

Sisters for Yah

Surviving the pagan holiday season

Yahweh's Holy Days have long been over for the year, and without fail, we begin hearing from numerous believers about the stress they are feeling as the pagan holiday season commences. Indeed, this is a very difficult time for Yahweh's people. We know that Yahweh hates pagan worship, yet we often find ourselves bombarded by well-meaning unbelieving friends, family members, and co-workers who try to invite us to their Christmas parties and other festivities. Believers are often torn between defending the faith and attempting to keep the peace with those with whom we interact with on a daily basis.

If you are feeling a great deal of stress lately, take comfort! You're not alone. We're all in the same boat. I can imagine Yahshua's disciples most likely went through the same thing two thousand years ago. They were under Roman occupation, and we know the Romans were pagan to the hilt! Living in a pagan society is not easy, especially when you know the truth.

A believer should feel free to share his or her beliefs with friends and family. However, much caution is needed. Many believers come across as smug and self-righteous. This is the wrong way to share our faith. Remember, at one time, we too, were just as deceived as anyone else. There is nothing special about us compared to other people, except that Yahweh is calling us right now. He is not calling everyone at this time. This is one of the most difficult things for a believer to realize. It is natural for us to want to "save" everyone, especially those we love! But we must not drive people away by acting like we are superior in our knowledge. Smug attitudes do nothing to nurture relationships. We all have to live in this world, and if possible, we must strive to live at peace with all people.

Don't try to retaliate if your friends and family members taunt you and tease you for your beliefs. Vengeance belongs to Yahweh, not us. Instead, pray for peace. Yahweh gives us the peace that passes all understanding. The pagan holidays will pass. Winter will turn into spring, and with it, we can look forward to celebrating Yahweh's true Holy Days.



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To Realize

To realize the value of a sister: Ask someone who doesn't have one.

To realize the value of ten years: Ask a newly divorced couple.

To realize the value of four years: Ask a graduate.

To realize the value of one year: Ask a student who has failed a final exam.

To realize the value of nine months: Ask a mother who gave birth to a stillborn.

To realize the value of one month: Ask a mother who gave birth to a premature baby.

To realize the value of one week: Ask the editor of a weekly newspaper.

To realize the value of one hour: Ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.

To realize the value of a minute: Ask the person who missed the train.

To realize the value of a second: Ask the person who survived an accident.

To realize the value of a millisecond: Ask the person who has won a silver medal in the Olympics.

To realize the value of a friend: Lose one.

Time waits for no one. Treasure every moment you have.

You will treasure it even more when you can share it with someone special.

(Author unknown, submitted by Sister Jan Meyer)



Every Day

Every day I need you Yahweh, but this day especially

I need some extra strength to face whatever is to be

This day more than any day, I need to feel You near

To fortify my courage, and to overcome my fear

By myself I cannot meet the challenge of the hour

These are times when humans need help

But we need a higher power

To assist us; bear what must be borne

And so, dear Yahweh, I pray—

Hold on to my trembling hand and be near me today

(Author unknown, submitted by Sister Jan Meyer)

Truth is stranger than fiction: The real Christmas story

Every year, the world celebrates Christmas with its familiar iconic figures: Santa Claus, of course, and a baby in a manger surrounded by animals. People have come to associate this holiday with the birth of the Messiah, the most important birth in the history of the world. As Yahweh has revealed to us, we know that the world as a whole is under a great deception. What most people don't know is that the "real" Christmas story has absolutely nothing to do with our precious Savior Yahshua's birth, Who was most likely born in the fall around Sukkot, not the dead of winter. The "real" Christmas story has everything to do with paganism. Almost everything about Christmas is pagan, including decorating trees, wreaths, and mistletoe.

Two thousand years ago, an angel appeared to Mary (*Miriam*) and told her that she would bear the Messiah. People never "put themselves in Mary's sandals." But think for a moment. She was most likely a terrified teenager when the event occurred. Not to mention that she could've been executed for being pregnant before marriage! Yes, the death penalty was indeed in effect. We take it for granted today that many babies are born out of wedlock to teenagers. Things were different in Mary's time.

Let us be grateful that Yahweh loved us enough to send His Son to pay the penalty for our sins. Let's never forget His ultimate plan for His people.

Nurture your relationships

...

We have not
ceased praying
for you and
asking that you
may be filled
with the
knowledge of
Elohim's will.

...

COLOSSIANS 1:9, NRSV



No matter what the relationship is (spouse, parent-child, co-worker, etc.), there are ways we can ensure that our relationships thrive. Healthy relationships can be a source of support, comfort, and love. When we see the same people every single day, it's easy to grow irritated and take our loved ones for granted. Here are some good tips that everyone can use:

—Really listen! Put aside distractions, such as turning off the TV and cell phone. Give your full attention to the person. Look for non-verbal clues. Does the person seem troubled? Focus on the person's words, rather than planning what your next response will be.

—Never rush to offer solutions. It might be that the person is just needing to vent to a sympathetic ear. You may consider asking, "Do you want me to just listen, or should I help you think of some solutions?"

—Offer sincere compliments. Be mindful of what people do for you, and always say thank you.

—Be open to trying new things. Instead of immediately saying no to ideas presented by our loved ones, consider taking a chance, even if the activity is outside your comfort zone.

—Show kindness whenever possible. Small gestures go a long way. Sending a card or email just to brighten someone's day can do wonders for relationships!

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Delightful Peppermint Mocha

3/4 cup whole milk
3 T. sugar or your favorite sweetener
1 T. unsweetened cocoa powder
3/4 cup brewed strong coffee
1/2 t. mint extract
1/4 t. vanilla extract

Whipped cream and chocolate shavings, to garnish, optional.

Heat all except garnishes in a small saucepan until steaming hot. Pour into a two small mugs and top with garnishes.



Easiest Shepherd's Pie

2 pounds potatoes, peeled and quartered
1 stick butter
1 onion, chopped
1 1/2 cups mixed vegetables (such as diced carrot, corn, and peas)
1 1/2 pounds ground beef
1/2 cup beef broth
1 t. Worcestershire sauce
Salt and pepper, to taste

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Boil the potatoes until tender. Drain. Mash with 4 T. of the butter and season with salt and pepper. Cook the beef and drain. Mix in the broth and Worcestershire, and salt and pepper if desired. In remaining 4 T. butter, cook the onion and vegetables until tender. Mix in the beef mixture. Place the veggie beef mixture in the bottom of a 9 by 13 inch baking dish. Top with the mashed potatoes. Bake about 30 minutes. Comfort food at its finest—especially on a chilly winter evening.

