

WWW.RESTORATIONTIMES.ORG

March-April 2021

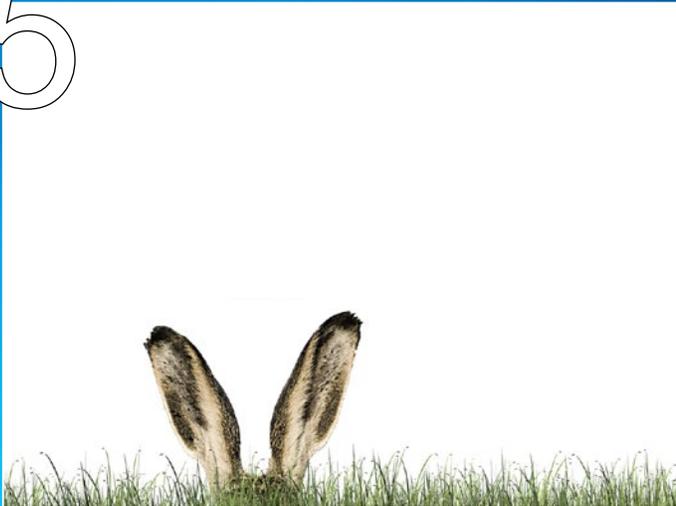
RESTORATION TIMES



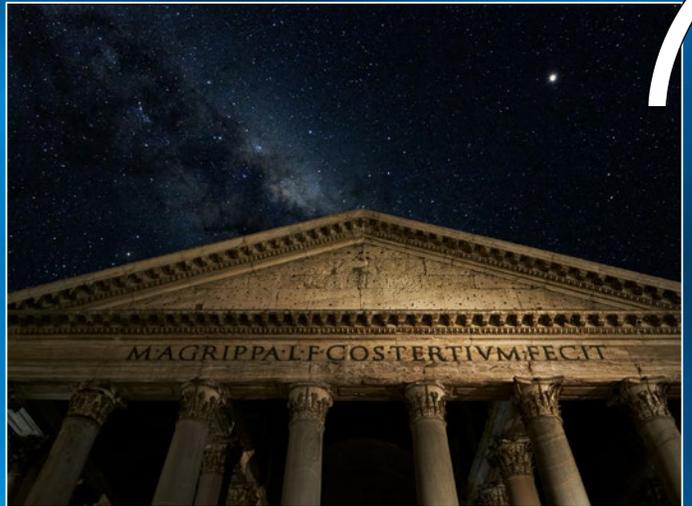
RESTORATION TIMES

VOL. 11 | No. 2 | March-April 2021

5



7



A R T I C L E S

10



14



3 | Passover and Feasts - Proper Worship in Our Time
by Alan Mansager

5 | Going Down a Bunny Trail

7 | Is America Repeating Rome's Fall?
by Alan Mansager

10 | Fruits of the Spirit - Goodness
by Randy Folliard

14 | From Grace to Obedience

16 | Q & A

Restoration Times expounds the close ties between the Old and New Testaments. We teach the continuity and harmony that extend from Yahweh's actions anciently down through His present activity in Yahshua the Messiah. This was also the conviction of the early New Testament Assembly.

This publication is sent free of charge, made possible through the tithes and offerings of those who desire to see the truth of Scripture restored in our day.
© 2021 Yahweh's Restoration Ministry



COVER:

Menorah carved in stone on arch at the entrance to the archaeological site of Tel Shilo, Israel.

iStock

EDITOR Alan Mansager
COPY EDITOR Debra Wirl
GRAPHICS / LAYOUT Ryan Mansager
CONTRIBUTING WRITER Randy Folliard
DIGITAL PUBLISHINGS Lucas Cecil

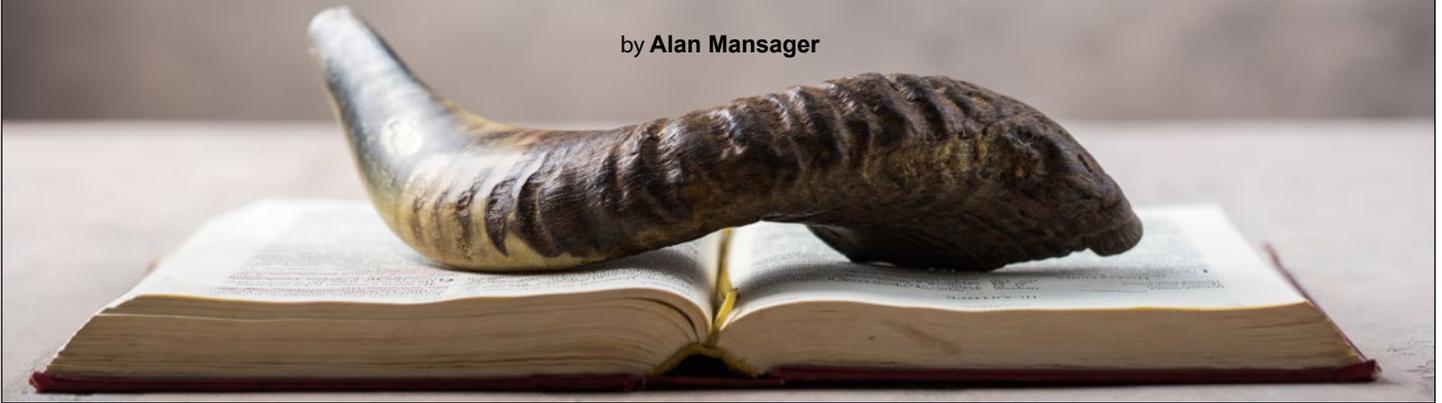


Yahweh's Restoration Ministry
PO Box 463
Holts Summit, MO 65043

Telephone: 573-896-1000
Office hours M-F 8am-4pm
www.yrm.org
info@yrm.org

Passover and the Feasts— Proper Worship in Our Time

by Alan Mansager



Having no compass, a ship captain would be lost at sea. Without a benchmark to work from, a surveyor would have no starting point on which to base his survey. Without a level, a carpenter would build a crooked house that would be subject to collapse.

Compasses, benchmarks, and levels give these occupations the proper orientations, starting points, and alignments. Trying to function without them would be a nightmare.

Seeing any of these professions progress without such tools may even be ludicrous. The captain, surveyor, and carpenter would be fumbling around and guessing while making serious mistakes.

The right tools and knowledge are fundamental to one's craft. Yet few think it strange to ignore the basics on which proper worship is oriented and guided. Predictably, the results have proven disastrous—a tangled mishmash of disconnected teachings and practices being passed off as true, biblical religion when they aren't even close.

Yahweh gave man laws and special times on which to base life and proper faith. These are foundations, the benchmarks, on which His worship is to be established. His directives serve as true guides so that we will always

be correctly focused, on track, and in harmony with His will. By observing them we will also be blessed, Exodus 19:5.

Pursuing Counterfeit Observance

Dissatisfied and stubborn mankind rejects Yahweh's law and replaces the inspired and commanded days of obligation with his own worthless observances.

Were the Feast days part of the law that was supposedly "abolished"? Are they just for Jews? If so, why are they still being actively observed both anciently, in the New Testament, and on into the coming Kingdom? (Zech. 14:16-19)

Rather than memorializing Yahshua's Passover sacrifice, millions commemorate egg-laying rabbits. Instead of living in obedience to their Savior and coming Judge, millions teach their children to be good for Santa's sake; rather than learning righteousness through the power of the Holy Spirit that came at Pentecost, the masses glory in witches and demons, mayhem and death, all from the unholy spirit in the Halloween celebration.

Yahweh commanded harvest feast observances that provide deep insight into the plan of salvation and the coming spiritual harvest of the saints. The

masses choose instead to make a fetish of evergreen trees, red-nosed reindeer, and senseless gift exchanging in the dead of winter. Where foundational truth is missing the certain outcome is falsity. That falsity now rules the world of worship.

Return to Righteous Worship

When Hezekiah took the throne, conditions in Israel were deplorable, not unlike what we see in our world today. The new 25-year-old king brought in the priests and Levites, 2Chronicles 29. He told them to rid the temple of the filthiness (false worship) that had completely overrun it.

Hezekiah said their fathers had completely abandoned the worship of Yahweh and turned their backs on Him. Yahweh's wrath was subsequently on the people and they were up to their chins in trouble, just as our society is racked today.

So, what's he to do? The very first thing Hezekiah commanded was to go back to serving Yahweh. And how was that accomplished? First, by cleaning up the temple, verse 16. Then by reinstating proper worship.

Hezekiah immediately sent letters to all the tribes of Israel to come to Jerusalem to keep the Passover,

2Chronicles 30:1.

