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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.

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COVER:
Arches from a crusader-built castle at Caesarea Maritima, Israel

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Rapture

Don't Believe the Lie

by Randy Foliard

Have you ever been promised something you thought was too good to be true, only to find out that you were right? If so, you can probably relate to the pre-tribulation rapture teaching.

This popular doctrine states that the Messiah is going to return to secretly rapture the elect before the Great Tribulation. While this sounds terrific and a doctrine most any person would like to believe, the fact is, it's biblically unsupported.

Worse yet, it's dangerous! It gives the false hope of escaping the suffering of the Great Tribulation. Inevitably, this false hope will cause some to lose faith.

Many theologians trace this belief back to John Nelson Darby, a 19th century theologian. This Anglo-Irish Bible teacher lived between 1800 and 1882. He was influential among the original Plymouth Brethren. In addition to the rapture doctrine, he also fathered dispensationalism, an attempt to divide the Bible into dispensations or times. The rapture doctrine was later popularized by the *Scofield Reference Bible*, published in 1909.

In this article we will examine the evidence used by many to support this

doctrine. We will examine the context and when appropriate the original language behind the text.

Caught Up, but Where To?

The most often used passage to support the rapture notion is 1Thessalonians 4:16-17. "For the Master himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of Elohim: and the dead in Messiah shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Master in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Master."

Advocates of the rapture will make the case that Paul is describing a secret coming in which the Messiah will snatch away the elect to heaven. For them the key phrase is "caught up." This phrase comes from the Greek *harpazo*. *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* defines this word as, "(1) to seize, to carry off by force (2) to seize on, to claim for oneself eagerly and (3) to snatch out or to snatch away."

Does this Greek word and Paul's statement prove that our Savior is coming back in a secret rapture? The answer is no. What then is Paul describing?

First, *harpazo* simply implies that

Yahshua will raise the elect at His Coming; there's nothing here stating that they are going back with Him to heaven. And second, it should be clear from the description that this coming is anything but secret.

Paul writes that Yahshua's coming will be announced by a shout from an archangel and the trumpet of Elohim. Why would there be shouting and a blast of a trumpet if this is describing a secret rapture?

Why Rapture the Dead?

Another conundrum is that Yahshua will resurrect the dead first followed by the living. If the rapture is to remove the living from the trials of the tribulation, why worry about the dead? After all, in Ecclesiastes 9:5 Solomon said, "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing." If the dead are oblivious to the coming tribulation, why the need to rapture them from the grave?

Paul is not describing a secret rapture here, but the Second Coming of Yahshua the Messiah and the resurrection of the saints. The rapture supposedly occurs before the tribulation, while the Bible confirms that Yahshua's coming occurs immediately after the tribulation. The rapture states that those snatched away will be taken to heaven, but

the Bible says that the saints will dwell on the earth.

In fact, Revelation 5:10 specifically says that the saints will dwell on earth as a kingdom of priests. According to Revelation 20:6, this will occur during the Millennium: "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."

One Taken, One Left

Many will also point to Matthew 24:40-42 to support the rapture. "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Master doth come."

According to rapture theorists, the ones taken are taken to heaven in a secret snatching away. But where does Scripture support it?

Verses 36-39 of Matthew 24 paint a very different picture. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

The Messiah is comparing his Second Coming to the flood of Noah. Just as the people during the days of Noah were carrying on with their lives and ignoring the impending flood, we'll see the same disregard right before Yahshua's coming. We are witnessing many of these signs already. People today don't fear their coming Judge and because of that, immorality is growing at a rapid rate.

Those who were taken away in the days of Noah died in the flood. This is the same fate for those who are taken in this prophecy. Yahshua is not referring to the rapture in verse 40, but to the demise of those who defy Yahweh's Word.

It's amazing the truth we can glean when we simply read the Bible in context.

Take Heed and Watch!

Mark 13:32-37 is another attempt to prove the rapture. "But of that day and that hour

Roots of the Rapture in a Young Girl's Dream

"We have seen that a young Scottish lassie named Margaret Macdonald had a private revelation in Port Glasgow, Scotland, in the early part of 1830 that a select group of Christians would be caught up to meet Christ in the air before the days of Antichrist.

"An eye-and-ear witness, Robert Norton M.D., preserved her handwritten account of her pre-trib rapture revelation in two of his books, and said it was the first time anyone ever split the second coming into two distinct parts, or stages...

