earth.

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 forgiven 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, where the people gathered to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities.

By 43 AD, Romans had conquered the majority of Celtic territory. In the course of the four hundred years that they ruled the Celtic lands, two festivals of Roman origin were combined

with the traditional Celtic celebration of Samhain.

The first was Feralia, a day in late October when the Romans traditionally commemorated the passing of the dead. The second was a day to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple and the incorporation of this celebration into Samhain probably explains the tradition of "bobbing" for apples that is practiced today on Halloween.

By the 800s, the influence of Christianity had spread into Celtic lands. In the seventh century, Pope Boniface IV designated November 1 All Saints' Day, a time to honor saints and martyrs. It is widely believed today that the pope was attempting to replace the Celtic festival of the dead with a related, but church-sanctioned holiday. The celebration was also called All-hallows or All-hallowmas (from Middle English Alhallowmesse meaning All Saints' Day) and the night before it, the night of Samhain, began to be called All-hallows Eve and, eventually, Halloween. Even later, in 1000 AD, the church would make November 2 All Souls' Day, a day to honor the dead. It was celebrated similarly to Samhain, with big bonfires, parades, and dressing up in costumes as saints, angels, and devils. Together, the three celebrations, the eve of All Saints', All Saints', and All Souls', were called Hallowmas.

The economy of the Celts was pastoral and agricultural, and they had no city life. Each tribe was headed by a king and was divided into three classes: Druids (priests), warrior nobles and commoners.

Druids

The earliest known records of the Druids come from the 3rd century BC. According to Julius Caesar, who is the principal source of in-

formation about the Druids, they seemed to frequent the oak forests and acted as priests, teachers and judges. Once a year the Druids assembled at a sacred place in the territory of the Carnutes, which was believed to be the center of all Gaul, and all legal disputes were there submitted to the judgment of the Druids.

The Druids offered human sacrifices for those who were gravely sick or in danger of death in battle, even those they abstained from warfare. Generally, they would choose to sacrifice criminals, but would choose innocent victims, if necessary.

In the early period, Druids, who were occupied with magico-religious duties, performed certain rites in clearings in the forest. Sacred buildings were used only later under Roman influence. The Druids were suppressed in Gaul by the Romans under Tiberius (reigned 14 – 37 AD) and probably in Britain a little later. In Ireland they lost their priestly functions after the coming of Christianity and survived as poets, historians, and judges (filid, senchaidi, and brithemain). Many scholars believe that the Hindu Brahman in the East and the Celtic Druid in the West were lateral survivals of an ancient Indo-European priesthood.

The Druids principle doctrine was that the soul was immortal and passed at death from one person to another. 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 tindery cages 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 Ro-

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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.

man 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 Wagnall's 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.

Halloween Comes to America

As European immigrants came to America, they brought their varied Halloween customs with them. Because of the rigid Protestant belief systems that characterized early New England, celebration of Halloween in colonial times was extremely

limited there.

It was much more common in Maryland and the southern colonies. As the beliefs and customs of different European ethnic groups, as well as the American Indians, meshed, a distinctly American version of Halloween began to emerge. The first celebrations included "play parties," public events held to celebrate the harvest, where neighbors would share stories of the dead, tell each other's fortunes, dance, and sing. Colonial Halloween festivities also featured the telling of ghost stories and mischief-making of all kinds. By the middle of the nineteenth century, annual autumn festivities were common, but Halloween was not yet celebrated everywhere in the country.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, America was flooded with new immigrants. These new immigrants, especially the millions of Irish fleeing Ireland's potato famine of 1846, helped to popularize the celebration of Halloween nationally. Taking from Irish and English traditions, Americans began to dress up in costumes and go house to house asking for food or money, a practice that eventually became today's "trick-or-treat" tradition. Young women believed that, on Halloween, they could divine the name or appearance of their future husband by doing tricks with yarn, apple parings, or mirrors.

In the late 1800s, there was a move in America to mold Hal-

loween into a holiday more about community and neighborly get-togethers, than about ghosts, pranks, and witchcraft.

At the turn of the century, Halloween parties for both children and adults became the most common way to celebrate the day. Parties focused on games, foods of the season, and festive costumes. Parents were encouraged by newspapers and community leaders to take anything "frightening" or "grotesque" out of Halloween celebrations. Because of their efforts, Halloween lost most of its superstitious and religious overtones by the beginning of the twentieth century.