Because the temple and people weren't ready at the proper time, the king directed the Memorial to be observed the following month, as allowed by the law in Numbers 9:10-11.

After the Passover came the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which they also observed, verse 21. It was such a joyous occasion that they kept it another seven days. Because of their faithfulness and willingness to return to correct and commanded worship, Yahweh blessed Israel.

Imagine how our nation would be blessed if a president directed that the biblical Holy Days be observed in place of the false holidays! A time is coming in the millennial rule of Yahshua when we will see exactly that (see Ezek. 45:21).

Just Old Testament Observances?

Some will say that the seven observances and Feasts were for ancient Israel only. Many are told that they were later abolished under the New Covenant as simply another part of the old Mosaic law.

In Exodus 12 we find Yahweh explaining the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. There He said these Feasts were to be kept "throughout your generations." And this was two months before the law was codified at Sinai! (see also Ex. 3:18; 5:1; 10:9).

These days were commanded prior to the law at Sinai and would not be included in any supposed abolishment of that law.

For hundreds of years in Egyptian captivity, Israel had neglected to observe the holy days. Now Yahweh is taking them out of Egyptian bondage (a type of sin) and returning them to pure worship again—which included the observing of the holy days! That was the very reason Moses went to Pharaoh to win their release: They couldn't be faithful to the Holy Days in sinful Egypt. They had to come out first, Exodus 5:1.

A detail of the Feasts is in Leviticus 23. There we find a significant reference that is repeated in subsequent pages of Scripture. Yahweh calls them "My" Feasts. He did not refer to them as "Jewish" Feasts or "Feasts of Israel."

Yet that is the common assumption! Repeatedly they are called "Yahweh's Feasts."

If they are Yahweh's Feasts, then they are not exclusively Jewish. In fact, not even Jews observe all of them or even most of them. Because they are Yahweh's, we must keep them to please Him.

Yahshua said that not one minute part of the law would pass until all is fulfilled, meaning not until heaven and earth pass away, Matthew 5:18. Have heaven and earth passed away?

The Feast Days Are Divine Law

Many have been deceived into thinking that the only law given at Sinai was the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20. In fact, what was codified at Sinai was only a restatement of the sacred law that was in effect since Adam.

In Exodus 23 Yahweh again outlines the Feasts for Moses. In Exodus 24 is Moses' fourth ascent up Mt. Sinai to receive more of Yahweh's commands. Moses doesn't come down permanently until the 32nd chapter. All that time he was getting the Torah law from Yahweh, including the Feast days.

All of these laws are still in effect.

Did Yahshua the Messiah think the Feast days were important enough to observe Himself? In Luke 2:41-43 we find Him keeping the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread with His parents, who went to Jerusalem every year at the Passover.

"And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Yahshua tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it."

We know that He kept the Feasts throughout His life because He was without sin, Hebrews 4:15, and sin is the breaking of the law, 1John 3:4. Of course, we find Him observing the Passover near the end of His life, Matthew 26:17-18, Luke 22:8, John 2:23, and He literally became our Passover sacrifice.

He is our example, Hebrews 12:2 and 1Peter 2:21. We are to walk as He walked and do all that He commanded and did.

If He kept the Feasts, so must we. He fulfilled all righteousness, Matthew 3:15.

No Post-Resurrection Shift

"But that was all changed after His death," some might be saying. "Now we just keep the law in our hearts, spiritually." If that is proper, then Luke and Paul did not receive that message and neither did the rest of the New Testament assembly.

In the opening of Acts we read that 120 brethren were there to keep the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost. Had they not been obediently observing this Feast, they would have missed the giving of the Holy Spirit!

Later, in Acts 12:3-4, Peter was arrested at the time of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which are specifically mentioned.

We find Paul keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread at Philippi in Acts 20:6. In a chapter written during the Feast (1Cor. 5:7-8), Paul told the Corinthian brethren, including heathen Corinthians, that they were to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This was many years after the death and resurrection of Yahshua.

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even the Messiah our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

An Enduring Command

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is the first Feast in the special observances given by Almighty Yahweh for His people. It comes in the first month of the biblical year.

Leviticus 23 teaches, "And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto Yahweh: seven days you must eat unleavened



bread. In the first day you shall have a holy convocation: you shall do no servile work therein. But you shall offer an offering made by fire unto Yahweh seven days: in the seventh day is a holy convocation: you shall do no servile work therein.”

The law required a sacrifice each day of the Feast. Some assume that because Yahshua became our sacrifice that the Feast was somehow replaced as well.

Paul tells us that because of Israel’s inability to be obedient to the first covenant, a change was made. That change puts His laws in our minds and hearts rather than on stone (Heb. 8:10). Giving us a mind and heart for His laws

is just the opposite of abolishing them.

This change from the Old to the New covenant was prophesied in Ezekiel 11:19-20. As you read it, see whether any change in obedience is mandated: “And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in My statutes, and keep Mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be My People, and I will be their Elohim.”

Yahweh’s laws will extend on into the millennial rule of Yahshua. His Feast days will continue to be kept then as well.

Ezekiel 45 speaks prophetically of the Millennium. In verse 21 we read, “In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, you shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.” Other places, such as Isaiah 66, also tell of Feast observance in the Millennium.

Clearly, Yahweh’s Feast days have not been canceled or even suspended. Yahshua the Messiah observed them, as did His disciples and the early assembly. And they will be in force in the Millennium.

The continuity continues. Only stubborn man drifted far off course. ✓

Going Down a Bunny Trail

The Easter Counterfeit of Passover



While reading the Book of Acts recently, I was struck by several words that were oddly foreign to the text. A linguist would call them anachronisms, words that don’t fit the time. I read “deputy” in 13:7, “sergents” in 16:35, and “town clerk” in 19:35.

Obviously, King James translators used terms common in their day to describe officials of a far more ancient era, who no doubt were called something very different.

A similar error is in “biblical” art, where the 15th-century artist portrays biblical robe-and-sandal scenes with people dressed in garb of the Middle Ages. And then there is the ever-popular artist’s portrait of the Savior with very European features that belie His actual Mediterranean, Hebrew heritage.

Why is this propensity to alter historical truths?

Take the second most popular holiday in Christendom. If you had asked any of the disciples in the year 45 CE where they were going to celebrate Easter that year,

their startled looks would have startled you.

Why such a response? Because when the Savior walked this earth, and for centuries afterward, among the believers there was no observance even resembling today’s Easter.

According to Scripture, “Easter” as the observance we know is an anachronism as well. The ONLY place in the *King James Version* where this word appears is in Acts 12:4. There, the word is the Greek *pascha*, which is derived from the Hebrew *pesach*, or Passover.

The error is corrected to read “Passover” in modern translations (see *New International Version*, *The Jerusalem Bible*, *New American Standard Bible*, *The New King James Bible*, *Revised Standard Version*, *The New English Bible*).

Substitution from Heathenism

If the original observance was none other than Passover, and if today’s Easter observance is unknown in Scripture,

from where does Easter derive? And how do Peter Cottontail and colored eggs in baskets of cellophane grass fit into the resurrection of the Savior?

The answer is simple. Easter evolved on mere human authority and tradition. Easter is a deliberate merging of mostly pagan practices with a few biblical motifs.

The following excerpts give this explanation (from *The New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia*, “Easter,” pp. 43-44): “That the Jewish Christians continued to keep the Jewish festivals is altogether probable, if not certain, from Paul’s habit... So far then it would appear that the pascha observance was a time of grief and it is left uncertain whether the resurrection was observed annually by a special day, or, if observed at all, whether it was observed separately from the festival of the death of Chr-st.

“Eusebius further says that the churches in Asia Minor derived their custom of observing the pascha from the Apostle John and Philip. Without

doubt Christian elements were [later] incorporated into the celebration.

“Certainly in the fourth century the term pascha stood for both the resurrection and the death of [Messiah]. It was then called ‘the holy feast, the pascha of our salvation’ by the Council of Antioch 341.

“Finally, in the fourth century pascha came to be used in a limited sense for Easter Sunday alone...”

One reason for the switch to Easter by the church was anti-Jewish bias. Passover was wrongly considered only “Jewish,” when in fact it is called “Yahweh’s Passover,” Exodus 12:11, Leviticus 23:5.

Another eye-opening statement comes from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Macropedia, Vol. 4, p. 601): “Unlike the cycle of feasts and fasts of the Jewish Law, the Christian year has never been based upon a divine revelation. It is rather a tradition that is always subject to change by ecclesiastical law.”

This fact begs the question: if the only grounds for celebrating the popular church holidays is mere tradition of men and not the Bible, isn’t it a huge risk to honor them over those feasts that ARE specifically commanded by Almighty Yahweh Himself and observed by our Savior?

