

YAIY NEWS



Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua

Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, people of Israel? For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign YAHWEH. Repent and live!

Ezekiel 18:31-32 NIV

Santa Claus and Gift Giving (origins)

Santa Claus

"Santa Claus" is a corruption of the name "St. Nicholas," a Roman Catholic bishop who lived in the 5th century (Encyclopedia Britannica, volume 19, pages 648-649). A supposedly generous individual, he became the patron saint of a number of countries and cities, as well as merchants, bakers, mariners, and children. To the children he developed into a giver of gifts on the eve of his feast day, December 6. The Dutch and Flemish called it the Feast of Sinterklaas (a form of Sint Nikolaas), hence the anglicized corruption, "Santa Claus." A legend of his surreptitious bestowal of dowries on the three daughters of an impoverished citizen is said to have originated the old custom of giving presents in secret on the eve of St. Nicholas [Dec. 6], subsequently transferred to Christmas day.



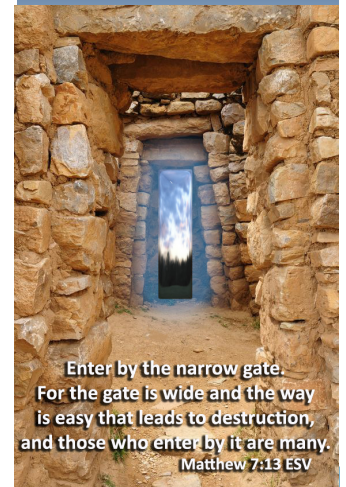
During the Protestant Reformation, the St. Nicholas image was nearly banished permanently to the North Pole. Taking his place was a more secular figure known as Christmas Man, Father Christmas, or Pope Noel. The Dutch clung tenaciously to St. Nick, although his religious attributes died. When the Pennsylvania Dutch came to America in the eighteenth century they brought with them the custom of the Christkindl. This "Christ Child" supposedly brought gifts for children on Christmas eve, riding a mule loaded with presents. His name was changed by the English

settlers to Kriss Kringle (secret Santa). The notion of his North Pole home was contrived through Scandinavian or Russian tales about north-dwelling wizards.

- Prov. 22:6 - train a child into the way he should go.

Gift Giving

The practice of gift giving also rests with the ancient heathen. The Romans gave gifts to one another at the Saturnalia merrymaking (Encyclopedia Britannica). They also exchanged gifts at the Roman New Year.



Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.
Matthew 7:13 ESV

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Santa Claus and Gift Giving ...cont.

- Matt. 2:11 - wise men never came to manger, went to house to see Yahshua.
The gifts they gave were not birthday gifts, but gifts that were traditionally given to a King by visitors in eastern cultures. They recognized him as born King of the Jews.
- Rev. 11:8-12 – only place gifts are exchanged.

Other Origins Surrounding Christmas

Mistletoe is a Druidic survival that was thought to cure everything from epilepsy to infertility, the wax berries of this parasite were thought to be a sex stimulant. Mistletoe has long been associated with both magic and fertility. Sprigs of mistletoe were once fastened over the conjugal bed on the wedding night.

Holly's green leaves and red berries were respected in medieval times as protection against witchcraft and the evil eye; a good luck charm for men.

Wreaths with their round shape symbolize the returning sun at the winter solstice, they depict the sun's comeback victory over darkness and death (Nimrod reincarnates to Tammuz).

Christmas candles trace to the burning Yule log and the reincarnation of Nimrod.

Ham is eaten because Tammuz (Adonis) was thought to have been killed by a boar. In his memory, pagans sacrificed and ate swine at the Saturnalia.

Christmas cookies trace back to the cakes that were made to the Queen of Heaven (Semiramis) in Jer. 44:19. Round ones were made for the Saturnalia and Brumalia to symbolize the returning sun.



Yule Log can be traced back to the days of the pagan Norsemen, or Vikings. To celebrate their belief in the powers of the gods, the Norsemen held festivals. The father of the Gods was Odin or Thor, commonly called the Yule Father (Yule referred to the sun). The Nordic Yule Log Ceremony was a festival celebrating the sun during the winter solstice. Originally, the Yule Log was burned in honor of the gods and to bring good luck in the coming year. The log was usually from one of the largest trees that could be found. It was so massive that to haul it a team of horses or oxen were needed.

