

YAIY BEACON

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**The Bread of Affliction
Treatise on a Preacher's Discouragement
Prophet or Profit?
Cremation or Burial, Which?
Scriptural Birth Date of the Messiah
Yahweh's Feasts**

INTRODUCTION

Churchianity in general has not been faithful in following the Bible. Surprisingly, many of today's popular teachings and customs are not based in Scripture. We strive to return to the old paths of truth that have largely been ignored, and obediently follow in the footsteps of the Redeemer of Israel, Jude 3.

We observe the weekly Sabbath (on the seventh day) known as Saturday, just as did the Savior, Luke 4:16, as well as Paul and the Apostles, Acts 13:42-46; 17:2; 18:4.

We also call our Heavenly Father by His revealed, personal Name Yahweh, which He says is His memorial Name forever, Exodus 3:15. Most pastors, Bible scholars, and seminary students will acknowledge that Yahweh is the correct Name of the Heavenly Father. The short form of His Name, Yah, can be seen in many words, including the most popular hallelujah ("halleluYAH," meaning, "praise you Yah"). It is also found in the suffix of Biblical names like IsaYAH, (Isaiah), JeremYAH (Jeremiah), NehemYAH (Nehemiah), and ObadYAH (Obadiah).

Our membership comes from nearly all denominations and all walks of life. Most began searching for deeper truth when they learned that their former affiliation was teaching another Evangel from what they found in Scripture. We continue to search the Bible for deeper understanding. We believe that the Bible teaches a way of life through the commandments in the Old Testament and from the same example of obedience given us by our Savior in the New Testament.

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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 salvational truths that have been neglected for centuries.

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The Bread of Affliction

In Deuteronomy, chapter 16, we read of **the bread of affliction**, in reference to Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. This article will look at current events: prophecy, the Abrahamic Covenant, Messiah Yahshua, tribulation and affliction.

At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, a Harvard epidemiologist indicated we could experience a far worse crisis, in which millions would die, similar to what occurred during the bubonic plague of the Middle Ages. This coronavirus can attack the heart, liver, brain, lungs, and other visceral organs, unlike the influenza outbreaks typically seen.

The bigger problem, however, may not be the disease itself, but rather the long-term economic fallout. In 2008, there was a recession and to pull out of it, corporations worldwide incurred \$42 trillion in debt. By 2018, that debt had ballooned to \$75 trillion. Worldwide, at the beginning of the current pandemic, personal and corporate debt had reached around \$250 trillion.

Reminded of the First Passover?

With the pandemic keeping us in our homes during Passover 2020, former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu alluded to that notable Passover occurring nearly 3 and ½ millennia ago, at the conclusion of Israel's captivity in Egypt.

We've only heard of national prominence, former Vice-President Mike Pence, praying during this pandemic. We've not heard anyone else in an official capacity openly confessing sins, neither asking Yahweh to forgive this nation, or the world, of its sins.

And though a high-ranking official in Israel asking Yahweh to remember the Covenant of Promise, he did not ask for forgiveness. He, and the rest of the world, really should read Leviticus 26:40-42 that speaks of Yahweh's disposition toward sin and the impenitent, and His Covenant Promise that will honor contrite confession and repentance.

Abrahamic Promise

The Jews today, acknowledge the Covenant of Promise made through Abraham (Gen. 15:1-8, 18, 17:1-11). It is their hope, and quite frankly, ours, as well. However, many fail to see Yahshua the Messiah in the Covenant of Promise given through Abraham and Isaac as a way for all of Israel to be saved (Acts 13:32-41) and further elaborated in Romans 9:1-5.

Moreover, Deuteronomy 16 instructs the children of Israel to remember what Yahweh had done for them through the annual observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

*Observe the month of Abib and celebrate the Passover to Yahweh your Elohim, for in the month of Abib Yahweh your Elohim brought you out of Egypt by night. And you shall sacrifice the Passover to Yahweh your Elohim from the flock and the herd, in the place where Yahweh chooses to establish His Name. You shall not eat leavened bread with it; seven days you shall eat with it unleavened bread, **the bread of affliction** (for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste), in order that you may remember all the days of your life the day when you came out of the land of Egypt. For seven days no leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory, and none of the flesh which you sacrifice on the evening of the first day shall remain overnight until morning. You are not allowed to sacrifice the Passover in any of your towns which Yahweh your Elohim is giving you; but at the place where Yahweh your Elohim chooses to establish His Name, you shall sacrifice the Passover in the evening at sunset, at the time that you came out of Egypt, Deuteronomy 16:1-6.*

The bread of affliction (unleavened bread) is intended to remind us to maintain an attitude of contrite repentance during this season of memorial of the Exodus.

First, Repentance

Would it be reasonable to think repentance and confession of sin need to precede the physical and prophetic establishment of the end-time Temple in Jerusalem? Could perhaps, this want of repentance and confession of sin be also, in part, a reason for the plague we are experiencing today?

We remember the words spoken in a night vision by Yahweh to Solomon, following the dedication of the first Temple.

If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and My people, who are called by My Name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now My eyes shall be open and My ears attentive to the prayers [offered] in this place. For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that My Name may be there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually, 2 Chronicles 7:13-16.

Points to consider:

- Didn't we who are in Messiah, have to repent before Yahweh allowed us to become a Temple for a measure of His Spirit? Have we thought about His eyes and His heart being with us?
- *Oh that My people would listen to Me, that Israel would walk in My ways, Psalm 81:13.* Has anything changed? Does He change?
- *"For I know the plans that I have for you," declares Yahweh, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope," Jeremiah 29:11.* While this was spoken to Judah before they went into captivity, does this not still resound to them who love Yahweh and who set their hope on Him through His Messiah? For they who are listening and following His ways now, have a future and a hope.

Think and be Unleavened

We should think in terms of being unleavened. For we are told, *Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are [in fact] unleavened. For Messiah our Passover also has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, 1 Corinthians 5:7-8.*

Messiah also admonished us through the Word, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" (Luke 12:1b).

Yahshua, furthermore, emphasized the weightier matters of the Law, saying in Matthew 23:23-28:

*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the Law: **justice and mercy and faithfulness**; but these are the things you should have done, without neglecting the others. You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of **robbery and self-indulgence**. You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, that the outside of it may become clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all **uncleanness**. Even so you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of **hypocrisy and lawlessness**.*

In Matthew 16:5-12, Yahshua expounded more to His disciples, on the negative properties of leaven.

*And the disciples came to the other side, and had forgotten to take bread. And Yahshua said to them, "Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." And they began to discuss among themselves, saying, "It is because we took no bread." But Yahshua, aware of this, said, "You men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves that you have no bread? Do you not yet understand or remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you took up? Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many large baskets you took up? How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? But beware of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the **teaching** of the Pharisees and Sadducees.*

False doctrines, like leaven, grow and corrupt the whole (Gal. 5:9).

What's Next?

In thinking about things which need to take place before Yahshua's return, we can see the pandemic causing something else to occur – that is, the people in Israel desiring to see the Messiah coming as a Savior and Redeemer.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling! Behold, your house is being left to you desolate. For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me again, until you say, "BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF YAHWEH!" Matthew 23:37-39.

While many in Israel don't believe the Messiah has already come on earth, they may be more open to deception by someone who will come with answers to the world's troubles.

Will the world experience more trouble with economic problems, famines, etc., stemming from this catalyst called the pandemic? Will someone come, providing solutions, working miracles in the power of Satan to accomplish the impossible?

The Apostle Paul said there would be someone coming before the Master Yahshua should return.

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Master Yahshua Messiah and our

*gathering to Him, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Master has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, [for it will not come] unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the sone of destruction, who **opposes and exalts himself above every so-called mighty one or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of Elohim, displaying himself as being Elohim.** Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Master will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; [that is], **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish,** because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason Elohim will send upon them a deluding influence so that **they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness,** 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.*

Who takes pleasure in wickedness? Just look at the world, in general. Even after the Man of Sin is identified, there appears to be other demonic-influenced, so-called messiahs and other false prophets who will show up around the world during the tribulation time period. Mind you, this is at the mid-point of a seven-year peace treaty signed between Israel and other signatory nations (Dan. 9:27). It is such a time to come in which even the revived Sanhedrin will recognize they were admiring a false messiah and savior.

Maybe, it's at that time, they will truly fulfill Yahshua's own words in which He says they should not see Him again, until they declared, "Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of Yahweh" (Matt. 23:39).

We are told further in Matthew 24:15-24:

Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop

not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babies in those days! But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short. Then if anyone say to you, "Behold, here is the Messiah," or "There [He] is," do not believe [him]. For false messiahs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance.

It will be utter chaos. Could it also be that believers like you and I will be questioning, why we aren't doing miracles and wonders in light of them which are false doing so? After all, are we not the children of Yahweh and isn't He Who in us, is greater than he who is in the world? (1 John 4:4).

Revelation 3:8 speaks most honorably of the Philadelphia Assembly of the Seven. Yet ascribed to them, was the Master's acknowledgement that they had "a little strength." There may be yet forthcoming, the greatest testing to come upon us. For as the Beast System – the New World Order – is being implemented. It may be that NATO, with the recent invasion of Ukraine by Russia, will be forced to enter into a more direct role in confronting the aggressor. That, many say, will be World War III with the threat again of nuclear arsenals being used. A threat to Israel, is also now more real than ever, with Iran being at the cusp of having enough enriched uranium for a nuclear bomb of their own. To such things Judah has stated, quite frankly, "Never again."

Nevertheless, we believe Scripture shows toward that end, Yahweh's people will be granted a little strength (Dan. 11:32-35). For in weakness (2 Cor. 12:9), and in the keeping of His Word, Yahweh's Power and Love is perfected in us (1 John 2:5).