Scripture clearly teaches that the proper celebration of the resurrection is not Easter but is in the solemn act of baptism. See Romans 6:3-5; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12; and 1Peter 3:21. No biblical celebration for the resurrection exists!

Symbols of Fertility Abound

One problem with popular religious observances based on human tradition is that much of that tradition is heathen in origin.

It’s no different with Easter. “As at Christmas, so also at Easter, popular customs reflect many ancient pagan survivals—in this instance, connected with spring fertility rites, such as the symbols of the Easter egg and the Easter hare or rabbit,” *Britannica*, p. 60.

The English name Easter has nothing to do with the “resurrection.” It

is derived from an Anglo-Saxon name of an old Teutonic goddess of spring and fertility worship. In Chaldea this heathen deity was Astarte, one of the titles of Beltis, the queen of heaven. In Babylon she was Ishtar (pronounced “Aestar”).

The *Oxford English Dictionary* says about the name Easter: “Baeda derives the word...from Eostre (Northum spelling of Eastre) the name of a goddess whose festival was celebrated at the vernal equinox. Her name...shows that she was originally the dawn-goddess,” “Easter” p. 19.

The celebration anciently honored this queen of heaven and the fertility and procreation she represented, for which springtime, rabbits, and eggs were symbols.

Sun Worship at Sunrise

One rite is central to the Easter celebration—the sunrise worship service. Why is this service so much a part of the Easter experience? Is it because Yahshua rose Easter Sunday morning? Not at all.

Clearly, He was already risen by sunset Saturday night, according to Matthew 28.

The real origin of the sunrise service traces to idolatry. It was even practiced by people professing Yahweh, which He strongly condemned. In Ezekiel 8:16 the prophet is shown this abomination taking place right on the steps of the temple.

“And He brought me into the inner court of Yahweh’s house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of Yahweh, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men with their backs toward the temple of Yahweh, and their faces toward the east: and they worshiped the sun toward the east.”

This abomination is the same rite still done in Easter sunrise services today. It is nothing more than perpetuating ancient sun worship. “Learn not the way of the heathen,” Yahweh thunders. Why isn’t churchianity listening?

Roots of Lent

Neither Yahshua nor His disciples observed Lent, and they said nothing about it in the Bible. Yet millions still

think it is a scriptural observance.

The 40-day fast of Lent directly traces to the worship of the Babylonian goddess Semiramis (a.k.a. Ishtar). This pagan observance was a “preliminary to the great annual festival in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Tammuz,” her son and sun-god, *The Two Babylons*, p. 105.

Weeping over the death of Tammuz marked this celebration, giving birth to the practice of fasting or giving up something in anticipation of the hoped-for resurrection.

You Are Obligated

How can anyone be a True Worshiper and indulge in practices firmly entrenched in ancient mystery worship? Yahweh calls such things abominations.

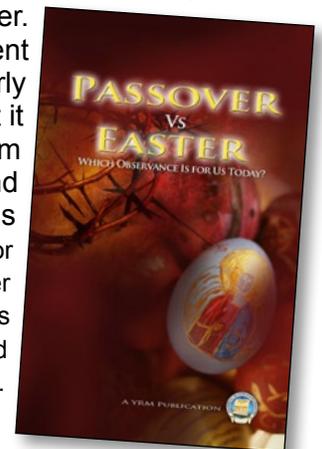
Once you understand the truth, you are entirely obligated to follow it. “If we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries,” Hebrew 10:26-27.

Giving up the ways of the world may not be easy, but it is the first step on your journey to everlasting life! 

Passover Vs. Easter

Surprisingly, Christian history is very candid about the origin of Easter.

The ancient records clearly show that it originated from paganism and that it was substituted for the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread.



To order: yrm.org/booklets or
Call toll free: 844-899-6438

Is America Repeating Rome's Fall?

How much further must this nation nosedive before it falls flat or falls on its collective knees and repents?

by Alan Mansager



If history tells us anything it's that great civilizations are not murdered. Instead, they take their own lives. So concluded the historian Arnold Toynbee in his 12-volume work, *A Study of History*. Toynbee examined the rise and fall of 28 civilizations.

Although empires usually cause their own decline, their self-destruction is often aided and abetted. Like viruses that invade when health is compromised, destructive agents will move in at the first sign of weakness.

Why study the history of societies? Because they provide clues to our future. Just as individuals act in predictable ways, so do nations.

Yahshua said in Mark 13:33: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is." Take heed for what? Look what's happening around you. Be aware, know prophecy. Verse 29 reads: "So you in like manner, when you shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors."

Yahshua did not say go on living blindly, nor did He say be fearful for what's happening in the world. Prophecy should not scare us but prepare us.

The root of the problem confronting us is not just political nor cultural, but spiritual. Since the 1960s the loss of biblical principles and values in America

has been in overdrive. One result is that the milk of human kindness is taking a big hit and the love of many is waxing cold.

Coarseness is growing in the culture, as is an increasing loss of civility. Anger is on the rise. Profanity is proliferating everywhere, even in the news where it was once highly tabooed.

Bible in the Crosshairs

This nation was built on religious freedom. But today, any reference to Yahweh in the public square is squelched in many jurisdictions where atheism dominates.

Predictably, efforts to remove Yahweh from society have resulted in a cascade of sin. In 1962 prayer was banned in schools; abortion was legalized in 1973, sodomite unions in 2015. If the controlling powers think they can do all this with impunity, they best reconsider.

And because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. Violent crime is skyrocketing, from homicides to the burning of cities, destroying and looting businesses, and assaulting police.

Where is righteousness? Where is justice? How much more must this nation decline before it falls flat or falls on its collective knees and repents?

We see today the literal fulfillment

of Isaiah 59:14: "Justice is turned back, And righteousness stands afar off; For truth is fallen in the street, And equity cannot enter. So truth fails, And he who departs from evil makes himself a prey."

Habbakuk 1:3-4 puts it this way: "Why do you force me to look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Oppression and violence are right in front of me. Strife is ongoing, and conflict escalates. This is why the law is ineffective and justice never emerges. For the wicked restrict the righteous; therefore, justice comes out perverted" (*Christian Standard Bible*).

"Politics is downstream from culture," goes the saying, "and culture is downstream from a society's values."

Yahweh is being shut out and we are seeing the stunning results. Bible-centered religion has been replaced by the religion of socialism, humanism, and evolution. They all work in harmony to destroy what Yahweh ordained.

"Men must be governed by G-d, or they will be ruled by tyrants," warned William Penn, founder and first governor of Pennsylvania.

Most of last summer's rioters were young people in their teens and 20s. As one commentator noted, "Higher education has been fundamentally transforming many young people into an army of arrogant, historically ignorant,

morally confused and spiritually bankrupt hateful foot soldiers – and now they have been called to active duty.”

Isaiah prophesied in 3:12: “As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.”

If it is alarming to see open vilification of traditional values, waiting in the wings is fulfillment of James 2:7: “Do not they blaspheme that worthy Name by which ye are called?”

When the most hallowed Name in all the universe is attacked, we will have reached a tipping point that only Yahshua can set aright.

Yahshua prophesied in Revelation 13:17 about what’s ahead once the blasphemous beast system is in place:

“And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

Those who refuse to bow to the Beast and take his mark will be prohibited from buying and selling. That means no groceries, gasoline, utilities like water and light. No cell phones. No ability to pay taxes, leading to property forfeiture.

The faithful will one day be shut out of society. That is when Yahweh will take control and deliver His people into the wilderness, Revelation 12:14:

“And to the woman [Assembly] were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.” Three-and-a-half years of the tribulation will turn this world into a living nightmare.

Yahshua also predicted that the social climate of the latter days will be filled with fear and anger: In Matthew 24:12 He prophesied: “And because iniquity [sin, lawlessness] shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” Benevolence will be rare as the milk of human kindness evaporates.

He also explained what lies ahead for those who are not rooted firmly in unshakable faith.

“But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy



If it is alarming to see open vilification of traditional values, waiting in the wings is fulfillment of James 2:7: “Do not they blaspheme that worthy Name by which ye are called?”

receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended,” Matthew 13:20-21.

Offended means to trip up, have occasion to fall. It means to begin to distrust and desert what one ought to trust and obey. That’s what happens when a person is not totally committed in his or her walk. Not well grounded, they soon fall away from the faith. Many will be unable to endure opposition and suffering. Note what happens next.

“And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another,” Matthew 24:10. Anger, resentment, provocation. The true heart of the faithless is revealed by their behavior. These are the product of hearts ruled by haSatan. And it gets even worse.

Mark 13:12 says: “Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.” Abject fear coupled with unconverted hearts – that’s all it takes to bring many to this shocking point. Yet there is ultimate hope. “But he that endures to the end shall be saved,” Matthew 24:13.