Oscilla is a memento/picture/angel figurine image hung on a tree and moves with the wind. During Saturnalia oscilla were sometimes mementos of young kids. Oscilla were associated with ancient child sacrifice rituals of the pagans during Saturnalia. Oscilla also was a form of remembrance of the Roman god Bacchus (same as Dionysus-Greek god), the god of grape harvest and ritual madness.

- Ps. 106:37-41 – Israelites entered Palestine, child sacrifice, worshiped Moloch, precursor of Saturn/Kronos.

“For what can be a greater proof of madness, than to offer human sacrifice, to pollute every city, and even their own houses, with kindred blood? Do not the Greeks themselves attest this, and is not all history filled with records of the same impiety? The Phœnicians devoted their best beloved and only children as an annual sacrifice to Saturn. At Heliopolis three victims were daily offered to Juno, for whom king Amoses, impressed with the atrocity of the practice, commanded the substitution of an equal number of waxen figures. At Sparta they immolated (sacrificed) human beings to Mars. Diodorus affirms that two hundred of the noblest youths were sacrificed to Saturn by the Libyan people, and that three hundred more were vol-

Santa Claus and Gift Giving ...cont.

untarily offered by their own parents.”

Eusebius. Oration in Praise of Constantine, thirtieth anniversary of his reign. Chapter 13, Verses 7,8.

Other Quotes To Consider

“Christmas was not widely celebrated until the late 300s.”

Christian History Magazine-Issue 37: Worship in the Early Church. 1993. Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today.

“...since it’s not obvious from the New Testament that the early church observed Christmas and Easter and Trinity Sunday, these special days were cut out of the Scottish church calendar. The development of Christmas as a major Christian festival in Scotland is a remarkably recent re-emergence. There are still one or two smaller Presbyterian churches that make more of New Year than they do of Christmas.”

Christian History Magazine-Issue 46: John Knox & the Scottish Reformation. 1995. Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today.

“...many Christians had half-lapsed back into their native religion, mingling Christian and pagan practices in ways that tested the limits of orthodoxy—and the missionary’s patience.”

Christian History Magazine-Issue 93: St. Benedict & Western Monasticism. 2007. Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today.

“Indeed, the background of many observances such as Christmas, Epiphany, and Ember is pagan.”

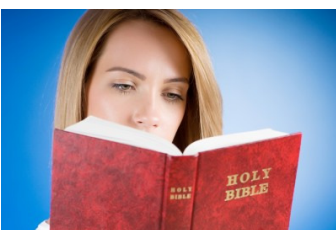
Myers, A. C. (1987). The Eerdmans Bible dictionary (1069). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

“In the church we have many traditions, too. Some of them, such as the special ways in which a congregation celebrates Christmas or Easter, help us draw closer to [Yahweh] even though we may not be able to define or support the practices from Scripture. By using the words traditional and contemporary to talk about types of worship, we acknowledge that a good bit of what we do has developed from years of practice.”

Gangel, K. O. (1998). Vol. 5: Acts. Holman New Testament Commentary (245). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

“[Yahshua's] birth itself almost certainly did not occur on December 25. This date became attached to the celebration of Christmas later because it coincided with a Roman holiday known as Saturnalia.”

Blomberg, C. (1992). Vol. 22: Matthew. The New American Commentary (62). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.



“...beware that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How do these nations serve their gods, that I also may do likewise?’ You shall not behave thus toward YAHWEH your Elohim, for every abominable act which YAHWEH hates they have done for their gods; for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it,” Deuteronomy 12:30–32 NASB.

“For the customs of the peoples are delusion; because it is wood cut from the forest, the work of the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool. ‘They decorate it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers so that it will not totter,’” Jeremiah 10:3–4 NASB.

“O YAHWEH, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in the day of trouble, to you shall the nations come from the ends of the earth and say: ‘Our fathers have inherited nothing but lies, worthless things in which there is no profit,’” Jeremiah 16:19 NASB.

News You Can Use Politics and Butterflies

After observing the recent presidential debates and subsequent re-election of Barack Obama as the 45th president of the United States, it seemed self evident that the democratic political process is a worldly event lacking spiritual value. According to a FoxNews.com article dated October 26, 2012, the high stakes prize will cost in excess of \$2,000,000,000 (\$2 billion). If you add the congressional election races, the tab exceeds \$5 billion. From an economic perspective, this degree of investment should result in the best leaders that money can buy. However, even after spending in excess of \$5 billion, the balance of power in the executive and legislative branches of the US government remains the same as before the election. The Democrats maintained the Senate majority and the Republicans maintained the House of Representatives majority.