Jacob's Trouble

All these things have one thing in common: a time of affliction and trouble for the children of Israel dispersed around the world.

A time of Jacob's trouble is coming, and these phenomena we are currently seeing in the world can

present trouble for us. But though the end is not yet, even trouble will pass.

Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own [home], and to leave Me alone; and [yet] I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world, John 16:32-33.

For a perspective of how Yahweh measures out punishment (the First Chastisement), read Leviticus 26:15-20 which speak of the promise of a subsequent reckoning up to seven times more grievous than the first – a just recompense for continuing in stubborn rebellion against Him.

Conclusion

Those things which have happened in earlier times to Israel (the bread of affliction) are recorded in the Scriptures as examples for our instruction (Rom. 15:1; 1 Cor. 10:11).

If this is the way it was – and it was – and it is still (Matt. 22:37) today, we are without excuse.

The question today is, will people turn to love Yahweh with all their heart, soul, mind and strength which is the great and first commandment? (Deut. 6:5).

The message to the world is to accept the bread of affliction and assume a repentant heart toward our heavenly Father, Yahweh, through His righteous Son, Yahshua (the Salvation of Yahweh). Are you willing to turn to Them, rather than live in unrepentance?

The choice is yours, and you are urged to choose Life. Through **the bread of affliction**, you are offered the Bread of Life.

-Elder David Brett

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The question today is, will people turn to love Yahweh with all their heart, soul, mind and strength which is the great and first commandment?”



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Treatise On A Preacher's Discouragement



And why call ye Me, "Master, Master, and do not the things which I say?" Luke 6:46.

Preaching is hard, unappreciated work. Just consider the Master Preacher, the true Light come to enlighten men who love(d) the darkness (John 1:9, 5) rather, and would not to come to the Light, lest their deeds should be reprov'd (John 3:19-20).

One might conclude, it wasn't a fair exchange that One Who would spend His nights on Olivet praying, interceding, supplicating, for a people, among whom the next day, He would give and be given, loving more abundantly, though He should be less loved (Luke 21:37-38), should just become acquainted with the grief of being despised and rejected of them (Isa. 53:3), and in the end be numbered among transgressors on Golgoeth (Isa. 53:12) ... there, bleeding and dying as an Heaven-sent Atonement and Redemption-Price for their sin.

Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel

But Preachers of every age have suffered by the tongues, and at the hands, of them to whom they were sent.

Moses, like his peer Jeremiah nine hundred years later (Jer. 1:6), protested that he was slow of speech (Exod. 4:10) – precisely, the sort of men whom Yahweh could use; such as the unlearned and ignorant men fifteen centuries later who, like their Master, were few among many more 'learned' but from whom was withheld that ability come of Above to speak with such authority as they (1 Pet. 4:11) – but afterward, endured with his Commissioner the murmurings of an obdurate, obstinate, and recalcitrant people who thought themselves equal in stature with him (Num. 12:2, 16:3).

And though he should be provoked into disobedience by their unruly dispositions so that he spoke unadvisedly with his lips (Num. 20:8-12; Psa. 106:33), his recompense of being deprived admittance into the Promised Land was a blessing in disguise, as his successor Joshua continued to bear the grievous burden of a people inclined more to serving themselves than to serving Yahweh.

The Prophet Isaiah mused,

I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way [that was] not good, after their own thoughts; a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificed in gardens and burneth incense upon altars of brick; which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable [things is in] their vessels; which say, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou." These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day, Isaiah 65:2-5.

Of them, he concluded, from the sole of the foot even to the head, there was no soundness; the whole head, sick; the whole heart, faint (Isa. 1:6, 5). There was little need, wrote he, of continuing with them, for they would but revolt more and more (Isa. 1:5) – like dogs, or swine even, which trample underfoot the Pearls of Great Price, then turn and rend the messenger (Matt. 7:6).

The Prophet Jeremiah, too – having earned the cognomen, *the suffering prophet* – suffered at, and by the hands, of them whom he would reprove, correct, instruct, rebuke, and exhort. He sent His Word, written and delivered to the sovereign of his people who, lightly esteeming Its message, cut and discarded Heaven's discourse into the fire (Jer. 36:4-26). Deemed instead, as one who troubled Judah, the Prophet was cast into a miry pit, there to famish ... though later, through the intercession of a king's servant, he was restored (Jer. 38:4-13).

Faced with certain exile into Babylon, the people of Judah, with dissembled hearts, petitioned the Prophet to seek direction as to their matter from Yahweh ... but once His answer was delivered, they rejected it in favor of their own will (Jer. 44:16-17). Little wonder, the Prophet would commiserate with himself, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His Name" (Jer. 20:9). Little wonder,

that another – the Apostle Paul, declaring himself as one born out of due time (1 Cor. 15:8), should in his discouragement with ministry, write, “From henceforth let no man trouble me ...” (Gal. 6:17). (Could it be, this is what the Master meant when He affirmed to Ananias, “I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My Name’s sake?” Acts 9:16.)

Nevertheless, Jeremiah was ordained as Yahweh’s spokesman with the Sovereign’s putting forth His hand and touching his mouth, and saying, “Behold, I have put My Words in thy mouth” (Jer. 1:9). Yes, though he found it wearisome dealing with a gainsaying and disobedient people, Yahweh’s Word was in his heart as a burning fire shut up in his bones, so that he could not but speak that which had been impressed thereon (Jer. 20:9). Like the Apostle Paul who would follow more than six hundred years later – though he should be appointed to death; was made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men; indeed, the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things (1 Cor. 4:9, 13) – woe to him if he should decline from his appointment (1 Cor. 9:16).

The Prophet Ezekiel, as a watchman to the house of Israel, received of his Commissioner, an ominous message (Ezek. 3:17) – words, grievous to be uttered before a stiff-necked, hard-hearted people. Yet, to forbear giving them warning; to neglect the duty to which he had been chosen and ordained, would incur upon himself, the wrath and indignation of the Almighty. Yes, the Prophet appreciated more than his constituency, that it should be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of Living, Consuming Fire (Heb. 10:31, 12:29).

Daniel dared to withstand Darius. And for this he was cast into a den of lions. But his faithfulness toward Yahweh – when it should have been more convenient to have addressed his petition to the king instead of to the King (Dan. 6:7) – positioned him among the Hebrews’ heroes of faith ... accorded honorable mention, in that narrative (Heb. 11:33).

Yahshua and the Apostles

Yahshua, too – though no man had spoken as He (John 7:46) – experienced grief of mind and sorrow of heart ... having more to say than hearts of unbelief could bear (John 16:12). (The Apostle Paul would later discover this same dullness of hearing with the people of Corinth, 1 Cor. 3:1-3.)

And though the Anointed One had been so long time with men chosen and ordained to succeed Him

in the Vicariate, some would sometimes be seized with unbelief ... in spite of them having with their ears heard, and their eyes seen (1 John 1:1), and themselves spoken many wonderful words and done many good works that had healed them oppressed of the devil (Acts 10:38). Yes, some, when they ought to have rejoiced for the consolation they had been visited by the Desire of the Ages, instead betrayed Him (Matt. 26:47-49); fled and forsook Him when He might have been succored by a friend (Matt. 26:56); denied His acquaintance (Matt. 26:69-75); and like so many others of Jewry, doubted His resurrection ... requiring a sign to substantiate His resurrection (John 20:24-29).

But later though, of them who had endured and been endued with Power from on High, they would, as well, share His sorrow and His suffering when they, were subjected to men’s persecution and forbidding them to speak or teach at all in That Name That is above every name (Phil. 2:9) ... that None Other Name under Heaven given among men whereby men can be saved (Acts 4:12), boldly without the fear that had been their color in Gethsemane, replied, “We ought to obey Yahweh rather than man ... *for* we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 5:29; 4:20).

Contemporary Preachers

And, today, some also labor in the Word and Doctrine among a people who ought to repent and show their deeds but who instead, recompense the others’ selfless work, by continuing in and, becoming increased in, those things which had, and yet do, distract, draw them away, and beset them. Thus, do they manifest themselves little different from others who had also done injury to their election by grace and their calling to become a peculiar people.

Not at all, are some very much different in thought and activity from their peers of antiquity: rejecting the chosen and ordained, and the studied who show themselves workmen approved of Yahweh (2 Tim. 2:15), having that ability come of Above to rightly divide and speak the Truth as an Oracle (1 Pet. 4:11). Some, like their fathers before them, refuse obedience to the Rule imposed upon them (Luke 19:14; Heb. 13:17), unknowing ... and uncaring to know, that it is not even so much men from whom they have declined, as it is He (1 Sam. 8:7).

For behold, for when they are questioned for their unruly conduct, they revile (Matt. 5:11) and are not afraid to speak all manner of evil against their tutors

(2 Pet. 2:10) – as if these, whose appointment is without the Throne’s recall, were in the trespass and transgression – but whose only intent and purpose is to perfect that which is lacking in their faith (1 Thess. 3:10), in order to present them a people having apprehended and attained unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Anointed One (Eph. 4:13).

Yea, better they which think more highly of themselves (Rom. 12:3) than what they appear to be, should take heed to, and give the more earnest heed to the prophets sent them rather, to esteeming them very highly in love (1 Thess. 5:13) which admonish (1 Thess. 5:12) and sow among them spiritual things (1 Cor. 9:11).

Better, they should continue steadfastly in (Acts 2:42); earnestly contend for (Jude 1:3) and obey from the heart that form of doctrine that is delivered them (Rom. 6:17). And more also, that they should obey and submit themselves, according double honor to those (1 Tim. 5:17) who stand as vicars of the Messiah before Whom, as stewards of Secret and Mystery, they will account for how they have watched for the others’ souls ... that their reckoning might be given with joy and not with such grief that will be unprofitable for their spiritual constituencies (Heb 13:17).