If you think all of this is for a time far, far away, think again.

Even now religious gatherings are being limited or forbidden in some states in fear of a virus. Free speech is being curtailed. Stifling opposition is growing.

It is not just a case of keeping safe from a virus. That is just the tip of the spear being used for other purposes.

See what the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 1 as to the root cause of all of this evilness: “Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of Elohim, so Elohim gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done.

“They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity.”

Where Did America Go?

Many wonder why America is missing in end-time prophecy. Being the best ally Israel has, why is America not running to the aid of Israel when Jerusalem is under siege by the world’s armies during the time of Armageddon?

Once we stop aiding Israel, look out. Genesis 12:1 and 3 read: “Now Yahweh had said unto Abram... I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Psalms 122:6: “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.” The negative of that is serious judgment on those that don’t.

Estimates are that China will overtake us economically in eight years to be the number one financial power in the world. That’s half the previously estimated timeframe.

Napoleon warned 200 years ago, “China? There lies a sleeping giant. Let him sleep! For when he wakes he will move the world.”

Using Rome as a model of decline, we can gauge our own fate heading down the same road, as its troubles are becoming common to us. As we look at Rome and America in their mature years, the comparisons are striking.

The two greatest and only superpowers in history are the Roman Empire and America. Each was and is dominant militarily, politically, economically, and culturally in their respective worlds.

The Roman Empire was the victim of many internal sicknesses, but was finally brought to its knees when

Rome was sacked by the Visigoths in the year 410 and the Vandals in 455. Finally, in 476, the Germanic leader Odoacer staged a revolt and deposed the Emperor Romulus Augustulus, dealing a deathblow to the western Empire.

Sharing a Similar Fate with Rome

Here are just a few of the common cracks in the foundations of both the Roman Empire and America:

- Outside invaders overran the Empire (read America's illegal immigrants).
- Lawlessness was widespread as pirates and bandits made travel unsafe (rioters destroying our cities).
- Businesses closed or moved from the cities for less costly, safer, and accommodating places. (Business and residents leaving coastal states and moving to safer, less-taxing states.)
- Roads and bridges left to deteriorate (no federal funds for repair).

Collapse of empires is often rapid and greatness provides no immunity. Look what's happened to us economically in less than a year after the stealth attack of the virus, with millions now out of work, where only a few months prior to the hit everything was rosy and bright and unemployment was at record lows.

Compare what happened to Rome. The Empire covered 1.9 million square miles in the year 390. Five years later, it had plummeted to 770,000 square miles (2.5 times smaller). By 476, the empire's reach was zero.

These were the rapid effects of Rome's collapse. But what caused the collapse?

Causes for Rome's Collapse

At the end of the 4th century, the Roman empire was going through a multi-level crisis; the economy was in a tailspin, religious conflicts between Christians and non-Christians were widespread; ultimately, invasion by barbarians would strike the death blow.

These elements are also active in America.

In the Roman Empire financial troubles started with overspending,

which led to oppressive taxation. That led many of the wealthy to flee the cities to set up their own fiefdoms in the countryside.

At the same time, the empire was rocked by a labor deficit. Outsiders had to do the work. Rome's economy depended on slaves to till its fields and work as craftsmen. No military victories meant no slaves to take for the workforce.

Many U.S. factories have moved out or closed, making us increasingly dependent on foreigners like China for our manufactured goods. In the Roman Empire the Germanic Goths became the producers.

Rome had overwhelming political problems, too. Being a Roman emperor had always been a dangerous job, but during the tumultuous second and third centuries it was a death sentence.

Civil war thrust the empire into chaos, and more than 20 men took the throne in the span of only 75 years, usually after the murder of a predecessor.

The political rot extended to the Roman Senate, which failed to temper the excesses of the emperors due to its own widespread failures and corruption.

As the situation worsened, civic pride waned and many Roman citizens lost trust in their leaders.

We are undergoing political turmoil that will change our future as a nation. Some are out to gut our entire system, including our laws, and eliminate all vestiges of our history and values.

Bible Believers Under Siege

In the eyes of many of that time, early Christianity was odd, bizarre, and in some ways even dangerous. It did not fit with what "religion" was supposed to be for the pagan Romans. Indicative of this is that Roman-era critics called it a perverse superstition.

Interestingly, this is the same kind of backlash against believers today who refuse to embrace immoral trends.

Christians were problematic for Rome. They refused to worship Rome's pagan gods and were called atheists because of it. On a smaller scale, many true believers today face the same kind

of opposition with relatives and friends.

Bible believers were at fundamental odds with the Roman religion because they linked their religious beliefs to ethical living, something the Romans lacked being without the moral laws of the Bible.

To the pagan people of Greece and Rome, religion just meant pleasing their gods, and their gods often represented the worst in evil and corrupt nature.

In light of today's moral decline, biblical religion is creating its own rift with the humanistic culture. As the older generations pass and the next generation becomes increasingly immoral, like the Romans we can expect the fulfillment of more and more prophecy.

Paul lays it all out in writing to Timothy. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of Elohim," 2Timothy 3:1-4.

Sin Lies at the Root

Solomon wrote in Proverbs 14:34, "Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people." Our problem as a nation is sin, the breaking of Yahweh's laws. So long as we keep sinning, we can expect to keep collapsing like the Roman Empire.

Are you ready to stand on faith without compromising if it comes to that? If you are told to renounce your beliefs and bow to evil, will you withstand the forces of the beast system and remain true to Yahweh, even if it means the ultimate sacrifice for the Kingdom's sake?

The believer could be tried and tested in ways never imagined. Yahshua said in Mark 13:13: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

Be among those who stand for Truth and uncompromised worship.



by Randy Folliard

Fruits of the Spirit Goodness

The Apostle Paul wrote, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law,” Galatians 5:22-23.

As mentioned in the previous installments, these nine attributes form the foundation or bedrock of what it is to be a believer in Messiah. If we desire to emulate and follow in our Savior’s footsteps, then we must adopt and live by the characteristics we find here. It’s not enough to keep the Sabbath and other commandments, but we must go beyond this and change who we are on the inside.

In Matthew 23 Yahshua refers to what He calls the weightier matters – judgment, mercy, and faith. I believe the attributes we see in Galatians 5 would also be considered the weightier matters. And as believers we should always be pursuing them.

Does this mean, then, that commandments like the Sabbath are not important? The answer is obviously no;

Yahweh’s commandments are critically important. We know that Yahshua and the apostles, including Paul, faithfully observed the commandments including the Sabbath and Feast days. Is it possible to obey these commandments and yet NOT be found worthy of the first resurrection? Based on the examples of the scribes and Pharisees, I believe this is a real possibility. And for this reason we must not only focus on the outward commandments but also on how we’re to change inwardly.

Let’s now continue with this series on the fruits of the spirit and focus on the next one: Goodness.

The Virtue of Goodness

The Greek word for goodness is *agathosune*, and according to ***Strong’s Concordance*** means “goodness, i.e. virtue or beneficence.” ***Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*** tells us this word means “uprightness of heart and life, goodness, kindness.”

As for “virtue,” according to the ***Merriam-Webster Dictionary***, this word

refers to a conformity, to a standard of right, and to moral excellence. It also refers to strength or courage and to a commendable quality or trait.

I believe virtue here would refer to living according to good works that exemplify righteousness and moral excellence in the context of goodness. In short, it’s doing what is right and living a life that rightly reflects the morality and standards of Yahweh’s Word.

In some ways, goodness can be viewed differently from the other fruits we’ve looked at thus far. Previously we’ve looked at love, joy, peace, longsuffering, and gentleness—attributes that we show to our fellow man. While this is true for goodness, goodness is also something we do individually. Living a moral and virtuous life requires a sense of fidelity to our Heavenly Father apart from how we interact with one another.

Agathosune is found only four times in the New Testament, including Galatians 5. Let’s review the three other instances where this Greek word is found, the first being Romans 15:13-14.

“Now the Elohim of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit. And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.”

Romans was written by the Apostle Paul. In this passage we see him refer to several important attributes, a few of which have been mentioned throughout this series. For example, we find here joy and peace. As a reminder, joy is a sense of happiness we find through the Holy Spirit that is not conditional or based upon our current situation. If we’re going through some sort of trial or tribulation, we should still be able to have a sense of happiness in Yahweh.

This passage also refers to unity within the Messiah’s body and the peace of mind we find through Yahweh’s promises. Peace is somewhat related to joy and for a moment, notice where we find these two characteristics.

Paul says here that the Elohim of hope fills us with joy and peace. So we see that these attributes are from Yahweh through the Holy Spirit.

Paul closes by saying that we should also be full of goodness, i.e., virtue or righteousness. This virtue leads to knowledge and the ability to rightly admonish one another.