"Margaret's views were well-known to those who visited her home, among them John Darby of the Brethren. Within a few months her distinctive prophetic outlook was mirrored in the September, 1830, issue of *The Morning Watch* and the early Brethren assembly at Plymouth England. Early disciples of the pre-trib interpretation often called it a new doctrine.

"Nowhere do the Scriptures say that the Rapture will precede the Tribulation. There appears to be ample evidence that a Rapture at the end of the Tribulation is both Biblical and representative of the historic position of the church on this subject," *The Incredible Cover-Up*, p. 93.

knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

According to rapture advocates, this passage offers absolute and undeniable proof that Yahshua is going to come before the tribulation to snatch away the elect to safety. However, Yahshua only conveys here that we are to watch and that He will come

at a time not expected. Nothing here states that this will occur before the tribulation. Those who see otherwise are simply trying to fit a square peg into a round hole.

Yahshua's telling us to be alert and cognizant of Yahshua's coming. Referring back to what He said about the days of Noah; they were eating, drinking, and giving in marriage. They were spiritually dead and oblivious to the pending flood and destruction that it would soon bring.

If we're not watching and preparing spiritually, we too will suffer the same fate. We must be aware of what's happening in this world today. If not, we too may be in danger of losing our salvation without even knowing it.

To Where Was Enoch Translated?

Rapture teaching also refers to Enoch in Hebrews 11:5 as proof of a rapture. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found because Elohim had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased Elohim."

The word "translated" comes from the Greek *metatithemi* and means, "to transfer, i.e. to transport." Interestingly, this is the same word used in Acts 7:16 where it is stated that after Jacob's death he was "carried over into Sychem." The phrase "carried over" is also from *metatithemi* and refers to a place of death. Contrary to what many believe, Enoch did in fact die.

Evidence for Enoch's death is found in Hebrews 11:13. It confirms that everyone mentioned in this passage, including Enoch, died without seeing the kingdom promise: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Enoch died and was not taken to heaven. The word "all" comes from the Greek *pos* and according to Strong's refers to "all, any, every, or the whole." This would obviously include Enoch.

Returning Saints

Another passage often used to support the



rapture is Jude 1:14. “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, Yahweh cometh with ten thousands of his saints.”

Rapturists claim that the word “saints” here refers to the elect of mankind, thereby showing that the elect are raptured before the tribulation and will return with the Messiah at His Second Coming.

The word “saints” here is derived from the Greek *hagios*. Strong’s defines this word as, “sacred.” *Thayer’s Greek Lexicon* states, “a most holy thing.” While this word is used in reference to mankind, it’s also used in reference to angelic beings.

Consider the following examples: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy [*hagios*] angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory” (Matt. 25:31).

“Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy [*hagios*] angels” (Mark 8:38).

“And they said, Cornelius, the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth Elohim, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from Elohim by an holy [*hagios*] angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee” (Acts 10:22).

From these instances, we find that *hagios* is connected to angels. Remarkably, in Matthew 24:29-31 Yahshua confirms that He will return with His angels, not His elect:

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

Yahshua confirms here that He’s returning with the angels of heaven and that He will send them to the four corners of this earth to gather the elect. This passage shows the impossibility of the saints returning with Him when He returns.

Besides context, another key to good

Bible study is found in Isaiah 28:10: “For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.” The lesson here is that we must view the Bible holistically, meaning that we must consider all the evidence. When we do this for Jude 1:14, we see that the “saints” refers to angels and not to the elect of mankind.

To Keep You from Temptation

Another Scripture verse that’s often used in the rapture teaching is Revelation 3:10. “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”

Rapture proponents will point to the phrase, “I also will keep you from the hour of temptation,” as proof for this belief. While the Bible teaches that Yahweh will offer protection during the tribulation, it does not state that this will be done through a secret rapture. This passage promises only that the faithful will find protection and safety during the tribulation.

The question is, where will they find this safety? As we saw in the Book of Isaiah, questions like this require that we consider all the evidence. In Revelation 12:14-17 we see where the Bible promises protection:

“And to the woman 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. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of Yahweh, and have the testimony of Yahshua Messiah.”

There are several important points to note here. First, Yahweh says that the woman will be given two wings of an eagle that she might fly into the wilderness. The woman represents those believers who keep the commandments of Yahweh and hold to the faith of Yahshua the Messiah. See also Revelation 14:12.