Conclusion

Of a truth, there should be no greater joy, no greater reward, bestowed upon His ministers than to both see and hear their charges walking in obedience to the Truth (2 John 1:4; 3 John 1:4); and no greater reward bestowed upon both the called out and elect, and their minister, than an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and that will endure through eternity (1 Pet. 4:4).

- Elder John W. Reece

In the modern world, we hear the sound on the streets, in homes, on television and from the pulpit – people claiming to speak the Evangel. But is it the true Evangel or another, and are these prophets seeking Yahweh’s glory or their own profit?



In the Olivet Prophecy, the Messiah warned us that in the latter days, many false prophets would arise and deceive many.

Are there false prophets today? If so, where are they? What are they teaching? And how can we recognize them? These questions should be answered. However, before proceeding, we must first understand what a prophet is, according to Scripture.

The Hebrew word for Prophet is *nabiy* (naw-bee), H.5030 ***Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance***, and means a prophet, or inspired man that prophesies by inspiration of the Holy Spirit and is manifested either through speech or in song, and in expression, either foretells some future event or tells forth a simple discourse ... as in declaring the Evangel, whether ministry from a pulpit or a Bible study venue or more simply, given in witness of a personal testimony.

All Scripture is inspired by Elohim and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of Elohim may be adequate, equipped for every good work, 2 Timothy 3:16-17. (Scriptures cited herein are from the ***New American Standard Bible***, unless otherwise noted.)

Here, the Apostle Sha’ul makes it clear that all Scripture is inspired (including the Torah). If all Scripture is inspired, then to preach from Scripture is a form of prophesying and those who prophesy are prophets.

So, now that we have established what a Prophet is, let's identify the *false* prophet.

You may say in your heart, "How will we know the word which Yahweh has not spoken?" When a prophet speaks in the name of Yahweh, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which Yahweh has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him, Deuteronomy 18:21-22.

These verses inform us that any person foretelling a future event that does not occur, identifies him as a false prophet. However, further inquiry reveals that if anyone who speaks a word which is followed by a sign or wonder to corroborate what had been spoken, then urges a people to forsake their obedience and service to Yahweh and to pursue and serve other *elohim*, he is a *false* prophet and is not worthy to live (Deut. 13:1-5). This is very grievous, because the false prophet will attempt to turn Yahweh's children back to sin and death. Had Yahshua even, as That Prophet of Whom Moshe spoke in Deuteronomy 18:15-18, not been faithful to speak all that which had been given Him of His Father, then He, too, would have been a *false* prophet, a liar, a sinner, and worthy of death ... no longer unblemished, but imperfect and unfit as a redemption-price for you and me who would still, be dead in our trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1) and of all men, most pitiable.

Moreover, the Apostle Peter further says,

"But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you,

who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in their greed they will exploit you with false words ..." (2 Pet. 2:1-3).

"... Springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved ..." (2 Pet. 2:17) are they, "speaking out arrogant *words* of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption ..." (Verse 18-19).

Peter gives vivid details of how false prophets act saying that they are self seeking, committers of lawlessness, indulgers of the flesh, despisers of authority, etc.

The Tree is Known by Its Fruit

Peter's observation is strikingly similar to the works of the flesh mentioned by Paul, his peer Apostle, who in the letter to the Galatians wrote,

Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of Yahweh, Galatians 5:19-21.



By these then, the fruit produced by the works of the flesh, identify the false prophet. The Master Yahshua, under Whose tutelage the Apostle was instructed, first proffered a description of a false prophet:

Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn [bushes] nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits, Matthew 7:15-20.

By all these characteristics, we are thoroughly furnished to know and distinguish the good from the evil, and truth from error; to know and distinguish, a fellow sheep from a hungry wolf.

In speaking of the men of religion of His day, and to whom the trust of the Torah and the Prophets had been committed, He charged them, saying,

“You are doing the deeds of your father. ... You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:41, 44).

Children often follow in their fathers' footsteps. So also, those who are children of the evil one will bear his traits – principally, lying, accusing, and murdering (spiritually). Therefore, false prophets in working against Yahweh, are by default working for Satan, and they will bear his fruits – leading people astray from the truth of Yahweh's word; mixing lies with truth ever so subtly; drawing the sheep, weak in the faith, away from the flock – condemning them to a sentence deprived of eternal life – and, from the shepherd that guards them and whom also, they will accuse as the deceiver.

Two Notable Examples of False Prophets

The Scriptures provide us with examples of behaviors of ancient *false* prophets. Balaam, the son of Beor, and a non-Israelite *diviner* was probably the most infamous false prophet in all Scripture. In Numbers, Chapter 22, we read he had been summoned by Balak, the king of Moab to curse Israel. It would appear that in his refusal to honor Balak's request, that he had the favor of Yahweh but as with Satan of which we are taught in Job

1:12, Balaam could not indeed speak but what he had been bid by Yahweh to speak.

A case might be made that his reply, “I will bring word back to you, as Yahweh may speak to me,” to the king's emissaries, and forthwith his dismissal of them would suggest him honorable. But afterward, with the return of more numerous and more highly esteemed than the former, and with the pledge of more abundant honor and the greater pecuniary reward, Balaam established the conditions for his “divining” in favor of Balak, saying, “Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not do anything, either small or great, contrary to the command of Yahweh my Elohim” (Num. 22:18) ... this last, but an affirmation that he could speak nothing but what He had been bid of Yahweh, though it is certain that Yahweh was not his Elohim.

Three times, Baalam spoke to Balak in favor of Yahweh blessing Israel. He could do nothing else, except to advise the princes of Moab and Midian to lay a snare for Israel (Num. 31:16, 25:1-3).

In this account we see the wickedness of Balaam, that he still cursed Israel by teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before Israel, thus bringing a curse through their own disobedience with the outcome that 24,000 of Israel were slain for their whoredom through Yahweh's execution. Balaam's sin was recompensed him, as he was slain with the five kings of Midian (Num. 31:8).

Another which comes to mind is Bar-Joshua (called bar Jesus in most English translations) mentioned in Chapter 13 of the book of Acts. He was set at variance with, and at enmity against the Apostles Paul and Barnabas.

When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they found a magician, a Jewish false prophet whose name was Bar-Joshua, who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence. This man summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of Yahweh. But Elymas the magician (for so his name is translated) was opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. But Saul, who was also [known as] Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze on him, and said, “You who are full of all deceit and fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of Yahweh? Now, behold, the hand of Yahweh is upon you, and you will be blind and not see the sun for a time.” And immediately a mist and a darkness fell upon him,

and he went about seeking those who would lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul believed when he saw what had happened, being amazed at the teaching of the Master, Acts 13:6-12.

In this account we see again that false prophets are sons of the evil one, bearing both his will and character, in seeking to turn people from the narrow path of salvation. This account makes clear that false prophets are enemies of all righteousness and will stop at nothing to destroy the works of righteousness.



Identifying *False Prophets* Today

Now, that we have looked at ancient false prophets let's look at present/future false prophets. In Matthew, Chapter 24, Yahshua tells us, saying,

“See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and will mislead many ... At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many ... Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Messiah,’ or ‘There He is,’ do not believe him. For false Messiahs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance. So if they say to you, ‘Behold, He is in the wilderness,’ do not go out, or, ‘Behold, He is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe them” (Matt. 24:4-5, 10-11, 23-26).

Many *false* prophets and messiahs will arise in the latter days, either claiming to be Messiah or professing Yahshua is the Messiah but proceed to lead people astray by teaching false doctrine. We have already established preaching from the Word is prophesying and anyone doing so is a prophet by definition.

The Apostle, in his instruction to the believers at Thessalonica, declared,

Do not despise prophetic utterances. But examine everything [carefully]; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil, 1 Thessalonians 5:20-22.

No man can lay a foundation of truth but what hasn't already been laid, which is Messiah Yahshua (1 Cor. 3:11). Every man's work (doctrine) will be tested and become evident, because it will be revealed by fire ... that fire, being the Word. The Word of Yahweh is like a fire; It will burn false doctrines like chaff and true doctrine will be shown pure by the fire.

One principal false doctrine is this idea of hyper-grace ... taught by some, that declares that no matter what you do, you can't lose your salvation – very deceptive and blatantly *false*, Scripturally.

A second *false* doctrine promulgated by some, is the ‘prosperity gospel.’ It basically claims that Yahweh wants us to be abundantly prosperous in life, and that we won't experience anything bad happening to us. Experiencing adversity, they say, occurs because of a lack of faith. This teaching mixes truth with lies. Yahweh does want us to prosper and to live life abundantly (John 10:10) as He promises blessings if we obey, and curses if we don't. Then He urges us to choose life, as it is written:

See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity ... I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, Deuteronomy 30:15, 19.

Yahweh both wants to, and will give us, blessings if we obey. However, disobedience brings a curse and misery. And though all that live righteously will suffer tribulation (John 16:33) and persecution (2 Tim. 3:12), they which do live righteously and suffer for it, are not appointed to His wrath (1 Thess. 5:9). We should expect to be hated, because of His Name ... seeing we are not above the Master (Matt. 10:22, 25; John 15:18).

Yes, bad things do happen to good people which manifest that physical prosperity, though fleeting, will give place to eternal, spiritual prosperity if we endure to the end.

On the other hand, *if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. ... Yahweh will judge His people. It is a terrifying thing to fall into the*

the hands of the living Elohim, Hebrews 10:26-27, 30-31.