How does this outcome affect you? Or even should it affect you? Are you a participant or an observer? With the 2012 presidential election in the history books, I pondered the degree of involvement that a follower of Yahshua should have in the political process. The answer becomes crystal clear when one asks the question “who would Yahshua have voted for in the recent election?” In John 18:36 Yahshua states, “*My kingdom is not of this world.*” Also, consider the admonition of Paul, “*And do not be **conformed** to this world, but be **transformed** by the **renewing** of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of Yahweh*” (Rom. 12:2 NKJV).

Conformed

The word “conformed” means to fashion yourself according to a pattern or process, or to be in union with (Strong’s G4964). Arguably, the electoral process is a fundamental tenant of our democratic political system. Romans 12:2 tells us not to be associated or united (conformed) with the processes and patterns of this world. We live in this world but are not of it.

As Yahshua prayed to the Father just before His arrest and crucifixion: “*I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world” (John 17:14-16). You will notice that in these 3 verses, Yahshua states twice that His followers are not of the world. If we have received Yahweh’s word of truth (John 17:17), we, then, by His word of truth, cannot be or want to be participants in this world’s system of government. Have you accepted Yahweh’s word of truth? Are you associated or united with the processes and patterns of the world?*



Transformed

Instead of conforming to the world’s processes and patterns, we are to be “transformed” by the renewing of our mind. The word “transform” means to change, transfigure or metamorphose (G3339). You may remember the cycle of the caterpillar, to the pupa, to the butterfly. “Metamorphosis” occurs when a life form changes into a new creature and the end result has zero resemblance to the original form.

Fundamentally, metamorphosis is a biological term that means:

1. a profound change in form from one stage to the next in the life history of an organism.
2. a complete change of physical form or substance.
3. a complete change of character, appearance, circumstances.

News You Can Use ...cont.

Being transformed into a new person requires a profound change of character, substance and circumstance. The new person has no spiritual resemblance to the former personality. *“Therefore, if anyone is in Yahshua, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new”* (2 Cor. 5:17).

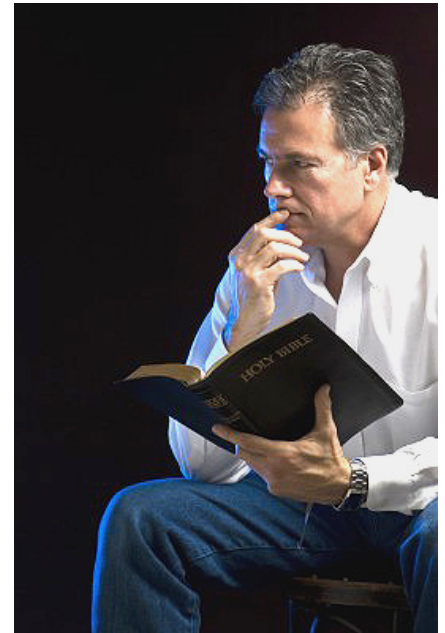
Renewing

Our transformation to a new creation results from the “renewing” of our mind through Yahweh’s Spirit. Renewing means to renovate or make new in freshness (G341). The dictionary definition of renovation is:

1. to restore to good condition; make new or as if new again; repair.
2. to reinvigorate; refresh; revive.

Our minds become corrupted through the influences of this world. There are endless worldly distractions that subvert our spiritual well-being. If you watched any of the events that preceded the recent election, it should be evident that the political system is permeated with greed, lust for power and ego. You could easily conclude that style trumps substance and that personal ambition and ego are important attributes of the process. Paul’s letter to the Philippians warned against these very attributes, *“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself”* (Phil. 2:3).