The “wings of the eagle” represents Yahweh’s provision and protection. This is



THE ‘WILDERNESS’ DOESN’T REFER TO HEAVEN, BUT TO A PLACE OF SAFETY ON EARTH. THIS IS SIMILAR TO YAHWEH BRINGING ISRAEL OUT INTO THE WILDERNESS AND PROTECTING THEM. YAHWEH HAD NOAH BUILD AN ARK FOR SAFETY RIGHT ON THE EARTH.

also an example of the amazing continuity between the Old and New testaments. Exodus 19:4 describes Yahweh taking Israel into the wilderness with the phrase, “... and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself.” Just as Yahweh brought Israel into the wilderness through protecting and sustenance on “eagles’ wings,” He will do the same with the elect before the Great Tribulation.

The wilderness doesn’t refer to heaven, but to a place of safety on earth. Again, this is similar to Yahweh bringing Israel out into

the wilderness and protected them. He had Noah build an ark for safety right on the earth and compared the end times to Noah's situation. This passage also confirms that the elect will be taken into the wilderness for a time, times, and half a time. This symbolizes the three-and-a-half years of the Great Tribulation.

During this time He promises to "nourish" those in the wilderness. This word comes from the Greek *trepho* and means to feed or fatten. In Revelation 2:17, Yahshua promised "hidden manna" to those who overcame. As Yahweh brought Israel out into the wilderness and fed her with manna, He may do the same for those believers taken into the wilderness before the Great Tribulation. So while the Bible does not support the rapture, it does support protection for many on earth, even amidst tribulation.

Rapture Contradicts the Bible

A parable that many rapture enthusiasts ignore is Yahshua's allegory of the tares, depicting His Second Coming. A careful reading of this parable shows the nonsensical reasoning of this heretical belief.

It reads, "Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn," Matthew 13:24-30.

The sower of good seed symbolizes Yahshua. The field represents the world. The good seed signifies believers in the Messiah. The bad seeds are the children of the wicked one or the rebellious. The enemy represents the devil. And the reapers symbolize the angels of heaven.

This parable shows that the angels will first gather the wicked and consume them

just the opposite of what will happen.

Another contradiction between the rapture and the Bible is that the rapture is designed to remove the righteous from tribulation, while the Bible shows that many of them will suffer tribulation before Yahshua's coming.

Revelation provides several examples of martyrdom during this time, debunking the rapture theory:

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of Elohim, and for the testimony which they held," Revelation 6:9. This fifth seal of Revelation confirms that many will die as martyrs in the tribulation.

"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations," Revelation 13:7. This passage verifies that the Man of Sin will make war and overcome saints on earth.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Yahshua, and for the word of Yahweh, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Messiah a thousand years," Revelation 20:4. As with the previous examples, this verse attests that some of the elect will die as a testimony to their faith during the tribulation. In this case, they will suffer beheading by the

Man of Sin.

In all of these examples we find absolute proof that some believers will be persecuted throughout the tribulation. Some will even die as martyrs to the faith.

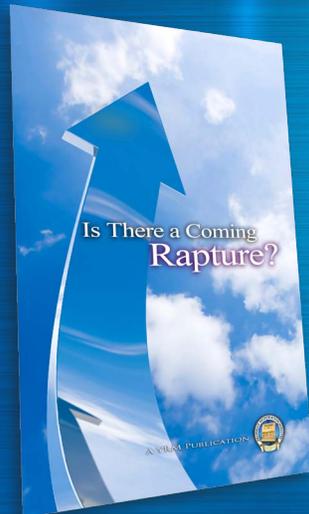
We see another example of this type of suffering from the Olivet Prophecy, "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake," Matthew 24:9.

The Olivet Prophecy provides several key prophecies that will occur during the tribulation. Yahshua confirms here that many will be hated, hunted, and killed for their faith. This fact along with the many others that we have reviewed contradicts the notion of the rapture.

Believers must follow the example of the noble Bereans and prove their beliefs from Scripture. As is evident, the rapture doctrine is irreconcilable with the Bible. The rapture promises a secret snatching away with a promise of escaping all tribulation, while Scripture shows the reverse, that many will suffer and even die for their faith.