Sin is lawlessness, and whoever practices sin is of the devil (1 John 3:4). It should be a terrible loss, on the day of judgment, to receive His declaring, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.” (Matt. 7:23)

His grace is unmerited favor that is granted to us. We don’t deserve it, but Yahweh gives it to us on the condition we repent of our sins. Repentance isn’t just an “I’m sorry” attitude. To repent means to make a 180 degree turn from sin to Yahweh. It means to change one’s mind, henceforth reflected in a change in one’s behavior. This doesn’t mean you will never sin again or that you won’t stumble, but it does mean you will be wanting and doing better day by day as you are conformed more and more into the image of our Messiah.

False prophets abound, too, in pronouncing the day, month, year of Messiah’s second coming. Perhaps, they should inform Him, as He plainly affirmed that *of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone*, Mark 13:32.

Nevertheless, no matter how many times some predict His second advent, and that time passes and He is still not returned, people still place their faith in these false prophets.

Characteristically, too, *false* prophets are *antinomian* – that is, without Law (the Torah) – teaching the Law has been abolished, twisting the Scripture ... making “the handwriting of ordinances” (Col. 2:14, *KJV*) a thing contrary to us, and thus, blotted out and nailed to Yahshua’s tree, so now, we can eat pork, keep sabbath any day we want, or even disregard it, etc. We have already seen that anyone teaching the Law doesn’t have to be kept is a *false* prophet and we aren’t to listen to them (Deut. 13:1-5). They which teach all these *false* doctrines “will incur a stricter judgment” (James 3:1) because they are responsible for those who hear them. They bear the consequences, whether good or bad, for the result their teachings have on their hearers. It is, however, no less incumbent upon those hearers who have been instructed by the Master both to take heed to **what** (Mark 4:24) and **how** (Luke 8:18) they hear. Solomon in his wisdom, instructs, saying, *Cease, my son, to hear the instruction [that causeth] to err from the words of knowledge*, Proverbs 19:27 *KJV*.

We defer to the Apostle Paul’s advice to his young protégé, Timothy:

“... instruct certain men not to teach strange

doctrines, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of Elohim which is by faith. But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. For some men, straying from these things have turned aside to fruitless discussion, wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertion” (1 Tim. 1:3-6).

Conclusion

Yahshua, of course, must have the first and the last word – strong words of rebuke, with which he addressed to the *false* teachers of His day, and which are as applicable to men today –

In His discourse in Matthew, Chapter 23, He rails upon scribe and Pharisee alike, who were charged with teaching the Torah to the people, but who imposed the heavy burdens of their traditions – borne out of the oral law ... esteemed higher than what Yahweh had codified in the Torah – and which, neither they observed. He charged them with compassing sea and land to make to themselves proselytes, and when they were made, shutting up the Kingdom of Heaven against them ... neither entering in themselves (Verses 23:13, 15).

Then, He proceeded to pronounce no fewer than eight woes upon them for their hypocrisies, calling them fools and blind guides (Verses 16, 17), and having “neglected the weightier provisions of the Law: justice and mercy and faithfulness” (Verse 23).

Yes, quite would He reveal their feigned nature: like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful but inside, full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness; outwardly, appearing righteous to men but inwardly, full of hypocrisy and lawlessness (Verses 27-28).

Yes, they which coveted the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues and respectful greetings in the market places and being called by men “Rabbi,” He instead, referred to them as “serpents” and a “brood of vipers” who would not escape the sentence of the lake of fire (Verses 6-7, 33).

Such are they, today, as well. And such will also, be their sentence the day on which they will give account before Him **Whose judgment is according to Truth** (Rom. 2:2 *KJV*).

-Brother Lucas Bentley



Cremation or Burial, Which?

The death of a loved one is never easy and one doesn't always know what problems may arise once a passing occurs. A question arose recently as to which form, that is, cremation or burial, is recommended once a loved one takes his or her final breath. Though we know there is a resurrection, and the person will be given breath again, one still needs to make arrangements for the funeral and give consideration to other family members as to what will be done.

Certainly, cremation is a much more economical and efficient way of handling the deceased. Just a basic burial can cost over \$5000 here in the United States. Unless one plans ahead this cost can be prohibitive for some relatives left behind to make arrangements. What is one to do faced with such a decision? Looking to Yahweh's Word will help.

Though, there is no direct commandment to actually bury a loved one, whether in the faith or not, Scripture does give us some insight into what was done, both for those who were good and for those who were bad.

Good Gone Bad

Israel's first king was given Yahweh's Spirit initially, changing him into a new man, and allowing him to prophesy. *And the Spirit of Yahweh will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man,* 1 Samuel 10:6.

With Yahweh's help Saul started out with good character. He respected and gave glory to Yahweh, even when he had a chance to destroy those who opposed him. Notice this account in 1 Samuel 11:12-13, *And the people said unto Samuel, "Who [is] he that said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' bring the men, that we may put them to death." And Saul said, "There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to day Yahweh hath wrought salvation in Israel."*

Saul changed from good to bad, though. For instead of giving glory to Yahweh, he started taking it to himself. He even took credit for his son's actions. We read in 1 Samuel 13:3-4, *And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that [was] in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear." And all Israel heard say [that] Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and [that] Israel also was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal.*

It came about soon after that Saul disobeyed Samuel, and therefore Yahweh (1 Sam. 10:8, 13:13) by offering a burnt offering (1 Sam. 13:8-9). Saul was impatient and offered excuses rather than accepting responsibility when he had been confronted:

And Samuel said, "What hast thou done?" And Saul said, "Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and [that] thou camest not within the days appointed, and [that] the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; therefore said I, 'The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto Yahweh: I forced myself (quenched the Spirit?) therefore, and offered a burnt offering," 1 Samuel 13:11-12.

Saul had a downhill ride after this. He was told that his kingdom would be taken away and he lost Yahweh's Spirit which had initially been put upon him. An evil spirit had now been given to him instead (1 Sam. 16:16). Saul acted out his sick mind by chasing David who was destined to be king, chosen because he was a man after Yahweh's own heart. Saul, on the opposite spectrum, had become a man stricken with bad character. Even when he died, he died as a coward in battle with the Philistines, as he killed himself. *And the battle went heavily against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was badly wounded by the archers. Then Saul said to his armor bearer, "Draw your sword and pierce me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and pierce me through and make sport of me." But his armor bearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. So Saul took his sword and fell on it,* 1 Samuel 31:3-4 (**NASB**).

A bit of investigation shows that Saul may have actually been scared, and not "badly wounded." "The LXX (Greek Septuagint) asserts that Saul was 'wounded in the belly,' but the MT (Hebrew Masoretic Text) states only that 'he writhed with fear of the archers'" – **Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary**.

In verse 4 the "make sport of me" is somewhat watered down. It would be better stated as

"humiliate," in which the **NLT** has it translated. The actual original Hebrew word is **Strong's** #1627 *alal*, meaning, "to make a fool of" or "insult." Saul had a problem with pride at the end of his life, in fact, it could be said, "Pride had killed him."

This gets us down to how he and others like him were burned:

All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there. And they took their bones, and buried [them] under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days, 1 Sam 31:12-13.

The efficiency and heat of incinerators today do not leave whole bones to be buried, as fires would have in ancient times.

Wicked Were Burned

There are many instances of the wicked being burned in the Bible though some, of course, were buried (1 Kings 11:15; Eccl. 8:10).

From prostitutes of priests (Lev. 21:9) to bad kings (1 Kings 16:18-19); whole families, including sons and daughters, were burned (Josh. 7:15, 24-25).

It was literally a purging of evil from among the people when Yahweh, and those who submitted to Him, were involved. Even the wicked idols were to be burned:

And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their elohims, and destroy the names of them out of that place, Deuteronomy 12:3.

Moses, David, Asa, and Josiah burned those detestable things that had been set up to be worshiped (Exod. 32:20; 1 Chron. 14:12; 1 Kings 15:13; 2 Kings 23:6).

Only Yahweh was to be worshipped, nothing else. Fire will consume those who stand up against Yahweh, His people (Rev. 20:9), and those things put up in place to be worshipped.

Doesn't Scripture say that Yahweh is a consuming fire? Indeed, as Hebrews 12:29 says, *For our Elohim is a consuming fire*. So, "What kind of people ought we to be?" (2 Pet. 3:11).



Notice, in context, the consuming fire on the day of Yahweh (a day of wrath, Rom 2:5) Peter mentions:

But the day of Yahweh will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. [Seeing] then [that] all these things shall be dissolved, what manner [of persons] ought ye to be in [all] holy conversation and righteousness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of Elohim, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? 2 Peter 3:10-12.

Joseph's Request

In this progressive, modern pagan society we live in today, it is common to hear that a loved one was cremated and now is in ashes sitting quietly, in an urn, above the fireplace. Simple enough, but this was not the custom of ancient Israel, nor believers in the New Testament.

Joseph, who himself was in an Egyptian society, specifically requested that he be buried outside of Egypt. *And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but Elohim will surely take care of you, and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob." Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "Elohim will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here." So Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt, Genesis 50:24-26 (NASB).*

Though, Joseph was embalmed, a common Egyptian practice, he was eventually taken and buried outside of Egypt, as he had requested:

And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph, Joshua 24:32.

Others Buried

Besides Joseph there are many others who were buried. John was beheaded on Herod's birthday, Matt 14:6-8. Afterwards his body was sought and taken to be buried:

And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Yahshua, Matthew 14:12.

Some, like John, would have been taken somewhere and buried. Burials could happen right

on the area that the death occurred, as it would have been sanitary and convenient in some cases. *And the children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to Mosera: there Aaron died, and there he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead, Deuteronomy 10:6.*

Other Scriptural records of burials are as follows:

And he (Yahweh) buried him (Moses) in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day, Deuteronomy 34:6.