By the 1920s and 1930s, Halloween had become a secular, but community-centered holiday, with parades and town-wide parties as the featured entertainment. Despite the best efforts of many schools and communities, vandalism began to plague Halloween celebrations in many communities during this time. By the 1950s, town leaders had successfully limited vandalism and Halloween had evolved into a holiday directed mainly at the young. Due to the high numbers of young children during the fifties baby boom, parties moved from town civic centers into the classroom or home, where they could be more easily accommodated. Between 1920 and 1950, the centuries-old practice of trick-or-treating was also revived. Trick-or-treating was a relatively inexpensive way for

an entire community to share the Halloween celebration. In theory, families could also prevent tricks being played on them by providing the neighborhood children with small treats. A new American tradition was born, and it has continued to grow. Today, Americans spend an estimated \$6.9 billion annually on Halloween, making it the country's second largest commercial holiday.

Traditions

Trick-or-Treating

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 can 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.

The American tradition of “trick-or-treating” probably dates back to the early All Souls’ Day parades in England. During the festivities, poor citizens would beg for food and families would give them pastries called “soul cakes” in return for their promise to pray for the family’s dead relatives.

Soul Cakes

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.

Costumes

The tradition of dressing in costume for Halloween has both European and Celtic roots. Hundreds of years ago, winter was an uncertain and frightening time. Food supplies often ran low and, for the many people

afraid of the dark, the short days of winter were full of constant worry. On Halloween, when it was believed that ghosts came back to the earthly world, people thought that they would encounter ghosts if they left their homes. To avoid being recognized by these ghosts, people would wear masks when they left their homes after dark so that the ghosts would mistake them for fellow spirits. On Halloween, to keep ghosts away from their houses, people would place bowls of food outside their homes to appease the ghosts and prevent them from attempting to enter.

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.

Jack-O-Lantern

People have been making jack o’lanterns at Halloween for centuries. The practice originated from an Irish myth about a man nicknamed “Stingy Jack.” According to the story, Stingy Jack invited the Devil to have a drink with him. True to his name, Stingy Jack didn’t want to pay for his drink, so he convinced the Devil to turn himself into a coin that Jack could use to buy their drinks. Once the Devil did so, Jack decided to keep the money and put it into his pocket next to a silver cross, which prevented the Devil from changing back into his original form. Jack eventually freed the Devil, un-

der the condition that he would not bother Jack for one year and that, should Jack die, he would not claim his soul. The next year, Jack again tricked the Devil into climbing into a tree to pick a piece of fruit. While he was up in the tree, Jack carved a sign of the cross into the tree's bark so that the Devil could not come down until the Devil promised Jack not to bother him for ten more years.

Soon after, Jack died. As the legend goes, God would not allow such an unsavory figure into heaven. The Devil, upset by the trick Jack had played on him and keeping his word not to claim his soul, would not allow Jack into hell. He sent Jack off into the dark night with only a burning coal to light his way. Jack put the coal into a carved-out turnip and has been roaming the Earth with ever since. The Irish began to refer to this ghostly figure as "Jack of the Lantern," and then, simply "Jack O'Lantern."

In Ireland and Scotland, people began to make their own versions of Jack's lanterns by carving scary faces into turnips or potatoes and placing them into windows or near doors to frighten away Stingy Jack and other wandering evil spirits. In England, large beets are used. Immigrants from these countries brought the jack o'lantern tradition with them when they came to the United States. They soon found that pumpkins, a fruit native to America, make perfect jack o'lanterns.

Superstitions

Halloween has always been a holiday filled with mystery, magic and superstition. It began as a Celtic end-of-summer festival during which people felt especially close to deceased relatives and friends. For these friendly spirits, they set places at the dinner table, left treats on doorsteps and along the side of the road and lit candles to help loved ones find their way back to the spirit world.

Today's Halloween ghosts are often depicted as more fearsome and malevolent, and our customs and superstitions are scarier too. We avoid crossing paths with black cats, afraid that they might bring us bad luck. This idea has its roots in the Middle Ages, when many people believed that witches avoided detection by turning themselves into cats. We try not to walk under ladders for the same reason. This superstition may have come from the ancient Egyptians, who believed that triangles were sacred; it also may have something to do with the fact that walking under a leaning ladder tends to be fairly unsafe. And around Halloween, especially, we try to avoid breaking mirrors, stepping on cracks in the road or spilling salt.

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*, pp. 48, report 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.