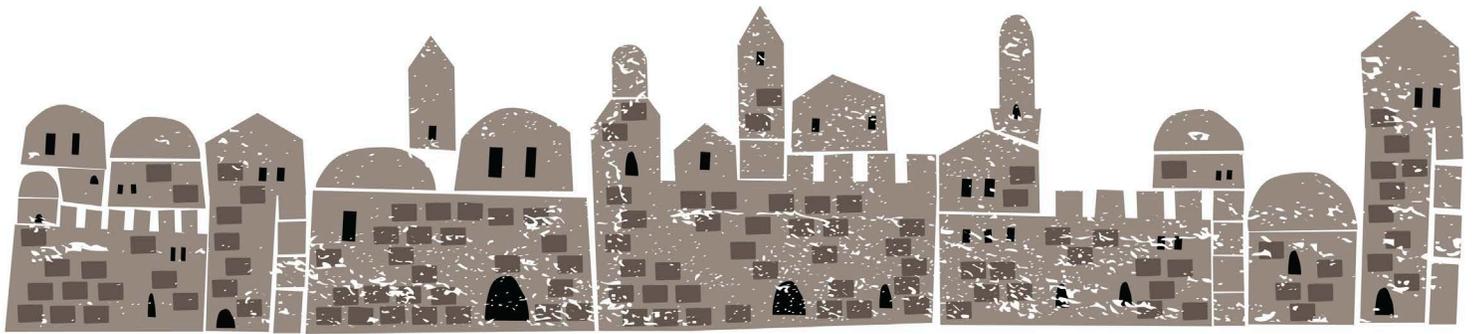
Those who are found worthy will serve as priests in Yahweh's Kingdom and will experience unimaginable happiness and security. As Paul states in 1Corinthians 2:9, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which Elohim hath prepared for them that love him."

Whatever we suffer, we can take comfort in knowing that the journey is worth the destination. 



If you were to invent the easiest and most popular religion in the world, you would probably do the following: You would tell your followers that their only obligation is to believe. You would teach them that there is no need to conform to any commands, because that would be bondage. And that they will escape prophesied tribulation. Read: *Is There a Coming Rapture?*

Read and request online:
yrm.org/is-there-a-coming-rapture



Forgotten Foundations of the Faith

by Alan Mansager

Western society is often described as “Judeo-Christian.” This mind-opening term shows Judaism and Christianity linked at the hip. What is it that fuses these two great religious movements and how does that affect New Testament worship? The answer is an epiphany that changes everything.

We start with a pastoral worship scene: It’s the seventh day of the week. An ordinarily dressed and unassuming individual stands at the seashore, speaking and gesturing to a growing group of curious gatherers. A gust of wind brings essence of fish and seaweed.

Waves splash rhythmically as the teacher, now just offshore in a weathered fishing boat, offers the crowd an impromptu parable about a sower scattering seed over a field of rocks, weeds, and fertile ground. His message is clear and simple as He warns against wicked and adulterous generations and more.

Quoting liberally from the Old Testament Scriptures and their prophecies, He explains that He has come not to bring peace to this world but to separate those who follow truth from those who choose darkness.

His listeners are struck by His riveting persuasiveness, unlike the stale banality of insipid messages. Some are moved to repent of their ways. Others are offended by His discourse and would love to push Him overboard. Sensing their hostility, He breaks away, only to be tracked by those eager to learn more.

A Modern Contrast

Our scene switches to a modern worship setting. It’s morning on the first day of the week. A stoic cleric wearing a long, white robe with chevrons on his sleeves and sporting a large medallion necklace, enters an ornate sanctuary and climbs ceremoniously to the top of an oak podium carved with fish symbols and crosses. Behind him on a golden altar two tiers of candles burn brightly. A red-robed choir awaits their cue to perform a perfectly orchestrated chorus to the rich sounds of J.S. Bach from a large pipe organ.

In a stained-glass voice the cleric talks of being one in the family of humanity and the need to accept the great diversity of religious beliefs in the interest of love, unity, and climate change.

His 20-minute message closes with a single “Pauline” verse. The congregation prepares to exit to a crescendo of more organ music. The preacher issues a farewell benediction to his parting flock, many of whom plan to make a quick slip out the door to spend the rest of the day out dining, pursuing entertainment, or mowing the lawn, satisfied that their religious obligation has been met for another week.

Primed for Error

These two modes of worship are clearly out of sync with each other. The first is spontaneous and alive, relevant, and life-changing. The other is routine, plastic, sleep-inducing, and—most of all—filled with centuries of fossilized fallacies and

customary platitudes.

Could they be transported back 2,000 years to stand on the seashore and hear the Savior Yahshua teach, most churchgoers today would be too uncomfortable to linger long. It just wouldn’t seem like church, so how could what He was saying hold water?

Our culture is so locked into hardened tradition that any practice or teaching different from what many have grown up with is rejected out of hand. Unless it fits a preconceived idea, it can’t possibly be right.