And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Yahweh, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathserah, which is in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash, Joshua 24:29-30.

And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill [that pertained to] Phinehas his son, which was given him in mount Ephraim, Joshua 24:33.

And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year; 2 Kings 13:20.

And devout men carried Stephen [to his burial], and made great lamentation over him, Acts 8:2.

All Resurrected

Scripture makes it clear that all will be resurrected. There are at least two resurrections mentioned in Scripture (Rev 20:5-6, 12-13). In the New Testament, 1 Corinthians chapter 15 addresses the first resurrection – what was sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44). *Blessed and holy [is] he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of Elohim and of Messiah, and shall reign with Him a thousand years, Revelation 20:6.*

Will Ananias and Sapphira be in the 1st or the 2nd resurrection? They were given Yahweh's Spirit; they were believers in Messiah; they were on the right track. However, they decided to conspire and deceive about some money they were going to give. Were they derailed from entering into the Kingdom as spirit beings?

And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the spirit: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried [him] out, and buried [him]. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, "Tell me

whether ye sold the land for so much?" And she said, "Yea, for so much." Then Peter said unto her, "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of Yahweh? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out." Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the spirit: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying [her] forth, buried [her] by her husband. And great fear came upon all the assembly, and upon as many as heard these things, Acts 5:5-11.

The lesson was clear for the brethren that witnessed this, as it is for us, "Don't tempt Yahweh!"

It is difficult to say whether or not they will be in the first or second resurrection, and certainly, such judgment is not ours to make. We can only judge (discern) in the sense of when we see a brother or sister in sin, then we are to take the proper steps to help them (Matt 18:15-17).

Most importantly, with Yahweh's help, we judge and correct ourselves, so that we walk on the right path that leads to eternal life. We are also to make sure we've taken the log out of our own eye – first, along the way – before trying to help another brother or sister who may be struggling (Matt 7:4-5).

Remembered No More?

Isaiah 26:13-14 is a Scripture pointed to, to show there are some who won't be in any resurrection, but will go straight to the frying pan, so to speak. It reads as follows:

O Yahweh our Elohim, [other] masters beside Thee have had dominion over us: [but] by Thee only will we make mention of Thy Name. [They] are dead, they shall not live; [they] are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast Thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish, Isaiah 26:13-14.

These verses are part of a song that is to be sung in the future Kingdom. The verses do not indicate anything more than pagan idols, as the "other masters." And, as we've already seen, they were burned and destroyed. Notice, there is NO wording showing that the "masters" were ever actually alive in the first place! Ultimately, in the future Kingdom to come, they will be utterly forgotten.

As we know, Scripture confirms Scripture. If one verse is in question, as is Isaiah 26:13-14, others need to be brought in to help clarify.

For example, in John 5:28-29, Yahshua the Messiah clearly states, *Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth;*

they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Acts 24:14-16 confirms the above statement from our Savior. The Apostle Paul speaking in his defense says, *But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the Elohim of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law, and that is written in the Prophets; having a hope in Elohim, which these men cherish themselves, that **there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.** In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before Elohim and before men, Acts 24:14-16 (NASB).*

Therefore, Isaiah 26:13-14 is not talking about men nor even the beast and the false prophet as has been suggested by some. No, the "other masters" are simply idols that were once considered worthy of servitude and worship.

Resurrection From Ashes?

It could be questioned, if one is burned (cremated), will one actually be able to be resurrected at all? From the above Scriptures, however, we know that "all that are in the graves" will be resurrected, but what about those who are not in any grave at all?

What of those loved ones that were burned in a building fire? How about martyrs of old who were burned at the stake for their belief in the Messiah? What about those who never had an opportunity to accept Yahshua? Thousands upon thousands are cremated each year, and many others die in natural fires and explosions all around the world.

Remember how Ananias and Sapphira's spirit left them. They effectively "yielded up the spirit" and fell asleep (a common Hebrew term for death).

It is impossible for us to destroy spirit in a fire, or any other way for that matter, atomic, nuclear, or otherwise, but it is not impossible for Yahweh. And, that is the point. Yahshua said, "with Elohim, all things are possible" (Matt 19:26). All powerful, all knowing. Yes, that is The One we serve!

Even from ashes He can resurrect an individual. Actually, besides the spirit (breath), which gives us life, our bodies are constituted of 60% water and 40% consolidated dust and ash (carbon material).

And Abraham answered and said, "Now behold, I have ventured to speak to Yahweh, although I am but dust and ashes," Genesis 18:27 (NASB).

Abraham was not unaware of Yahweh's power over death and knew Yahweh could give life back to his son Isaac. He was aware of Yahweh's ability,

even if his son was burned in a fire.

And Abraham said unto his young men, "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together, Genesis 22:5-6.

Conclusion

There is a story of a man who was offered a glass of goat's milk once at a fellowship meal. Brethren were all sitting around and when first offered the goat's milk, the brother refused it initially, but then he was told goat's milk is in the Bible. "Well then," he said, "If it's in the Bible then that's good enough for me!" And he took a glass of goat's milk and drank it.

The moral of this true story is that we need to be in the right attitude and live as closely in line with Yahweh's truth, as much as it is possible for us to do. This doesn't mean that we really absolutely need to drink goat's milk, but it sure couldn't hurt. We do, however, need to be willing to look at what

Yahweh says and make sure we're doing the best we can.

In looking at cremation versus burial, the Bible shows us clearly that burial (entombment or underground) was what was done by those who served Yahweh.

However, it would not be right to say, "If you don't have a proper burial, then you're not going to be in the first resurrection," and so on. That would be untrue. Note, though, we do perform a type of water burial, called baptism (immersion). It is an outward sign that we are burying the old man (old sinful ways) at baptism. And, it is indeed required by all who confess Yahshua as their Savior (Acts 2:38).

One who rejects proper baptism into Yahshua's name is being rebellious to a simple instruction found in the Bible, and therefore Yahweh.

If it is a decision between cremation or burial — and not baptism — the choice one makes will need to be one of individual conviction and for conscience sake.

-Elder David Brett



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The top half of the page features a dark blue night sky filled with numerous small white stars. A prominent, bright star with a multi-pointed starburst effect is positioned in the upper left quadrant. Below the sky, a dark blue silhouette depicts a landscape with rolling hills. In the foreground, there are several palm trees. On the left, a manger scene is shown with a woman and a child. On the right, three camels are silhouetted against the sky, with riders on their backs. The overall scene is a stylized representation of the nativity story.

Scriptural Birth Date of the Messiah

When was the Messiah born? Tradition says on December 25, but this date was decided upon in order to convert a festival of Mithra – the deity referred to as the “Invincible Sun” during a religious festival of the Roman Empire and which today, remains a fundamental part of the Roman Catholic Church and its daughters of Protestantism.

Is there a way to determine Yahshua’s date of birth? Many believe Yahshua (transliterated “Jesus” through four languages) was born on the High Sabbath of the Feast of Tabernacles. This is consistent with Scripture, historical events and Jewish culture. More importantly, it is consistent with Yahweh’s prophetic foreshadowing of major events. The feasts of Yahweh (detailed in Leviticus 23) are rehearsals foreshadowing the coming of the Messiah.

So, with that brief introduction, let us consider the amazing work of Yahweh.

Conception of John

In order to establish the date of the Messiah’s birth, we must first rely on clues found in Scripture, then add external historical and cultural elements. The birth of John (in Hebrew, Yahchanan, which means “The Mercy of Yah”) is a key factor, as he announces the coming of the Messiah (John 1:21-23).

First Chronicles 24:3-19 tells us that the Levitical priesthood was divided into 24 courses of priests. The ancient Jewish Historian Josephus (Antiquities 7) tells us that each division served for a period of one week. The first division began its period of service on the first day of the year — Abib 1 — as Elohim had established the calendar in Exodus 12:2 (and which occurs in March of the Catholic, or Gregorian calendar). Three weeks out of each year — during the week of *Pesach* (Passover and Unleavened Bread), *Shavuot* (Pentecost), and *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) — all 24,000 priests served together (1 Chron. 23:4).

As Zechariah (John’s father) was in the division of *Abiyah* (Luke 1:5), his term of service began in early Spring on the first day of the eighth week (27th day of the 2nd Scriptural month) and ran for one week through the 4th day of the 3rd month. As the following week (days 5-11 of the 3rd month) was Shavuot, the Feast of Pentecost, he would have stayed in the temple and served that week also with all the priests. Luke 1:23-24 tells us that Zachariah finished his duties at the Temple, and that Elizabeth conceived shortly after his return home. This sets the date for John’s conception at approximately the third week of the 3rd month. [Editor’s note: currently in 2022, of the Gregorian year, that week corresponds to around the 3rd week of June. Adding nine months to that date puts the birth of John sometime near the 3rd week in the Gregorian month of March 2023, as an example]

Conception of Yahshua

We know from scripture that Yahshua was conceived after John (*Yahchanan*), furthermore, with this information we can now ascertain when Yahshua was conceived.

Near the end of the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her about Elizabeth saying, "This is the sixth month with her who was called barren." Mary immediately left Nazareth (Luke 1:36-39, "with haste") and went to the "hill country" near Jerusalem to the home of Zachariah and Elizabeth. We know for sure that Mary was already pregnant with Yahshua because John, still in Elizabeth's womb, recognized the unborn Yahshua.

This sets the conception of Yahshua about the end of 10th month during Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication (also known as the "Feast of Lights" for the miracle of the 1-day jar of olive oil for the light of the Menorah that lasted for 8 days, thus demonstrating in a very special way that Yahshua is the Light of the World).