Now what does it mean “to admonish”? Strong’s defines this word as, “...to caution or reprove gently.” As we learned in the “gentleness” segment, when we reprove somebody, we should do so with kindness.

Source of Goodness

The second example of *agathosune* is found in Ephesians 5:2-13. “And walk in love, as Messiah also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to Yahweh for a sweet-smelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man,

who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Messiah and of Yahweh. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of Elohim upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in Yahweh: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto Yahweh. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprovèd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.”

Paul begins this passage by saying we should walk in love, as Messiah loved us. Yahshua gave His life as a ransom for our sins. During His ministry He said there wasn’t a greater love than to lay down one’s life for another.

As believers, do we have this same sense of love? If we want to be like Yahshua the Messiah, we must exemplify what it means to show love and concern for one another.

Paul also refers to specific sins within this passage. He mentions fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, and other works of the flesh. He says that some within that assembly



We know that goodness and righteousness come from Yahweh’s Word. In fact, without the Bible we would have no way of defining what is good or virtuous.

were in darkness, meaning that they were guilty of some of these sins, but now they are in the light of Yahweh, meaning that they are now walking in goodness and virtue.

We know that goodness and righteousness come from Yahweh’s Word. In fact, without the Bible we would have no way of defining what is good or virtuous.

Worthy of Our Calling

Let’s move on to the last example of *agathosune* in 2Thessalonians 1:11-12. “Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our Elohim would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: That the name of our Master Yahshua Messiah may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our El and the Master Yahshua Messiah.”

Here Paul encourages the Thessalonians that Elohim would count them worthy of this calling. The concept of being found worthy has mostly been lost today. Many would even define this as legalism or trying to earn our salvation. We know that we cannot justify ourselves or earn salvation; this comes only through Messiah’s blood and the washing of water through baptism. But once we’re justified or free from our sin, we must then live a life of goodness or virtue.

What happens if we refuse to live a life of goodness, a life that reflects the morality and righteousness of Yahweh’s Word? We’re going to miss the mark and not be found worthy of our calling.

You know, being found worthy implies that we must act or do something, living a life based on Yahweh’s goodness and virtue. When we do this, we also glorify Yahshua the Messiah.

Walking in Integrity

So by living a life of goodness, not only will we be found worthy of our calling, but we’ll also bring praise and honor to our Savior. And I would hope that we would desire to glorify the One who died for our sins.

Let’s view a few passages on integrity from the Old Testament,

beginning with Proverbs 10:9. “He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.” (KJV)

The *New International Version* translates it as, “The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out.”

From both the King James and the NIV we find that walking uprightly is the same as a man walking in integrity. The word “integrity” is essential. It conveys the ideas of honesty and reliability, both of which are important to believers. When we walk uprightly or in a way that shows integrity, our path will be sure.

This doesn’t promise health, wealth, and prosperity, but it does promise a direction that provides stability, if nothing else, of right morals and values. Even if we’re going through some trial or tribulation, it helps to know that the life we’re living and the decisions we’re making are based on Scripture. When we live according to Yahweh’s Word, there’s a sense of stability and strength within our lives.

In Isaiah 33:15-16, we find a promise of blessing for those who walk uprightly and in goodness. “He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.”

This passage gives a few examples on how to obtain this blessing: We don’t oppress others for personal gain, we refrain from taking bribes, we do no hurt to others, and we remove ourselves from seeing or participating in evil. When we do these things, Yahweh promises that we’re going to dwell on high and He’s going to provide for our needs.

While this passage is multi-layered, much is a prophetic promise pointing to His Kingdom. This is why it’s so important that we as believers live a life of goodness and virtue, that we practice what is right according to our Father’s Word. Many today believe that goodness

or virtue is either outdated or never really existed. Many will argue that virtue is subjective and that my virtue is as good as your virtue.

As believers in the Messiah, though, we know better. We know there is a one-core truth and that is Yahweh’s Word. As we read in Malachi 3:6, Yahweh doesn’t change: “For I am Yahweh, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

Lessons from Daniel

We must never deviate from or compromise Yahweh’s Word. When it comes to uncompromising, I often think about three illustrations in the Book of Daniel.

The first is when Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, refused to eat of the king’s meat (Dan. 1:8). Some believe the king’s meat was either unclean or possibly sacrificed to idols. I tend to think the latter was true, but either way we know that something wasn’t right about it.

Daniel convinced the prince of the eunuchs to feed them only vegetables and after 10 days to compare their health to the others. And as we know from the story, this was done and “at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king’s meat,” (v. 15).

There’s a lesson here for us: Sometimes we must take a stand – whether it’s with our job or even our families. Maybe it’s refusing to work on Sabbath or not attending our family’s Christmas dinner. Like Daniel, when we stand on Yahweh’s Word we’re going to be blessed. Daniel could’ve upset the king by refusing to eat his meat, but in the end he was blessed for standing on virtue.

The second instance is Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego’s conviction when they refused to worship the golden image (Dan. 3). As the account goes, when the people heard the music, they were to bow down and worship this golden image.

But, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to worship this

image, and so the King commanded they be thrown into a fiery furnace, which did not affect them. Yahweh not only protected them from the fire, but one like the son of Yahweh was in the furnace with them. This was likely Yahshua the Messiah in His preexistence. Yahweh divinely protected these three men for their devotion. They showed goodness and virtue in their faith.

In the last incident we see Daniel defying the king’s command and openly praying to Yahweh (Dan. 6:10). Daniel’s enemies convinced the king to enact a law prohibiting anyone from praying to their mighty one for 30 days.

They did this because they knew Daniel would not comply and as we know from the story, he continued to pray somewhat openly to Yahweh with his windows open. After word got to the king, Daniel was thrown into a den of lions, but Yahweh protected Daniel. Just as the fire did not affect Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the lions did not hurt Daniel.

For me, these cases show that Yahweh can do all things and when we choose to walk in virtue and integrity, we will be blessed.

Sometimes we lack the faith to walk in goodness or uprightness; we fear the consequences more than our Creator. But we should never fear doing what is right. Whether it means losing our job, upsetting our family, or even losing our lives, we should always seek to walk in goodness and do what is scripturally right.

Yahshua spoke about this in Matthew 5:15-16. “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.”

Yahshua encourages us not to hide our goodness, but to allow it to shine so that others can see and benefit from it.

When we are about our daily business, do we show ourselves to be different? One way we do this is by not cursing or using foul language. Recently one of my coworkers apologized to me

for swearing in front me. I said or did nothing to prompt that response; he knew from my behavior that I was not one to use that kind of language.

It's often not what we say but what we do that makes the real impact. Our behavior speaks far louder than anything we can ever say and that's why it's so essential we walk in goodness and virtue.

Others notice our behavior and the words we use. After all, we may be the only Bible some will ever read. In other

Not only will we live forever as spirit beings, but we'll also do so in a kingdom without sin and all the trappings of it.

Just as Paul does, I would encourage you to realize that no matter what you're going through or may go through, it's all worthwhile.

Paul also declares that we should do good to all men, especially to those in the household of faith or the assembly. According to *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*, the phrase "do good" implies to act in a way that is pleasant, agreeable,

the Messiah in all ways. While Yahshua obeyed the commandments, He also showed by example how to live the weightier matters; we must do the same. Second Peter 1:5-7 shows a progression that begins with faith and virtue. "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience holiness; And to holiness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."



words, the integrity that we show in our lives may be the only exposure to biblical truth that some will ever see. And that's why Yahshua says to let our lights shine and why we must live a life of goodness, virtue, and uprightness of heart.

Kingdom Focused

Paul also speaks about the importance and blessings of doing good. "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith," Galatians 6:9-10.

What do you suppose Paul's referring to when he comments, "we shall reap"? He's indicating the promise of Yahweh's Kingdom. The fact is, when we live a life based on the Word, we will often receive pushback and even experience trials and tribulations. Paul's telling us that even though we suffer, it's worth it; the journey is worth the destination.

I don't believe we can fathom the greatness of Yahweh's Kingdom.

joyful, and happy.

Are we acting in ways that others would define as pleasant and agreeable? Do we bring joy and happiness to those in the assembly? If the answer is yes, that's great, but we need to ask why and what we can do to improve and do better if the answer is no.

Goodness Begins the Journey

Ephesians 2:10 shows we have a special calling as believers in Messiah. "For we are his workmanship, created in Messiah Yahshua unto good works, which Yahweh hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

When we are immersed into Yahshua's name, we rise as a new creature with newness of mind. It's so important that after baptism we recognize we are a new person in Messiah.