Centuries-old legacies handed down through the mainstream have put today’s worshiper in a spiritual straitjacket. For fear of what they might discover, most are unwilling to take their Bibles out of their closets, blow off the dust, and confirm for themselves what they are being told. It takes a special individual to do that, a strong, independent thinker, like those Yahweh prefers to call.

Most either lack the motivation to investigate the truth, are apprehensive of what they may discover, or just don’t want to bother with anything unfamiliar. They are happy with the superficial, and are afraid to look below the surface for fear of what they may find and for what it may require. It is the unique person who has the inquiring mind to “prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” These were the Bereans, who were called noble for checking the Scriptures for themselves (1Thes. 5:21, Acts 17:11).

Those unafraid of the Word soon discover a big difference between what

centuries of church custom teach and what Scriptures really say. The contrast is striking.

Facing Fundamental Facts

Let's discover how tradition has twisted and covered up the truth, and how historical ignorance has created an alternative faith that has ruled the world for 2,000 years. It can be as simple as how many churchgoers today know that the Savior was a Hebrew, a Jew? That in itself opens up many connections and obliterates falsehoods as well.

How many in the Roman church realize that their supposed "first pope," the Apostle Simon (Heb. *Shimown*) Peter, was a Jew? How many see the imprint of the Israelites' religion on their own worship, but disregard these historical connections that would change their worship?

Few realize that the Messiah Yahshua based His teachings on the Old Testament, which by the way was the ONLY Scriptures in existence in His day. How many churchgoers stop to think that most all of the disciples were Hebrews and understand the profound impact that truth had on the early New Testament faith? It's a well-guarded and disregarded secret; hidden in plain sight is that the world's largest religion is Hebrew-based. A few eye-opening studies with your Bible will quickly reorient your thinking.

The fact that Christianity sprang from Old Testament Israelite worship is an epiphany for most churchgoers, who have been told that the Old Testament has little to do with their faith.

Another eye-opener is that believers were first called Christians at Antioch, a pagan Greek city in Turkey, Acts 11:26. That was at least 10 years after Yahshua was gone from the earth. Therefore, Yahshua and His followers were never called "Christians" when they walked the land of Judea.

In actuality the term itself is off-base. The name "Christian" is from the Greek *chrío* meaning anointed, akin to the Hebrew word Messiah. The term should be at least Hebrew-based, as something like "Messiah-ian." In Scripture they were designated simply as people of the way.

Old Testament Links

Churchianity's Old Testament connections cry out everywhere in today's church worship and teaching. This big elephant in the room is conveniently suppressed, however, as the church sought separation

from its Israelite ancestry early on.

Having Israelite roots explains why churches have "altars," as did ancient Israel. It is the reason today's church worship continues to take up "offerings," just as Israel brought their sacrificial offerings before Yahweh at the Temple. Because it grew out of Judaism, churchianity still gives lip service to keeping one day of the week "holy," as Judah and Israel did the true Sabbath.

In obvious reflection of its roots, the weekly Communion service replicates the Old Testament's annual Passover, with its later symbols of the body and blood. Easter



THE OLD TESTAMENT CONSTITUTES 80 PERCENT OF THE BIBLE DIRECTLY OR IN SHARED QUOTATIONS AND REFERENCES IN THE NEW. HOW CAN WE IGNORE 80 PERCENT OF A BOOK AND CLAIM TO UNDERSTAND IT?

is a clear corruption of the Passover (see Acts 12:4, where "Easter" in the KJV is a mistranslation of the Greek *Pascha* or Passover and the only place Easter is found). Today's churches even acknowledge Pentecost, one of the seven Old Testament Feasts. Why then do they ignore the six others?

Most churches have "sanctuaries," or holy places. Biblically, a "church" is not a building but the congregation within, the assembly of worshippers. How can churchgoers speak of their building as "the

church" and in the next breath say, "The church teaches..."? (Oh, if these walls could talk...?!)

Others, like the Roman church, see the church building itself as holy. This is a throwback to the Jerusalem temple and the Holy of Holies where Yahweh dwelled in the Tabernacle of Israel and where no one dared enter but the high priest on the Day of Atonement, another ignored biblical holy day.

Singing hymns in today's church is directly tied to the Old Testament Psalms, which King David set to music, as well as the songs Israel sang when they came out of Egypt.