"Yahshua was at the Temple in Jerusalem on Hanukkah in John 10:22, 23. It is at this celebration that He declares 'I and My Father are One' (John 10:30), which testifies to His Divine origin in His conception. It also reinforces Hanukkah as the time of His conception."



Birth of John

Given the above events, it is now straight forward to calculate when John was born. The prophet Malachi tells us that Eliyah (Elijah) the prophet must come to prepare the hearts of the fathers and their children before *Mashiach* comes.

Remember the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded to him in Horeb for all Israel, even statutes and ordinances. Behold, I will send you Eliyah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Yahweh comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the Earth with a curse, Malachi 4:4-6 HNV.

The way in which Gabriel worded his announcement to Zachariah makes it clear that John was to be the fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy: "He will turn many of the children of Israel to Yahweh, their Elohim. He will go before his face in the spirit and power of Eliyah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for Yahweh" (Luke 1:17).

Luke 1:56 tells us that Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months, which would have been until the time John was born. We can now calculate the date of John's birth with a great deal of accuracy:

- A full-term pregnancy term is 41 weeks.
- There are 27 weeks in the first six months (two trimesters) of pregnancy.
- There are 27 weeks from the spring service of *Abiyah* to Hanukkah.
- There are 14 weeks remaining to accomplish the last trimester and bring the pregnancy to full term.
- There are exactly 14 weeks from Hanukkah to Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Days 14-21 [inclusive] of the 1st month of the year, called *Abib*).

Therefore, John was born on the Day of Passover. He was circumcised on the eighth day, which would be the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. His birth therefore exactly fulfills both Malachi's prophecy and the Jewish expectation of that fulfillment to occur at Passover.



The Birth of Yahshua

So we have established that John was born at Passover. Given this, and knowing Yahshua was conceived toward the end of December (10th month), we come to the time of His birth. Adding 9 months to the 10th month will bring you to the 7th month; *Sukkot* occurs in the Hebrew 7th month (September/October).

For the past several hundred years, Christians have taught that Mary and Joseph were commanded to go to Bethlehem to register for their taxes, and that there were so many people trying to register at the same time that all the hotels were full. It's a beautiful story, but it's simply not true ... it's only a tradition.

First of all, when the decree was issued, citizens were given a full year during which to register for the census. There was absolutely no reason for thousands of Bethlehemites to have to come to their hometown all at once to register. That being the case, we must ask why Joseph would bring his wife Mary all the way from Nazareth to Bethlehem to register when her pregnancy was so far along.

There were three great feasts during the year when the people of Yahweh were expected to make every reasonable effort to attend in Jerusalem: *Pesach* (Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread), *Shavuot* (Pentecost, the Feast of Weeks, 50 days after the 1st day of the week (Sunday) in the middle of the week of Unleavened Bread – the day of the Sheaf Wave offering of Firstfruits), and *Sukkot* (the Feast of Tabernacles, ingathering, or booths). Exodus 23:14 reads, "You shall observe a feast to me three times a year."

During these three feasts, the population of "the metropolitan Jerusalem area" would swell from about a hundred twenty thousand to something over two million people (according to Josephus). Every home in the entire area was open to guests, and of course all the hotels and motels would have been booked up for months.

However, during the Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*), every family was expected to live at least part of each day in their tabernacle or booth, called a *sukkah*, which is a temporary dwelling

usually made out of palm or willow branches, to remind them that for 40 years their ancestors had lived in temporary shelters in the wilderness on their trek to the Promised Land. At night, these *sukkot* (the plural form of *sukkah*) were available for the overnight lodging of out-of-towners, and the homeowners would stock them with food for the travelers. The food was placed on a food-tray attached to the inside wall of the *Sukkah* to keep it up off the ground.

Bethlehem (*Beit-Lechem*, which means "house of bread") was a small village in the suburbs just about four miles south of Jerusalem. Mary and Joseph had apparently decided to register with the census-takers when they came up to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. Evidently, they had intended to stop overnight in Bethlehem, register in the morning, and then proceed to Jerusalem for the feast. When they checked the hotel for available rooms, as there were no vacancies the innkeeper offered them shelter in his *Sukkah*, his Tabernacle, which had been erected and well-stocked with food for the express purpose of sheltering feast-keepers.



It was not a shelter for animals at all. And when their Baby was born, they laid Him on the food shelf to keep Him up off the damp ground. When the (probably agnostic) Gentiles who translated the "King James" Bible got to this passage in Luke's gospel, they had no knowledge of Jewish tradition or how Tabernacles was observed. Thinking only in terms of life in Medieval England, they translated the word for "food tray" as "manger" and the whole Gentile myth of Yahshua's birth in a barn was created out of an ignorant error in translation.

We can know for sure that December is wrong for the birth. The shepherds provide the answer.

As to establishing the date for His birth, one thing is very certain ... He was certainly not born during the winter. Luke 2:8 tells us: There were shepherds in the same country staying in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock.

The weather in Israel is very similar to that in central California. By December, it is quite cold, and the sheep have all been brought into the fold for the winter. As is well known, the shepherds in Palestine do not 'abide in the fields' during the winter season. The shepherds always bring their flocks in from the mountain slopes and fields no later than the fifteenth of October!

Since we have already demonstrated that Yahshua was exactly six months younger than John, it is now easy to establish the time of His birth as the middle of the 7th Month, probably on the first day of Sukkot (the 15th day of the 7th Biblical month). The only reason that Bethlehem would be crowded in the middle of the 7th Month would be for Tabernacles. The first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, and the 8th Day (the "Last Great Day") were "high Sabbaths," and travel on those days was forbidden. Therefore, Joseph would have planned their trip to arrive no later than a few hours before sunset preceding the first day of Tabernacles. According to Luke's account, Yahshua was born that night, on the 15th day of the 7th Month.

The Circumcision of Yahshua

To someone growing up in the Assembly, and probably never being taught the culture & History of the "Roots of His Faith", the circumcision may seem unimportant. But in the culture, and to fulfill the commands of Yahweh, this event is critical.

The "birth" of an Hebrew baby boy was not considered complete until he had been circumcised on the eighth day. On the eighth day, Yahshua's "presentation" in the Temple included His circumcision according to Torah. Thus, we see that the birth of Yahshua ha Mashiach spanned the entire eight days of Tabernacles, including His birth on the holy Shabbat which was the first day of Tabernacles and His circumcision on the holy Shabbat which was The Eighth Day following the 7-day Festival of Tabernacles.

The Bread of Life

If indeed our inquiry is correct, then it adds even more meaning to the "Bread of Life" analogy. Scripture says that Tabernacles will be celebrated even by the gentiles, for all time. Could the reason be that it points to, and remembers, the greatest miracle of all, that Yahweh begat an only Son, born of His Spirit through Mary (*Miriam*), Yahshua the Messiah, who, according to Yahweh's Plan of Salvation, offered Himself as a propitiation for our sins?

At His birth he was placed on the food tray in the *Sukkah*, thus demonstrating that He is indeed the true Bread of Life (John 6:33-51). Yahweh's preparation of the Feast of Tabernacles centuries before His birth gives extra significance to John's comment, *The Word became flesh, and lived* [literally, "tabernacled"] *among us. We saw his glory, such glory as of the one and only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth*, John 1:14.

Note that Yahweh provided two holy feasts that lasted eight days, Passover/Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Tabernacles. John the Baptist, the forerunner of Messiah, was born and circumcised in the eight days of the first, then six months later Yahshua, the Messiah, was born and circumcised the eight days of the second. John came in the first month of the year and Yahshua came in the seventh month. In ministry, John introduced the Way through Messiah and then Yahshua perfected it, even as the first and seventh months signify.

The Feast of Tabernacles is a most important commemoration. Zechariah 14:16-17 tells us that one day all nations will be required by law to honor this Feast. For what greater reason, than it is the first coming of the King of Kings! Why should we delay?"

-Elder John Fisher (deceased)

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Yahweh's Feasts

Note: This is a condensed version of this study. Visit yaiy.org or contact us to read the full version.

Thoughtful people who study their Bible in earnest soon raise the question, should not we also be observing the annual Feast days today in addition to the weekly Sabbath? Are these days indeed still binding on Yahweh's people in today's modern ages? If we are to observe these times, where do we gather to keep them? What do we do at the Feasts? What time of the year are we to observe them? How long are they?

Abraham, Father of the Faithful

All who have entered into the New Covenant with Yahweh are to have the same attitude as faithful Abraham who did not flinch from doing Yahweh's will, for "Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." (Gen. 26:5)

Abraham departed Ur of the Chaldees, the pagan moon-city, journeyed to Palestine and to Bethel, from there to Egypt and back to Bethel. Some Bible scholars perceive his travels and stopovers a foreshadowing of the Feast days. His travels could have been within six months.

He was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac, tithed to Melchizedek, pioneer circumcision, and was faithful in his obedience to Yahweh. Abraham is rightly known as the "Father of the faithful."

Feast Days Everlasting

The Feast days were in force years before they were given to Israel at Mount Sinai. Cain and Abel evidently knew about them (Gen. 4:1-4). See *The Companion Bible* note. The Feasts were kept by the Savior and His Apostles. They will be kept in the Millennium (Ezek. 45). Why should they be suspended now?

Because of the sacrificial death and resurrection of the Messiah, meal and animal sacrifices are now suspended. However, the times of the Feast days are still holy and thus remain our obligation. We each must learn how to observe these times so we can guide and help others keep these as well.

Yahweh's Calendar

Every year Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua prepares a calendar showing the Feast days for the coming year. This sacred calendar is based upon observable new moons as was the custom during

the days of the patriarchs and when the Savior walked the hills of Galilee. Moon-spotters are asked to report their sighting of the sliver crescent.