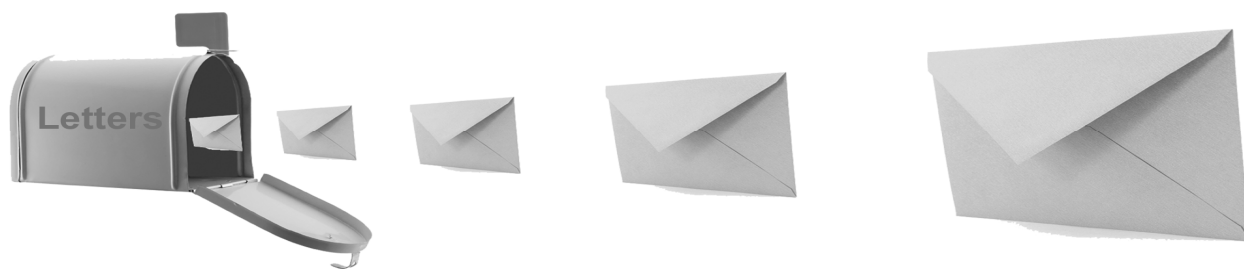
But the scriptures give a strong warning about this.

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).

But what about the Halloween traditions and beliefs that today's trick-or-treaters have forgotten all about? Many of these obsolete rituals focused on the future instead of the past and the living instead of the dead. In particular, many had to do with helping young women identify their future husbands and reassuring them that they would someday — with luck, by next Halloween! — be married.

In 18th-century Ireland, a matchmaking cook might bury a ring in her mashed potatoes on Halloween night, hoping to bring true love to the diner who

<Halloween see page 22>



I so appreciate your teaching of our Heavenly Father Yahweh and His Scriptures. I also am thankful my eyes have been opened to the truth of the Word of Yahweh. I am also looking forward and praying for a visit to bless us with our Father's Word and baptism in the name of Yahshua. — **BD, OH**

Thank you for all the work you do. Your ministry has helped me to understand a lot this past year. May Yahweh bless you and keep you. May Yahweh make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May Yahweh lift you up with His countenance and establish shalom with you. — **JW, NV**

Hello. I'm so blessed to be on your list for Bible Studies and literature and I cannot thank you enough. I learn many things through your ministry and I try to share them with others. However, hardly anybody wants to learn. How sad it is. — **KH, CA**

Greetings and thank you for such a great magazine as the Beacon. I would like to make sure I am on your mailing list for next year. When I finish reading an issue for the second time, I pass it on to someone else. — **TK, CO**

First of all, I'd like to thank you for the literature you last sent to me. I will share them with some friends and family. It is really exciting to have access to teachings of sound doctrine. — **RC, PA**

I just read your printings, "Understanding Hellfire" and "Tongues, Past, Present and Future." Very logical. I thank you all at YAIY for publishing what your public churches are "not" teaching their unfortunate congregations. All we can do is continue speaking the truth and allow the Spirit of Yahweh to bring the righteous out of the mother of harlots. May the Creator's love, forgiveness and blessings be upon you all by the power and blood of Messiah Yahshua. — **RV, CA**

Hello. I am just engulfed in your studies. I really enjoyed the "Untold Story of Christmas" and I shared it with others. But most of them are stuck in traditions. Thank you so much for these studies. May Yahweh bless you all. — **JW, OH**

Shalom. May Yah's blessings be bestowed upon you for the righteous works you are doing. I want to thank Yah for you and I thank you for all the studies you send out. — **DJ, CA**

Thank you for everything that you have sent me so far. The Bible Studies are very helpful and insightful. The mini-studies that you send me are also very knowledgeable and full of instruction. May Yahweh and Yahshua continue to bless your congregation. — **DS, MO**

I would like to thank you for sending me this quarter's Beacon. I really enjoy reading it. Thank you for all the literature you send me. — **JL, MI**

Greetings and glory to Yahweh all through His Son our Savior Yahshua Messiah. Thank you so much for all your publications. — **DR, NV**

Blessings to you all in Yahshua's name. I pray that Yahweh continues to guide your assembly in the right path in teaching those who search for truth. I thank you very much for the study booklets and the Beacon magazine that you have blessed me with. I thank you for your dedication in helping me seek truth. — **OR, CA**

Thank you for sending me the Beacon magazine. It is very encouraging. — **RS, FL**