Other terms like "elder," "teacher," "pastor," "prophet," and "shepherd" were first used in the Old Testament worship. Many other terms used in the modern worship service have been hijacked from Old Testament worship, like "amen," "halleluyah," "Messiah," "pulpit," "sanctuary" (sanctuary appears 133 times in the Old Testament, only four times in the new – all four in the Book of Hebrews, no less).

Rejecting the Roots of Truth

Regardless of these and many more similarities in practice and doctrine, to advocate seriously investigating the Old Testament as the foundation of biblical truth would get one quickly ushered out the door of most places of worship today that claim to be "New Testament only" believers.

Through centuries of conditioning, the average Bible believer today has been fed the erroneous notion that the Old Testament, its system of worship, its laws, and its people are superfluous; that the 39 books that come first in the Bible have nothing to do with modern worship. In fact, they are the very foundation of the New Testament and its worship.

Churchianity has been indoctrinated for centuries with the idea that anything occurring before the Book of Matthew has no significance for True Worship today.

It's the same conditioning that would make many churchgoers uncomfortable worshipping at a seashore rather than in padded pews, drenched in stained glass light amid crosses, candles and other icons – none of which existed during Yahshua's ministry.

Never mind that the New Testament

Apostles and the Savior Himself quoted from, referred to, and based their teachings on the Old Testament Scriptures. No other Scriptures existed.

In Deuteronomy 4:2 and Revelation 22:18-19 is the command at both ends of the Bible not to add to or take away from Scripture. Violating this one command led to the multitude of false teachings and worship that has occurred for 2,000 years.

- It is why the Old Testament has been virtually abandoned and shredded of its commanded worship that Yahweh gave to His people, Israel.

- It is why the church has abandoned Bible truth in deference to man-made teachings.

- It is why 21 church councils were called to reinvent doctrine that was already clear from the Scriptures or to add to the Scriptures.

Foundation Abandoned

Suppose you were asked to act in a two-part drama. How strange it would be if you were told to skip Part One and begin with Part Two.

Without an understanding that the New Testament Assembly has Hebraic roots, that “Christianity” grew out of Judaism, that the promise was given only to Israel (but non-Israel can be grafted into it)—without these anchors to stabilize it, nominal worship has found itself adrift, blown about by every teaching and is subject to all sorts of doctrinal aberrations.

If they had just stuck with the Scriptures, anchored in the Old Testament, and not relied on man-made church councils for their beliefs, today’s worshippers would be aligned with the teachings of Yahshua.

Without a foundation established on adherence to and teaching of Yahweh’s law embodied in the Ten Commandments, the modern church has so diluted biblical standards that it is powerless to confront today’s lawless, sin-filled world. The religious establishment has effectively tied its own hands and is guilty of heretical malpractice.

For the church to condemn society’s murders, stealing, lying, adultery, and other rampant sins is hypocritical when the church itself teaches that biblical laws against such, like the Ten Commandments, are no longer necessary.

In Romans 11 we read a portion of a letter by the champion of nominal worship.

Paul is often quoted in his Book of Galatians as advocating a new, “law-less” worship.

Paul Completes, Not Cuts, the Link

But notice what he says about the roots of his ministry:

“For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be COME IN. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away unrighteousness from Jacob” (Rom. 11:25-26).

He calls it a “mystery,” *musterion* in the Greek. It refers to knowledge not normally apprehended but made known only when and how Yahweh chooses. That hidden truth rested in the duration of Israel’s blindness. To bring it to light He sent a deliverer from Zion, not from Athens or Rome.

Paul doesn’t say that Yahweh has a different plan for the church, which would replace that given to Israel. He says Yahweh has opened an avenue for Gentiles to come into the basic covenant promise established with Israel. Today’s covenant (New Testament) is founded on the first covenant made with Israel, with some transformations from Yahshua.

Ignorant of this foundational connection, many think all churchgoers are going to their heavenly reward regardless of the lives they live or the beliefs they hold. They are just getting there by different routes. Not so. Salvation’s qualifications of righteousness remain the same today as with Israel. Yahweh changes not, Malachi 3:6.

The Kingdom is for only those grafted into the same covenant promise given to Israel. Those who are of Israel. That is the substance of what Paul was writing in Romans 9:4: “Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of Elohim, and the promises.”

To Israel is the promise of salvation: “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away wickedness from Jacob,” Romans 11:26.

Old Testament Challenges

But why has the Old Testament not been accepted as the basis for proper worship today?

Let’s look at a few practical reasons before we investigate the underlying doctrinal ones.

First, is its sheer size. The Old Testament makes up two-thirds of the Bible. As our society becomes increasingly nonreading and the present generation passes, the Old Testament with its lengthy detail will become increasingly mysterious to the masses.