The modern Jewish calendar came into being since the time of our Savior, and is a calculated calendar, which ignores visible new moons. The present Jewish calendar is not very ancient, but was introduced in the 4th century by Hillel II, with its many postponements and rabbinical rules which are nowhere found or sanctioned in the Bible.

Feast Sites Selected

The Elders of Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua arrange for a place for Yahweh's people to gather for the annual Feasts. There are seven special "Annual Sabbaths" to be observed throughout the year. Not all are able to take time from their secular jobs for the weeklong observance of Unleavened Bread in the spring and another week in the fall for Tabernacles.

Most of the brethren schedule their vacations for Tabernacles allowing time for travel, as some must travel great distances. The Feasts fall on different days each year, depending upon the visible new moons. Please note: we have forms available for those requiring excused absences for the Feast days for school or work.

Feasts Rejuvenating

The Feasts are special times Yahweh gives us for His worship. These times are for our spiritual and physical renewal. These are in addition to the weekly Sabbath, and a special offering is taken each annual Sabbath in accord with the command that we should not come before Him empty-handed (Deut. 16:16b).

All the Feast days are mentioned in Leviticus 23 beginning with the weekly Sabbath, the seventh day of the week known as Saturday. The Sabbath occurs every seven days and is a holy time when we desist from our worldly labors and pleasures. We abstain from secular activities and spend time communing with Yahweh and studying His Word, drawing closer to Him and His Son.

The reader is encouraged at this point to read Leviticus 23 to gain a background of these special days.

Year Begins in the Spring

Yahweh's new year begins with the 1st month in the spring when vegetation stirs and starts to grow again (Hebrew = *Abib*). See *Biblical Timekeeping* for a more detailed description on the word *Abib*, especially in context of the law.

Unleavened Bread is the first annual festival and immediately follows the Passover, usually in March or April. Passover is observed on the evening of the fourteenth of *Abib* (Lev. 23:4-5). Bible days begin at sunset (Lev. 23:32). Passover is not a holy day and work is permitted. It is called the "preparation day," that is, the preparation for the first Day (High Sabbath) of Unleavened Bread which follows (John 19:31).

Unleavened Bread

Seven days of Unleavened Bread follow Passover, and begin on the fifteenth Day of *Abib*. The fifteenth is a high (i.e., holy, set apart) annual Sabbath. The last Day of Unleavened Bread, which falls on *Abib* 21, is also a high annual Sabbath.

No bread with leaven is to be used with the Passover Memorial service nor is any leaven to be eaten during the days of Unleavened Bread.

All leavened products are to be removed from your premises until after *Abib* 21. Don't store anything leavened in another room. Yahweh is here testing your obedience in asking you to discard all leavened products such as bread, cake, and cookies. Their value is usually less than ten dollars — a small price to pay for obedience!

Leavened Doctrine

Those familiar with the Passover season arrange to have a little leaven to discard at this time. Leaven is symbolic of doctrine or a teaching (Matt. 16:5-12; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1).

Leaven can portray either good or bad, not always wickedness, sin and corruption. If it were always sin, we should never eat leaven, nor would it be offered to Yahweh at Pentecost (Lev. 23:17). Also, Matthew 13:33 shows the Kingdom of Heaven's expansion is similar to the action of leavening.

We are to be Unleavened

The purpose in keeping the days of Unleavened Bread is to examine all our doctrines of everything we believe and clear our minds of false doctrine or teaching, which leads to false worship. Then we are to accept and retain the unadulterated word of the "Living Bread" given us by the Savior (John 6:51). It is for us a spring house cleaning.

During these special days we are to eat some

unleavened bread daily to remind us that just as Israel left Egypt, we are to forsake the leaven of the world. Not all peoples customarily eat bread as part of their diet, but a token amount should be consumed daily.

Grocers often stock Jewish Passover matzohs this time of year and ordinarily have Ry-krisp, Triscuits, and other unleavened products. Unleavened recipes are available from us at YAIY, and homemade unleavened cakes, pies, breads, cookies, can be eaten along with the fruit, grains, nuts and vegetables one normally eats. But avoid consuming any leaven for these seven days.

At first, the above proscription to avoid leavened products for seven days may sound a bit strange. It does test our obedience and helps us examine food labels before ingesting food. We should know what we eat.

We understand better the reason for being "unleavened" when we perceive that we are to examine fully all doctrines we have come to accept as truth. When we find we have mistakenly accepted error, we are to eliminate error and replace it with the truth of Yahweh's word, the "unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (I Cor. 5:8).

Yahshua, Our Passover

The Passover and the ensuing days of Unleavened Bread are a very significant introduction to the annual Feast days. We must first accept the shed blood of the Lamb for our sins that are past. Then we clean up our lives by examining our doctrines. As we feed on the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth we walk the narrow way that leads to eternal life.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread lasts for seven days. However, only the first and last days of Unleavened Bread are annual Sabbaths. The intervening days are NOT annual Holy Days, and work may be done on them, except for the weekly Sabbath which falls within that time.

Even though one might work on those days which are not set apart as Holy times, we should not let our daily routine keep us from realizing the purpose of this special time. We should spend extra time in Bible study and ingest some unleavened bread daily. This is a special time of rejuvenation both spiritually and physically.

Spring – Beginning of New Life

This is the beginning of Yahweh's new year. The earth is springing back to life as the grass greens, the trees bud, and the earth warms up for a new period of growth. It is really a time when we should turn over a new leaf and determine to do better in our

spiritual walk with our Savior. The remaining five Feasts will guide us along the way.

Israel kept the Passover as a family. Even the young were involved in the service. Today, the children should be trained by parents to eat unleavened bread at this time and taught the meaning for doing so.

It is never too early to teach the young the reason for keeping these times. Most young people enjoy the challenge of participating in wholesome adult activities and eating unleavened bread for seven days is not at all difficult.

Pentecost: Feast of Weeks

The next annual festival on Yahweh's calendar is called *Shavuoth*, Firstfruits, Pentecost or Feast of Weeks. This is a holy day which falls on Sunday (when the Sabbath ends, the week is out). Pentecost commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit and no labor is to be done on this day. As much preparation as possible for meals for this day should be done the previous Friday.

A convocation of Yahweh's people is held on this day just as the disciples gathered together on Pentecost (Acts 2:1) in 31 C.E. However, if one is unable to assemble with others of like faith, as with any Holy Day, a great deal of Bible study is always in order along with prayer.

Feasts of the Seventh Month

With the approach of autumn, we welcome the first of the four Annual Sabbaths, starting with the Day of Trumpets. It is a Sabbath of rest when no laborious work is to be done, except for the meals of the day. None of the Feasts of the seventh month has been fulfilled as yet. Fulfillment is yet ahead. Remember, you are an example to those around you. Be a light to the world, and make this day a joy for your family. Spend extra time studying your Bible and prayer. Many of the brethren participate in a video or audio recorded message both of which are available from YAIY.

Atonement

This day is indeed unique because it is referred to as a Feast day, but is actually a day of fasting! The Day of Atonement is a day in which no food or drink is taken for 24 hours — from sunset to sunset.

Leviticus 23:27 reads "afflict your souls," which is a commanded fast. This can be seen by comparing Psalm 35:13; 69:10; and Isaiah 58:3. There are certain benefits from fasting, and Yahweh has legislated that His people fast at least this one special day.

Yahweh commands that no work of any kind be done on this day. It is the holiest of all days of the year. It is not uncommon that extra rest be taken this day. Make certain all work is completed beforehand so no complaints from the family will be forthcoming. Remember that fasting is from sunset the previous evening to sunset of this day.

Feast of Tabernacles

This is the most joyous time of the year. The harvest is in, and we can thank Yahweh for a bountiful growing season and look forward to His harvest of souls.

The Feast of Tabernacles is a time to join with others of like faith in thanking and praising Yahweh. We share our hopes and dreams for the seven days with others also striving to enter the Kingdom under Yahshua Messiah. It is a time to rejoice!

Reading the book of Deuteronomy is timely, for it will be the constitution of the coming Kingdom. The book on the side of the ark, which went into the promised land, was the book of Deuteronomy, 31:26. We can relate this to our own future entrance (Heb. 4:1). (Take special note: Heb. 3:16-19, 4:11).

High Sabbath and Last Great Day/Eighth Day

The first Day of the Feast of Tabernacles is a High Sabbath, and after seven days comes the last Great Day of the Feast, written in the Law as the Eighth Day. No work is to be done neither on the first day of Tabernacles, nor on the last Great Day.

Yahweh places His Name in His people through baptism, and the Elders of His Assembly invite all sincere people to attend the Feast and join with others who have been sealed with His Name (Rev. 14:1).

Assemble for Annual Sabbaths

The Passover in Egypt was a family gathering as they huddled in their houses for fear of the destroying angel. The next day Israel gathered together as a congregation at Rameses to keep the first annual Sabbath, the first day of Unleavened Bread. ALL Israel joined in convocation to keep all seven Annual Feast days. They did not keep these Feasts in their back yard.

May Yahweh inspire you with zeal to become fully committed to Him so that when you come you are behind in no work or responsibility, but have faithfully trusted in Him to guide you in deeper truth. Should you have any Biblical questions, feel free to get in touch with us. Allow Yahweh the opportunity to bless you and plan to attend the next Feast of Tabernacles with us.



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q I was with a group who says that Isaiah 26:20 proves we will be protected against the coming death and tribulation to come upon the world. They also indicated we the congregants might stay behind the locked doors of their meeting hall or possibly travel to a specific location, even out of the country, for safety.

A Times of safety have occurred in the past for those close to Yahweh. The families of Noah survived and everyone else was destroyed. Lot and his family were saved, except for his wife, but the cities they left were destroyed. Even during the time of Egyptian slavery of Yahweh's people, after initially suffering the first three plagues, His people were eventually pulled out and had received protection. Yahweh, in doing so, showed a separation.