When I counsel for baptism, I stress the idea that after baptism we're to think and behave differently. We can't live like we did before, our decisions and actions must be based solely on Yahweh's Word. This is what it means to walk unto good works. Our lives should reflect Yahshua

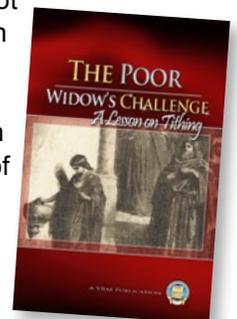
Another word for virtue is goodness, which also refers to being upright in heart. He goes on to say we should add knowledge to our virtue, temperance to our knowledge, patience to our temperance, holiness to our patience, brotherly kindness to our holiness, and charity or love to our brotherly kindness. Notice that this progression begins with virtue or goodness and ends with love.

Next issue: 'Faith' 🙏

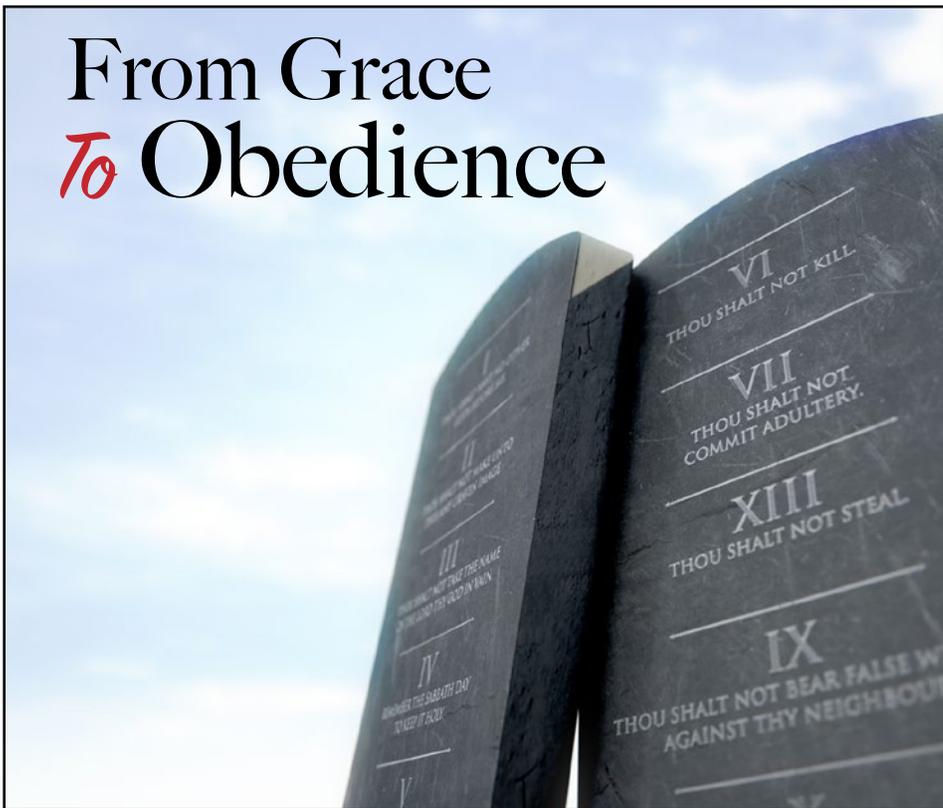
Blessings from the Heart

When Yahshua pointed out the poor widow's remarkable giving to support the temple, He made a statement about the true heart. One doesn't support what is not believed in. You can donate either online or by mail. See the contact information on the back cover of this issue.

Request the booklet, *The Poor Widow's Challenge*



From Grace To Obedience



“Guilty” was the jury’s verdict. The judge’s sentence: death by lethal injection. For Adam Sinclair Smith, a convicted murderer, the nightmare of that January day seven years ago had played endlessly through his mind. In a jealous rage he had taken a man’s life. He realized that he deserved the death penalty for what he had done. No amount of agonizing or remorse could change that.

Regardless of how many times he pleaded for forgiveness from the victim’s family, no matter how much he wished he could relive events, one persistent fact remained: Adam deserved to die. The law was the law. He was guilty of a capital crime and would pay the utmost price for his sin. With nowhere else to turn, he sought mercy from the governor.

‘You Have Been Pardoned’

Just minutes before his scheduled execution, Adam heard the most wonderful words ever spoken to a condemned man: “By the grace of the governor of this state, you have been pardoned.”

“I can’t believe it,” he said to himself.

“He pardoned me! I can live!” Humbly thankful for the gracious pardon, Adam vowed from that point on that he would be a model citizen. And he never was in trouble with the law again.

The foregoing illustrates the concept of scriptural grace and how it works in the believer’s life.

No person on earth is sin-free. Paraphrasing the words of Nathan the prophet to King David, “We are that man.” We all deserve to die for our sins, Romans 5:12; 1John 1:10. We earned our fate and nothing we can do can change that fact. Only the mercy of Yahweh and the sacrificial death of Yahshua can save us.

Being sinless, our Savior was the only one who could pay the death penalty in our stead. Yahweh’s grace in sending His Son to die for us is our only hope for salvation. Like the governor in Adam Smith’s case, only Yahweh and His Son can release us from the death sentence our sins earned.

In Romans 6 Paul explains the operation of Yahweh’s grace. The chapter is a profound study in the

transformation that takes place in a True Worshiper under Yahweh’s grace.

In the last verse of chapter 5 Paul writes, “That as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Yahshua the Messiah our Master.”

Few other concepts are as misunderstood as Yahweh’s grace. What does Paul mean in Ephesians 2:8 that we are saved by grace? Is he saying that the statutes of Yahweh are no longer binding in this New Testament era? If so, what of the many passages warning us of disobedience and the necessity to watch carefully lest we fall again into the condemnation of the unrighteous?

Now suppose the condemned man went right out and repeated the crime for which he was pardoned. Wouldn’t his actions violate the spirit of the pardon? Certainly! The governor didn’t save him by his grace so that he would go out and commit serious crimes all over again. Would not the courts and the governor deal with the man much more harshly the next time? Absolutely!

Yahweh’s grace is no different. What’s the point of Yahweh’s grace—His favor on sinful human beings—if once pardoned we deliberately return to sinful ways?

The words, “grace reigns through righteousness,” are key. The *New Testament in Modern English* translates the phrase, “Now grace is the ruling factor, with righteousness as its purpose and its end.” Grace is not static. It is active and it must work daily in the believer’s life.

Yahweh’s grace has an objective: that we will repent and turn from sin to live uprightly as we follow in Yahshua’s footsteps. Obedience is the mechanism allowing that to take place. That means to obey His laws, since sin is clearly defined as the transgression of the law, 1John 3:4.

Paul explains further in chapter 6 how grace works in the life of the repentant sinner. “What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? Yahweh forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (vv. 1-2)

To accept Yahweh’s grace—His

pardon for our sins—and then turn back or continue sinful ways as if nothing happened is to pervert the whole purpose of grace. We make Yahweh’s grace pointless if we accept His pardon only to repeat the sin.

Hebrews 10:26-27 warns of practicing intentional sin: “For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”

Further in the chapter we find this solemn warning: “Of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden underfoot the Son of Elohim, and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” (Heb. 10:29). The word “despite” means, “to insult.” If we continue in sin after receiving Yahweh’s grace, we show contempt for Yahweh.

Slipping up and making a mistake is one thing, willfully returning to sin is another entirely. In Galatians 6 Paul explains the difference.

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, you which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering yourself lest you be tempted.” “Overtaken” is the Greek *prolambano* and means, “to be taken off-guard in a trespass.” “Fault” is the word *paraptoma* and signifies a slip or lapse, rather than a deliberate act.

We have only this option: obey the law, which is righteousness, or don’t obey, which is sin. If we obey, we can’t be blamed.

The next part of the verse reads, “For you are not under the law but under grace.” How clear! Through Yahweh’s grace (His pardon) our former sins will not be held against us. The penalty for breaking the law has been paid by Yahshua’s sacrifice. By trusting in His grace, we will not need to pay the penalty ourselves, which the law demands.

The wages of sin is death, Paul wrote in Romans 6:23. In our case it is Yahshua’s death in exchange for our own. If we continue

in sin that has been pardoned, we make a mockery of His sacrifice.

The Upright Not Condemned

Does this passage mean that we are free from the law now and can go out and sin again, as some seem to say? The Greek word for grace is *charis* and is defined as the divine influence on the heart and its reflection in one’s life.

Simply put, under Yahweh’s grace we now emulate His righteous nature. We begin to think and act as He does. That means refraining from sin, which is the same as adhering to His standard, His laws.

When we come in line with His law by righteous living, the law with its incrimination and penalties for the disobedient has no claim on us. In Romans 8:1-2 Paul explains this concept:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Messiah Yahshua, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yahshua has made me free from the law of sin and death.”