Hundreds of difficult place names and characters are in the Old Testament. That includes long genealogical listings as well as chapter after chapter of chronology encompassing thousands of years. These make for rather dull reading for many.

The time the Old Testament was written is remote, as it deals with a people of a different culture. Besides this, sociologists tell us that we in the West have a Greco-Roman world view, while the Old Testament is couched in Near Eastern thinking with many unfamiliar metaphors and Hebrew idioms. This difference has impeded a correct grasp of the Old Testament from the beginning.

Another barrier some have to reading the Old Testament is its many wars, its violence, slavery, and difficult conditions that Israel had to face. Yahweh was establishing a people for Himself in an incorrigible world filled with sin (just like today), and that called for some drastic measures on occasion. All of which makes for some uncomfortable reading for those who cannot grasp the concept of necessary and appropriate punishment.

Differences Emphasized

But by far the big reason that the Old Testament is not considered essential is a doctrinal one. Through centuries of church teaching many have been preconditioned to reject the Old or original testament.

For millennia the teachings about Old and New testaments have stressed differences rather than similarities.

Contrast and contradiction were played up, while relatedness and similarities were downplayed. As the church became more Grecianized and infused with Greco-Roman thinking, the Old Testament was increasingly seen as a book just for Jews.

Reflected in that attitude were anti-Semitic undertones born of Gnosticism, which brought its own reaction from the Jews, who looked on Gentiles with similar disdain. This furthered the gap between Old

and New, making the Old Testament the Bible for the Jews and the New Testament the Scriptures for Christians.

Instead of seeing a harmony in the covenants, the Old is seen as a book of wrath, while the New is a book of grace. The Old is a book of Law, the New a “Gospel” of peace and love.

What the True Worshiper must ask himself, however, is what are the attitudes of Yahshua and the others in the New Testament toward the Old Testament? This is the only proper way to understand the relationship correctly.

Yahshua the Living Model of Obedience

The Savior said in Matthew 5, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill” (Matt. 5:17). The word fulfill (Greek *pleroo*) means to cause to abound, render perfect, to carry out His Father’s laws. He brought the statutes to their proper realization through Himself as the living model of them. He came to show how to become the complete and righteous individual.

We fulfill the law under the New Covenant the same way. Paul tells us in Romans 8:4:

“That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

Yahshua maintained that He did not come to destroy the law or prophets established in the Old Testament, and then in the rest of Matthew chapter 5 He goes on to show how the Ten Commandments are to be observed in various applications and circumstances today!

Through His many teachings He revealed the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in their keeping the letter of the law while completely missing the point of obedience. Obviously people were thinking even back then that He came to abolish Old Testament law. He said don’t think that! If you do you aren’t getting the gist of what I am saying. You are missing the heart and soul of my message.

Yahshua said to look deeper into the reason for your law-keeping. Have the right motives for your obedience, but don’t put your own righteousness on display as the Pharisees do.

Notice what Yahshua said in the last part of John 10:35: “If he called them *elohim*, unto whom the word of Yahweh

came, and the Scripture cannot be broken.”

The phrase, “the Scriptures cannot be broken” in the Greek means loosened or undone. Those who claim the Old Testament is out of date need to realize that there are over 1,600 quotations, references, and allusions linking the Old with the New. The relationship between Old and New Testaments is complex and highly interwoven — which is minimized in the way today’s Bibles are divided into two very distinct sections.

Without the Old Testament, the New would be virtually impossible to understand correctly.

The original Testament explains:

- Creation;
- The fall of humanity and our need of a Redeemer;
- The concept of grace in the way Yahweh dealt with a sinful Israel;
- The concept of love Yahweh showed Israel;
- What the covenant is;
- What the law is and why it is necessary;
- The priesthood, of which our Savior is chief;
- Yahshua’s Messiahship and personal sacrifice.



The modern church has so diluted biblical standards that it is powerless to confront today’s lawless, sin-filled world.

The Old Testament constitutes nearly 80 percent of the Bible directly or in shared quotations and references in the New. How can we ignore 80 percent of a book and claim to understand it?

It’s time churches stopped looking at

the Old Testament as optional reading and began to see it as essential to their entire understanding of the Word of Yahweh!

If they would they’d discover just how far off the mark Christianity has been for the past 2,000 years.