Greetings and blessings in the names of our Father Yahweh and His Son Yahshua Messiah our Savior. I would like to thank our Father Yahweh for your assembly and the services you provide for people like me. The information you make available is extremely helpful and enlightening. — **DP, MO**

All your stuff is straight forward, easy to read, and also easy to understand. Some studies I have read just did not feel right. Yours are more like confirmation. Again, I thank you and may the Father continue to bless you as you spread the truth. — **OM, TX**

Greetings in the name of our Heavenly Father Yahweh and His Son Yahshua the Messiah. I want to thank you personally, and on behalf of our group here, for sending the DVD teaching series on Romans. We recently received it and will be viewing it as soon as possible. I truly believe your sound teaching and doctrinal stance. I also enjoy them, especially the one dealing with the Feast of Tabernacles with all the photos. We are all very grateful. May Yahweh continue to bless you. — **JM, VA**

Thank you for all the help you give me. I have a clearer understanding of Who Yahweh is because of your care for me. I know your reward will be great. — **RM, NY**

I would like to send my deepest appreciation for allowing me to enroll in YAIY's Bible Course. Thank you, Heavenly Father Yahweh, for allowing me to receive Your true and correct wisdom and knowledge and allowing my heart, soul, body and mind, as well as my spirit, to receive understanding of everything I study. — **RM, FL**

I have been blessed to have discovered your organization and I've been enlightened by your Beacon magazine. — **RM, MI**

Thank you so much for the Beacon magazine and all the newsletters that you send to me. I truly enjoy them and when finished I pass them on to others. May you be blessed and continue to do Yahweh's evangelism. — **TJ, NV**

Your In-depth study titled, "The Mistaken 'J'," was very informative. It is almost mind boggling how a group of people would forsake and forget the name of their mighty-one. I greatly appreciate the ministry our Father Yahweh has blessed you with and look forward to receiving and reading your materials. — **TJ, WA**

The information you have shared with me is very eye-opening. I am learning to live a new life-style by studying your literature. Words can not express how much I thank you for the knowledge you have shared with me. May Yahweh continue to shower blessings on everyone at YAIY. — **AG, GA**

I write to let you know that I received your literature and information. I was happy to see it. I share them with others that I talk to. I hope you will send me more literature as I need the help. — **WE, OH**

We are a group of more than 20 people who observe the Sabbath of Yahweh and would like to learn more about the teaching of the assembly to which you belong. If we gain good understanding of what you teach, we would gladly work with you. May you please send us some literature that would enlighten us about Yahweh's Word. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

— **FD, Malau**

of Unleavened Bread. This will be my first observance of the Holy Days and it feels good to be a part of it. Yahweh has opened my eyes to the truth and He is ushering me into His plan and I never felt more at peace in my life. Yahweh has revealed Himself to me in numerous ways and I have come to have a better understanding of Who He is. Thank you, YAIY in helping me on that journey because now I can hear His voice and I have confidence to follow His leading me.

— **TC, OH**

I am looking forward to Passover and the Feast

<Halloween from page 19>

found it. In Scotland, fortunetellers 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.

Other rituals were more

competitive. At some Halloween parties, the first guest to find a burr on a chestnut-hunt would be the first to marry; at others, the first successful apple-bobber would be the first down the aisle.

Of course, whether we're asking for romantic advice or trying to avoid seven years of bad luck, each one of these Halloween superstitions relies on the good will of the very same "spirits" whose presence the early Celts felt so keenly. Ours is not such a different holiday after all!

Let the Scriptures Be Our Guide

Many parents will say to let their children go out on Halloween night and enjoy some inno-

cent 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 doesn't Yahweh say in Jeremiah 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.

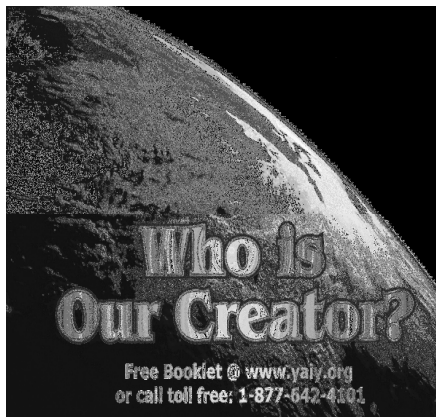
Yahweh further says in Deuteronomy 18:12 - 13:

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



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Campbell County Community Media, Channel 17
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Mashpee Public Access, Channel 99
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Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet,
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