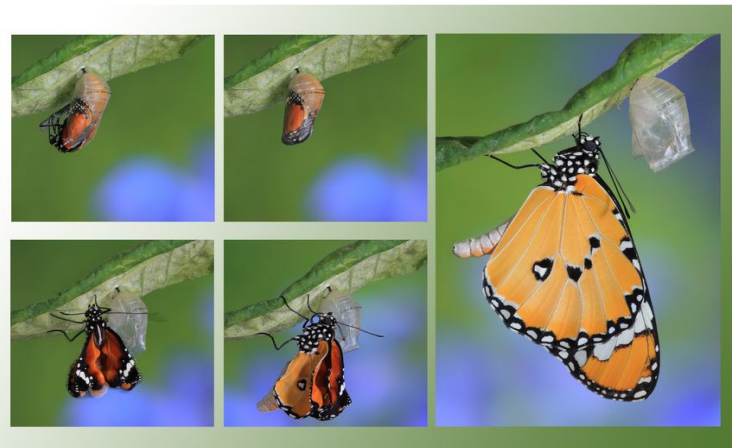
The renewing of our mind is tantamount to renovating an old dilapidated building. When you renovate a building, you start by removing the weathered and worn out materials. You replace the old materials with new, fresh materials and repair dysfunctional systems. The renewing of our mind is a similar process: *“that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to Yahweh, in true righteousness and holiness”* (Eph. 4:22-24).



Morphing to a Butterfly

Have you received and accepted Yahweh’s word of truth? If you have, you will not be involved with the patterns and processes of this world. You will have made a complete change of form and substance, just as the caterpillar morphs into a butterfly. Your mind will have been renovated and restored to a new fresh condition, previously never manifested. You will be empowered by Yahweh’s Spirit and your citizenship will not be of this world (Phil. 3:20-21).

*“And do not be **conformed** to this world, but be **transformed** by the **renewing** of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of Yahweh”* (Rom 12:2 NKJV).



Assembly in Focus: Sardis

Sardis (renewal, sardine stone-red, red ones) – Martin Luther era - 1500 AD - tribulation.

A commercial city located 30 miles southeast of Thyatira, on an important trade route. Today called Sart, it was the capital of the province of Lydia. Significant industries included jewelry, dye and textiles, which made the city wealthy. Sardis had a large influential and affluent Jewish community that had a long respected history in local civic life. Sardis hosted many pagan cults and locals worshiped Artemis, Cybele, Demeter and Kore (Persephone). Despite the city’s pagan influence, the faithful followers of Yahshua experienced no persecution; however, there was little spiritual enthusiasm.

Sardis was the location where the genesis of the modern monetary system was developed. There was gold and silver nearby where the city developed. The Sardis stone was also found there and became part of locally manufactured jewelry. World class textiles were made with a locally invented dyeing process supplied by a plentiful supply of wool from the fertile Hermus Valley. Sardis was a strategic trading city; however, the city was synonymous with decadence. Sardinians were despised and labeled as lovers of pleasure and luxury. The wealthy city of Sardis was the oldest city in Asia Minor and for centuries was the richest city in the world. Its King Croesus (560 BC) became the proverb for wealth.

Because of the geographic location of Sardis and the indigenous natural protections, Sardis’ residents considered the city impenetrable. Their attitude of overconfidence in times of crisis has been a weakness throughout history and was the reason the city was conquered without resistance by both Cyrus and Antiochus.

- Rev. 3:1-6 – Assembly of Sardis – fallen asleep, spiritually dead vs. 2.

Salutation	Vs 1 – He that has 7 Spirits and 7 stars, Rev. 1:20 = angels of assemblies Vs 1 – 7 Spirits – Rev. 1:4, 4-5, 5-6
Assets	Vs 2 – strengthen what little you have, before it dies
Liabilities	Vs 1 – have a name=character/reputation, but you are dead, talk ≠ walk, • Ezek.33:30-32, Matt. 7:5, Matt. 15:7-9, 2 Tim. 3:1-5
Rebuke	Vs 2 – I have not found your works perfect (complete, full)
Exhortation	Vs 2 – be watchful & strengthen what you still have Vs 3 – remember how you received and heard, hold fast, repent, watch
Reward	Vs 4-5 – a few will walk with me in white, name included in the Book of Life Book of life – 7 times in NT, Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:15, 21:27, 22:19
Post Script	Vs 6 – he that has an ear

- Attributes – spiritually dead, imperfect works, living at peace with an idolatrous population, faithful few.
- Martin Luther/John Calvin Protestant reformation – Pope removed but that’s it.
- Rev. 3:3 – surprise, come as a thief = Matt. 24:43
- Matt. 23:27-28 – polished outside, hypocrite inside
- 1 Tim. 4:1-2 – leave the faith, abusive Sheppard’s
- 2 Tim. 3:1-8 – only a form of righteousness
- Parable – Matt. 13:44 – hidden treasure
 > Paul’s epistle – Romans (justification & salvation by faith)
- Rom. 1:16-17 – just shall live by faith (in Yahshua)



“Sardis synagogue courtyard. Remains of the Sardis Synagogue at the archaeological site of Sardis, near present-day Sart in the Manisa province of Turkey.”