The critical word is “condemnation,” which results from lawbreaking. When we live according to Yahweh’s statutes, we are innocent of sin and therefore free from condemnation and punishment.

An unintentional slipup is certainly covered by grace for the repentant. But if you continue to repeat the sin, you are mocking the spirit of grace and are subject to Yahweh’s wrath.

Paul continues in verses 3-12 of Romans 6, asking, how can we who have followed Yahshua into the waters of baptism and have buried our old carnal life, continue in our old ways? Particularly since baptism means a putting to death of the “old man.” We must become dead to sin, he tells us in verse 11.

A person who has yielded his life to Yahweh, having put to death his sinful nature, must now live a new life of obedience, Paul explains in verse 13. As he puts it, we become “instruments of righteousness.”

Righteousness derives from a Greek word meaning right or just. The opposite

is wrong or sin, which is lawbreaking.

Moving on in verse 14 Paul writes, “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law but under grace.” Does he mean that after all he has just said about giving up sin that we are no longer under any obligation to obey Yahweh’s law? How is that possible when the law itself defines what sin is? (“For where no law is, there is no transgression,” Rom. 4: 15.) Let’s examine the verse by segments.

First, for sin not to have dominion over us we have to be out from under it. The only way to accomplish that is by obedience to the law because sin by definition is lawbreaking.

As we have demonstrated, to be free of sin is to be obedient to His law. The same concept is found in Galatians 5: 16, where Paul writes, “Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.”

If grace means we are not under obligation to keep Yahweh’s laws, then grace gives the okay to sin! To this the prophet Jeremiah speaks for Yahweh in 7:9-10:

“Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other deities whom you know not; And come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My Name, and say, ‘We are delivered to do all these abominations’?” Yahweh answers that because of these sins and that kind of attitude, “I will cast you out of my sight,” verse 15.

“But does that mean that I am free to do anything I please under grace?” you may be asking. Let Paul answer that question. The very next verse of this chapter, Romans 6:15, reads,

“What then? shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? Yahweh forbid. Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey: whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?”

Under Yahweh’s grace we are expected to live obedient lives, giving honor and worship to Him alone as His special people.

(please turn to p. 19)

Q Matthew 5:19 says a person teaching to break the least of the commandments will be called least in the Kingdom. How can he be in the kingdom?

A The *Twentieth Century New Testament*, Moffat's version, and others render this verse as "among those in the Kingdom" rather than "in" the Kingdom. The preposition "in" (Greek *en*) has many different meanings in the Greek, and the KJV has clearly chosen the wrong meaning here. See footnote in the Restoration Study Bible.

Q Isaiah 1:13-14 says the new moons and Sabbaths are an abomination to Yahweh and He hates your new moons and appointed feasts. What about it?

A This passage is sometimes used in claiming that the Feasts are no longer necessary. If Isaiah is nullifying the Feasts and Sabbath, then he is violating Yahweh's very command to observe the Feasts and Sabbath as a statute "forever" (Lev. 23:14, 21, 31, 41). In addition, he would be contradicting what he himself wrote in the Book of Isaiah about the necessity of the new moons and Sabbath (Isa. 66:23, 56:4; 58:13), as well as observing Yahweh's ways and laws, which include His Feasts (Isa. 2:3).

For proper understanding, we need to know the reason Isaiah wrote the passage. The context is found in verse 2 of the chapter. Judah was in rebellion against Yahweh. Isaiah calls them a sinful nation, evildoers that have corrupted the way and forsaken Yahweh and gone backward, 1:4.

Then in verse 10 he issues a scathing denunciation of Judah's rulers, comparing them to those of Sodom and Gomorrah. He invokes the law of Yahweh, as he does 12

times in the book. The law included the proper Sabbath and Feasts of Yahweh.

So we see that Judah is apostatizing and in rebellion against the laws of Yahweh. Now in 1:13-14 Isaiah says that because their hearts aren't right and their sins have separated them from Yahweh, that even their worship is polluted. Notice in verse 14 he says "your" new moons and "your" appointed feasts My soul hates.

Their worship was so perverted that these were not even Yahweh's Feasts they were keeping, but their own. Yahweh says to repent of your sins, verse 16.

Q Why did Yahshua in His model prayer ask Yahweh not to lead us into temptation?

A The question is, would Almighty Yahweh actively and deliberately lead people to sin? This is another example of how the New Testament reflects its true,

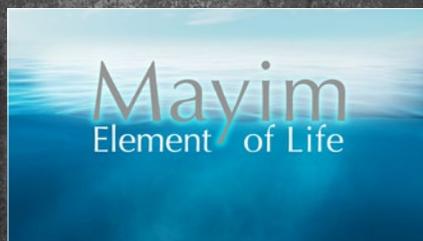
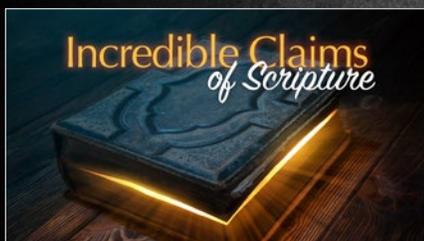
Hebraic roots. Matthew 6:13, which is where this verse is found (the other is Luke 11), is a Hebrew idiomatic expression not exactly clear when brought through the Greek. The verb expresses not the action but the permission to do something. In other words, the verse is Yahshua's request that Yahweh not allow us to be tempted.

The same idea is in Jeremiah 4:10. There the phrase, "You have greatly deceived this people" is an idiom meaning that Yahweh would allow the people to be deceived. Similarly, Yahweh did not harden Pharaoh's heart in Exodus 4:21, but through the Hebrew idiom we see that He allowed Pharaoh's heart to be hardened.

Yahweh does not tempt people to sin. James tells us, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of Elohim: for Elohim cannot be tempted with evil, neither does He tempt any man. But every man is tempted, when he is



Cutting-edge topics **LIVE** every Sabbath!



Watch on YRM Mobile, Facebook Live, yrm.org/live, or Youtube.
yrm.org/live-archives

drawn away of his own lust, and enticed” (1:13-14).

Our own hearts cause us to follow or deny the truth. Our own hearts lead us to sin because of what resides within us spiritually. This is what Yahweh tried repeatedly to impress upon ancient Israel as well as on us: “O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always...” Deuteronomy 5:29.

Q I have never felt right about going out to eat on the Sabbath with my church friends. Does the Bible allow doing such business on the Sabbath day?

A Notice what the nation of Judah vowed to do once they returned to True Worship of Yahweh under Nehemiah: “And if the people of the land bring ware or victuals [food] on the Sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the Sabbath, or on the holy day...” Nehemiah 10:31.

Later Nehemiah had to deal with some backsliders in Judah who broke Yahweh’s laws by conducting such business on the Sabbath:

“In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals [food]. ... Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, ‘What evil thing is this that you do, and profane the Sabbath day?’” (13:15, 17)

In the rest of the account we find that Nehemiah threatened the merchants with physical action if they came again to Jerusalem to sell to Judah on the Sabbath. So they came no more on the Sabbath.

Yahshua had to contend as well with the merchants who were buying and selling food in the Temple (Mark 11:15-16). Although this was probably not on the Sabbath, the desecration of what was considered a sanctified place is a direct parallel to defiling through worldly business the Sabbath day that is also sanctified.

We are also prohibited from doing our own pleasure on the Sabbath, which going to restaurants would violate as well, and force our culinary “servants” to work for us on Yahweh’s rest day.