Similar things will take place in the future. And Isaiah 26:20 does indicate His people will be taking shelter, but its broad stroke does not tell the entirety of what will take place. Passover in the past, and, present for us, certainly comes to mind. Spiritually speaking, we seek shelter in the Almighty Father (Psa. 91:1,4; Zeph. 2:3).

With the current war between Russia and Ukraine, one can see the exodus of people in the seven figures fleeing and others taking shelter, and others still taking up arms, resisting and fighting. Some have been captured and held against their will, others have died, besides those having been injured. This is war and tribulation. A taste of what is to come worldwide.

What will the ultimate outcome be? For the big picture in Yahweh's economies, we see life everlasting for those who love Him and overcome to the end. No matter what we go through, the end is assured and promised (Luke 21:13-19). Will everyone be saved? No. (1 Cor. 7:16) Will everyone die? No. (Rev. 13:10) Will some believers die? Yes. (Dan. 11:35; Matt 24:9) Will some be protected. Yes. (Luke 21:21; Rev. 12:14) Will some face other difficulties, including death? Yes. (Luke 21:23-24; Rev. 13:10).

Putting all the pieces of the puzzle together, we try to assess the overall picture. There are still unanswered questions, but we would be leery of any church or group saying they are the place of safety behind the closed doors of their building; or, if, at least, their congregants travel to a secret location they have designated, they will be saved. That would be like saying, "If you leave our group, you cannot be saved." To that we would say, they do not know the true power of the One we serve.

Q "Therefore go out from their midst and be separate from them says Yahweh, and touch not the unclean *thing*" (2 Cor. 6:17). Go out? Where? Be separate? What is the unclean thing?

A Paul wrote in Romans 4:14: *I know, and am persuaded by the Master Yahshua, that [there is] nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it [is] unclean.*

The problem we have, is recognizing the Truth of the Word, that not all men have faith (2 Thess. 3:2) – that is, to say, our faith. Paul asks, *Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before Elohim,* Romans 14:22. And for sure, our faith will be duly tested in our refraining from judging others through becoming a stumblingblock or an occasion whereby another

falls (Rom. 14:13). Often, the challenge to us – if we have a particular conviction about something (which might really be a preference) – is studying to be quiet and doing our own business as we have been commanded (1 Thess. 4:11).

Nevertheless, we are to withdraw ourselves from fellowshiping with the unfruitful works(ers) of darkness (Eph. 5:11) and even from every brother (or sister) who walk disorderly and not after the tradition received of the Apostles (2 Thess. 3:6) – yet, warning them that are unruly (by Yahweh’s standard, and not by our own), comforting the feebleminded, supporting the weak, and being patient toward all men (1 Thess. 5:14) and always, considering ourselves, lest we should be tempted (Gal. 6:1) and overcome.

Once bought with the peculiar price of Innocent Blood, we can no longer do what we had done; go where we had gone; company with those with whom we had companied – and all done, running to an excess (1 Pet. 4:4) providing for the lusts (Rom. 13:14) of the eyes and of the flesh and the pride of life (1 John 2:16) when we were dead in trespasses and sin (Eph. 2:1), lest we should find ourselves once again steeped in the vomit and mire of our past (2 Pet. 2:22).

Called out and separated? Absolutely, undefiled and incorruptible. Give no place to the devil, neither to his agencies (Eph. 4:27).

What is unclean is that which is inclined toward your transgression of His Commandment. If a person has an aversion toward satisfying the lusts of his flesh or the lusts of his eyes, he can’t give license to unrestrained imagination that makes for a reprobate mind to conceive thoughts that will overcome him and be difficult, if not impossible, to bring into captivity to the obedience of the Commandment. For example: There is nothing inherently wrong with a television, but if one is given to surfing the cable or satellite channels for the purpose of his senses becoming exercised toward lewdness, then for him TV is unclean and it would be better for him, not to have one. The same is true with other technical devices, like computers and smart phones.

Certainly, a computer that is used as a word processor (like a typewriter) could not be thought unclean of itself. If, however, one plugs in an accessory item like a flash drive that has lewd images on it, or has internet service from which he/she accesses pornography, then that computer may well be deemed unclean, and it would be better for him not to have one.



Smart phones are another item of concern. There’s nothing inherently wrong with having a telephone, but people walking around screening, exercising their thumb and forefinger, scrolling – just before they bump into the utility pole, or step off the curb into the path of a Mack diesel truck using its Jake Brake to slow in anticipation of that person’s sleepwalking off the curb – then that smart phone might be considered ... well, unclean.

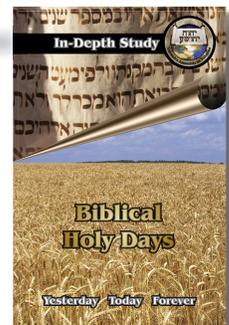
A good definition of *unclean* is anything that if improperly used, distracts you or separates you from giving your attention to the Master, or draws you away from obedience to His Commandments – and by the way, that can be people and places, as well as things.

And so, what’s the final answer? We live in perilous times (2 Tim. 3:1) – times in which the cunning and the subtlety of sin is all around us; times in which there is confusion between what is holy and what is profane; between what is clean and what is unclean; between even, what is male and what is female.

Throughout the New Testament Scriptures, we read these words: “Be Not Deceived” and “I Would Not Have You Ignorant, Brethren.” The only way by which we can avoid Deception and Ignorance is to frequent Yahweh’s Assembly to receive reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, rebuke, and exhortation (2 Tim. 3:16, 4:2) ... and so much the more of each of these administrations of His Word, as we see the day of our redemption drawing nigh (Heb. 10:25; Luke 21:28).

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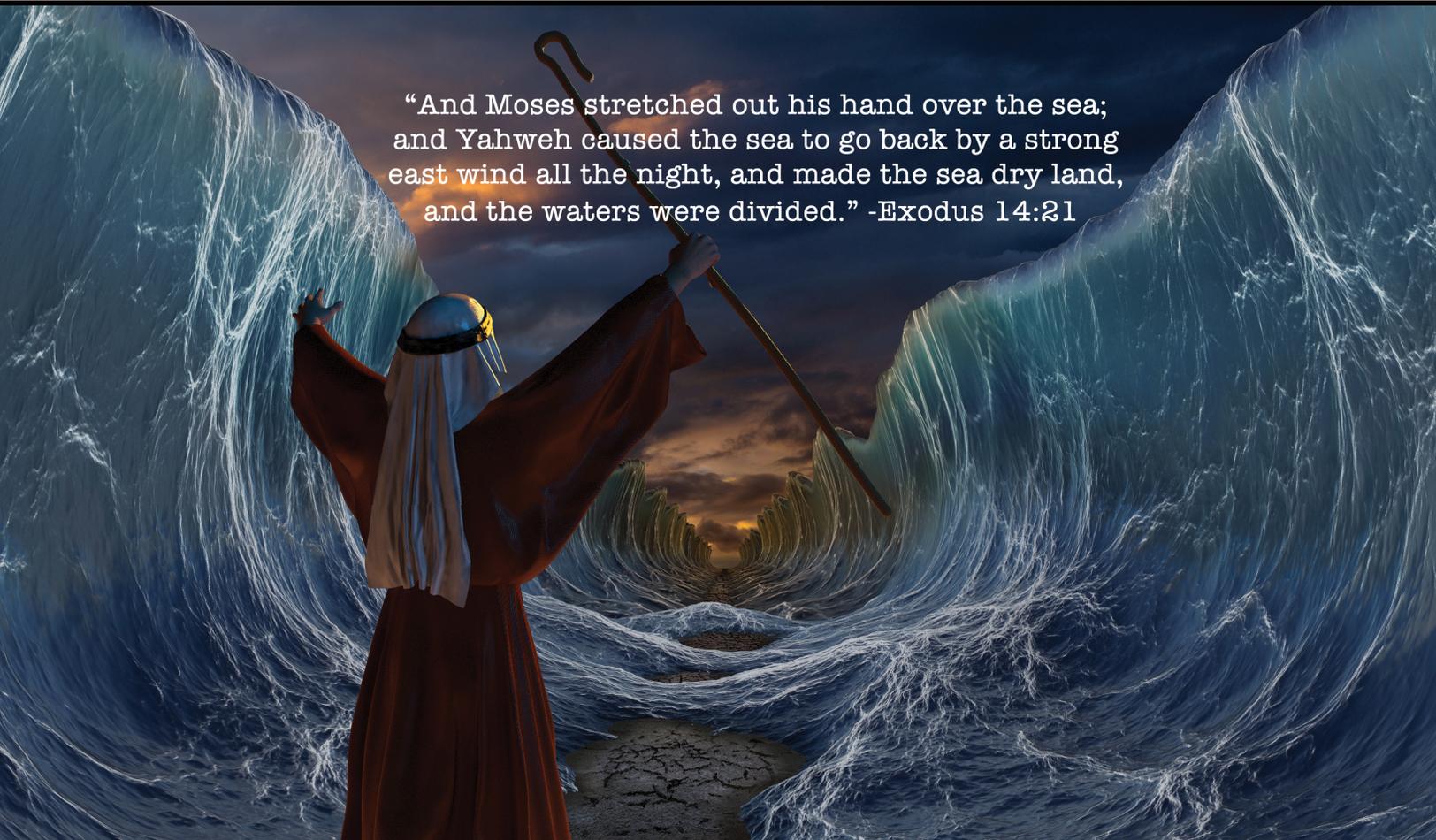
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“And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea;
and Yahweh caused the sea to go back by a strong
east wind all the night, and made the sea dry land,
and the waters were divided.” -Exodus 14:21