Note: Quote and image to the right is taken from wikipedia.org

What's New at YAIY?



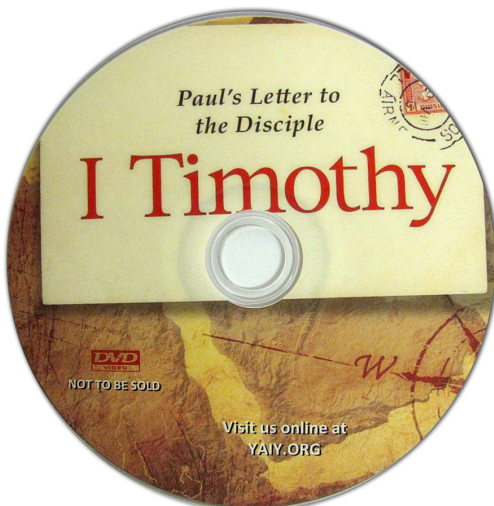
YAIY Beacon

In an effort to cut printing costs and allow us to continue to grow in others areas, including the continuous printing of other booklets and studies, the Board of Directors of Yahweh's Assembly of Yahshua has decided to go quarterly on the YAIY Beacon magazine.

The next issue in the works, to be sent out shortly, is the January-March issue. We thank Yahweh for allowing us to continue producing the YAIY Beacon magazine and other materials free of charge.

Sing-Along

The Sing-Along at the 2012 Feast of Tabernacles was recorded and is now available for ordering on CD. You're invited to order through our office. Or, you can download the MP3 formatted songs online in the Songs of Praise section.



Scripture Reading Videos

We now have started to make the new online archives of the video Scripture Readings/Commentaries available in DVD format for ordering. The first one is the letter (aka book) of 1 Timothy. We will announce as others are completed and ready. For all current archives available in WMV format as online downloads, please visit the Site Map and go to the Scripture Reading videos next to Sabbath Services.



What's New at YAIY? ...cont.

Printing

The directors decided to consolidate all printing to the newer Konica Minolta copier which was just added to a maintenance agreement with a local company.

Our 15-bin Watkiss Vario collator, along with the Ryobe 2-color press, will be put up for sale.

YAIY NEWS

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Press



Full color copier

Wow!

A new volunteer holding a new booklet!



Collator

Prayer List

Elder Dick Vaow, Hap Tew, Michelle Love and Family, Jewell Holt, Dolores Parker, Maxine Conrad, Terrell Frasure, Lois McDonald, David & Barbara Creel, David Jones Jr. and Family, Charlie Pelton, Robert Dorchester, Dries Van Zyl, Daphne Griffith and Family, Donald Carringer, Clare Kane, R.C. Fernald family and friends, Robert and Patricia Potter, Manuel Longoria and Family, Gary & Lanai DuBois, Donnie and Roland Miller, Serena & Sonya Siangco, Glen Jones, Carrol Isdell and Family, Bonnie Merryman, Gerald Bennett and Family, Paul Oliver, Collette Jazaerli, Dirk Coetzee, Elsie du Plessis, Garry Rivers and Family/Friends, Sandra Gets, Jim Colletti and Family, Dan & Geri O'leary, Karen van Schalkwyk, Kay Manning, Kent Hovind, Claire and Albert Hendricks, Aaron Garner & family, Solofonirina Ramanamahenina Justine, Rasolofonjatovo Elie Jasmin, Oliver Lister and family, Frances Rodgers, Diana Abbot, Peter Fterniatis, Peter Kihara and Family, Peter Still, Love-ness Banda, brethren around the world, Jerusalem and the those in Israel at this time.

"I thank Elohim, whom I serve with a clear conscience, as my forefathers did, as I unceasingly remember you in my prayers night and day," 2 Timothy 1:3.