Outreach Program’s Current Partners

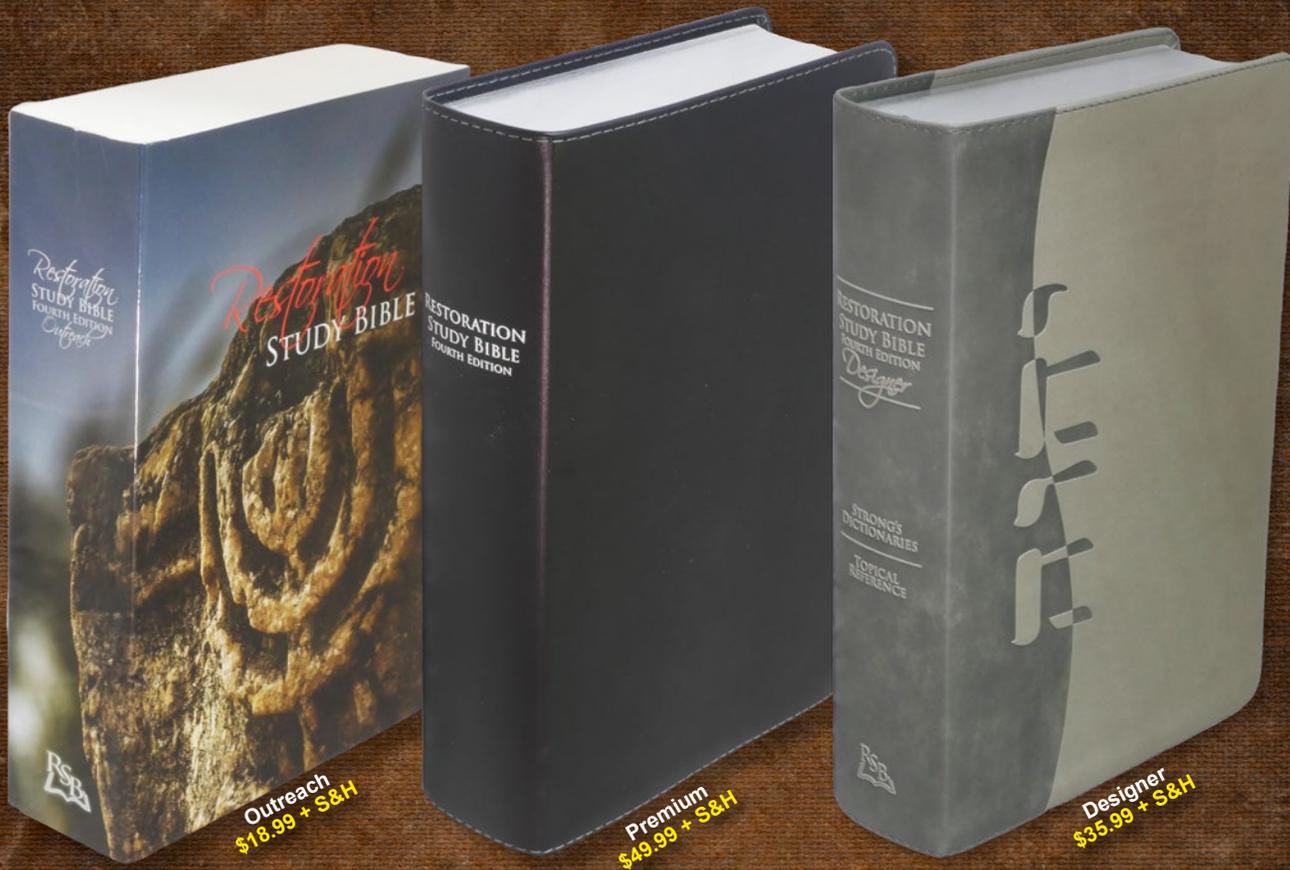
We recognize our outreach partners for their outstanding dedication to the Truth in their effort to fulfill the Great Commission. If you are interested in becoming an outreach partner to help us spread the Truth, visit: <http://www.yrm.org/outreach> or call us at (573) 896-1000 during normal office hours (M-F, 8:00 am- 4:00 pm.) We will explain how you can join this group committed to spreading the Good News!

Zipporah Mwangi
David Nesta
James Williams
Steve Twillegar
Michael Hubbard
Antonio Kimble
Ricardo Angolano
Judy Stern

Larry Godejohn
Robert Kountz
Michael & Meandy
Bishop
Linda Lowe
David Lynch
Barbara Creel



4th Edition



In addition to restoring the sacred names Yahweh and Yahshua, this unique Bible includes: in-depth book introductions, thousands of eye-opening study notes, cross references, instructional and archaeological charts, chronological timelines, and an extensive topical reference section. This unique Bible has Strong's numbering for all significant words in the text and Strong's Hebrew and Greek dictionaries at the back so you can confirm meanings yourself. It even has a family record section for recording important life events. It is three books in one – a real value.

Three cover choices: Outreach (Paperback), Designer (imitation leather), and Premium (cowhide); the contents are the same in each.

Ten-point main text (as in standard newspapers and magazines); footnotes are slightly smaller.

Thumb tab cutouts for quick-and-easy referencing (Designer and Premium)

* Ribbons for place-holding

Place your order at: yrmstore.org/shop or telephone 573-896-1000

(continued from p. 15)

When we sin we are unrighteous. This is shown in verse 20: "For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness."

What 'Under the Law' Means

The converse is just as true: to be righteous is to be free from sin. No one can be legally arrested for doing good. No sheriff will arrest me for saving a drowning man. There is no law against doing good.

When you do good, you are not under the condemnation of any law. The demands of the law are already met, therefore, and you have no debt to the law. This is what Paul means by not being under the law. It does not mean the law is no longer in effect.

A murderer would not be condemned to die if there were no law against murder. And he would not need a pardon or grace.

Yahweh offers His grace and sent Yahshua to die for our sins for the plain and simple fact that the law is still in effect. Because the law is in force, the penalty for breaking it is real, or else we would have no need to fear sin's consequences.

Some will argue that Yahshua came to do away with the law and thus we are under grace. This belief falls flat if we can find grace in the Old Testament. Sure enough, in Genesis 6:8 we find, "Noah

found grace in the eyes of Yahweh." Because of grace, Yahweh saved him from the penalty of death by drowning. Exodus 34:5-7 reads like something out of the Book of Galatians. It speaks of Yahweh's mercy, grace, longsuffering, and abundance in goodness and truth.

If grace existed in the days of ancient Israel, then why does Yahweh command Israel to keep the Ten Commandments? Why should it be any different with us?

We are under grace so long as we do not continue to break the law. Grace is not a permanent condition of the believer but a gift granted by Almighty Yahweh. That gift can be rejected through our rebellion and acts of disobedience.

"Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of Elohim; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled," Hebrews 12:15.

Salvation Cannot Be Earned

Being law observant has nothing to do with "earning" salvation. I don't get any special reward for paying my taxes on time, for keeping the peace, for not robbing my neighbor or mugging a stranger. I'm simply obeying laws. I'm not earning a thing by being law abiding.

Paul writes in the Book of Ephesians, "For by grace are you saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of Yahweh: Not of works, lest any man should boast," 2:8-9.

Nothing we humans can do earns us a place in the Kingdom because Yahweh has not defined obedience that way. Obedience simply engenders Yahweh's favor and demonstrates our faith in and love for Him. Obedience is the criteria by which He judges us worthy for the kingdom. We are judged by our works, Romans 2:6; Revelation 22:12.

Now if I fail to pay my taxes, if I rob a bank, disturb the peace or mug someone, I will come under the penalty of the law. Yahweh says in Galatians 5:19-21 that those who practice sin are also

lawbreakers. Unrepentant lawbreakers will not inherit the Kingdom.

Yahweh's people love and serve Him and want above all else to please Him. In several Scriptures we find that the love of Yahweh is defined as the keeping of His commandments. (See John 14:15, 21; 1John 2:5; 5:3; 2John 6.)

Only Yahweh can grant salvation and at His own pleasure. Therefore, we want to be sure we have His favor by being obedient to what He commands. "And being made perfect He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him," we read in Hebrews 5:9.

Lawkeeping is not salvation by works. Rather, it is salvation by obedience. Obedience can't guarantee me a position in the Kingdom, but disobedience will keep me out of it!

We complete our faith by following through with action. A faith that is sincere is proved by what we do about it. When we obey Yahweh's commandments and other laws in our daily life, we prove our faith in Him while pleasing Him at the same time.

Yahweh's grace is a wonderful gift. May we never forfeit that grace through willful disobedience. 

2021 Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread March 27-April 4

Join us at Holts Summit, Mo,
for a week of worship, learning,
fun, and fulfilling fellowship
with others of like faith!
Rooms and RV spots available
Register at:
yrm.org/passover-2021

Do you shop at Amazon.com?

You pay nothing to support YRM through your Amazon purchases. A percentage goes to the ministry. Start now, scan code to the right to sign up. (Free QR code scanners can be downloaded free from the app store.)



Simplify Your Hectic Life

You can now conveniently donate to Yahweh's Restoration Ministry by regular, automatic withdrawal from your bank account. Save time and effort. Go online and print and complete the Pre-Authorized Debit Authorization form and mail it to the postal address below. If you do not have Internet access, you can receive the form by calling (573) 896-1000. (US accounts only)
YRM | POB 463 | Holts Summit, MO 65043



YAHWEH'S
RESTORATION
Ministry

PO Box 463
Holts Summit, MO 65043
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Holts Summit, MO
Permit No. 463

PASSOVER

Feast of Unleavened Bread

Holts Summit, Missouri
March 27-April 4

Rooms and RV spots still available!

To register: yrm.org/passover-2021 or call: 573-896-1000

Here's how to request free literature offered in this magazine:

Online: www.yrm.org
E-mail: request@yrm.org
Phone: 1-573-896-1000

Read back issues online: yrm.org/restoration-times-archive

Mail: Yahweh's Restoration Ministry
PO Box 463
Holts Summit, MO 65043