In 2Timothy 3:16 we learn that the Old Testament is inspired, which means breathed by Yahweh. (Latin: inspire = in-into + spirare, to breathe). The Scriptures are literally spoken by Yahweh, “Yahweh breathed.”

“All scripture is given by inspiration of Yahweh, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” Yahweh spoke the words of His book through the Holy Spirit, which served as a conduit to pass them on to the inspired writers of the Bible.

From Hebrew Heritage

When you read Mark Twain you need some understanding of the times in which he wrote to fully grasp his works. Try to read Shakespeare or Chaucer only in the context of today’s culture and you’ll miss much of the significance of what is written.

Even more fundamental, however, is the simple fact that we cannot comprehend the New Testament if we sever it from its Hebrew roots. You can’t read it through Greek or Latin eyes and claim a complete and true understanding.

From the start in Matthew 1 Yahshua’s human side is presented through the line of David. Whose way of life was He following? Which days did He observe? Which foods did He eat? Which commandments did He follow? The same ones Yahweh gave in the Old Testament.

Yahshua grew up among Jews and followed Hebrew and Jewish custom, practice, and law.

He did not attack the Pharisees and Scribes for their obedience to Old Testament statutes and laws, but for their hypocrisy. He told the people to follow what the Scribes and Pharisees said, but not do what the Pharisees and Scribes did.

“The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not after their works: for they say, and do not” (Matt. 23:2-3).

As they sat in Moses’ seat, they had the authority of Moses to teach the law of Moses. They had access to Old Testament teachings, and Yahshua is clearly telling the



multitude and His disciples to observe what they are told to observe in keeping with Old Testament legislation.

Far from disclaiming the law of the Old Testament, Yahshua the Messiah upheld the keeping of those precepts as showing love for Him and His Father Yahweh. He tells us in John 14:15, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Naturally it would be the same for us as it was for Him and His followers under the New Covenant.

He adds later that disobedience to what is set forth in the Old Testament is showing dislike for Him and His Father: "He that loves me not keeps not my sayings: and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (John 14:24).

The Old and New testaments are two divisions of a single book. The Old explains the New and the New completes the Old through the fulfillment of certain things by our Savior.

The Bible does not support two systems of worship. There is only one

truth: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; One Master, one faith, one baptism," Ephesians 4:4-5.

Both Judaism and Christianity have made themselves mutually exclusive, and because of that both suffer from fundamental faults. Both need to come together and fix the chasm that comes with rejecting the Messiah on the one hand and rejecting Yahweh's laws on the other.

A Parable Speaks

Yahshua said in the Luke 16 parable of Lazarus that if you do not believe and will not keep the precepts found in the Old Testament, you do not really know me. It's as simple as that.

This parable is not about hell fire but about the fact that the gentiles (symbolized by Lazarus) were faithful servants rewarded for their faithfulness to the truth. The rich man represents Judah in royal garb and with many riches, who kept the promises

to themselves.

The striking message of this parable comes to us in the last comment Yahshua makes about it. The rich man wanted Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brothers so they would repent and not be lost. But Yahshua said, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

If churchianity will not hear and heed the teachings of the Old Testament as given by Moses and the prophets, they cannot be persuaded (much less truly repent) if one came to them (like Yahshua) from the dead. First they must have a heart wanting to obey.

The missing link that nominal worship lacks and therefore wanders around in darkness from is the one that connects today's worshiper to his Old Testament roots. If we understand and follow the precepts of the first covenant, the second covenant with the law in our hearts (Hebrews 8) will be fulfilled and completed. 



Muḥammad al-Mahdī and the Man of Sin

by Randy Folliard

In Shiite tradition, Muḥammad al-Mahdī is the 12th and final Imam before the return of the prophet Muhammad. As stated in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “Muḥammad ibn Al-Ḥasan al-Mahdī known as Imām Zamān is believed by Muslims to be the Mahdī, an eschatological redeemer of Islam and ultimate savior of humankind and the final Imām of the Twelve Imams who will emerge with Isa [Yahshua Messiah] in order to fulfill their mission of bringing peace and justice to the world.

“Twelver Shī‘ites believe that al-Mahdī was born in 869 (15 Sha‘bān 255 AH) and assumed Imamate at 5 years of age following the killing of his father Hasan al-Askari. In the early years of his Imamate, he is believed to have had only contact with his followers through The Four Deputies. After a 69-year period, known as Minor Occultation, a few days before the death of his fourth deputy Abul Hasan Ali ibn Muhammad al-Samarri in 941, he is believed to have sent his followers a letter. In that letter that was transmitted by al-Samarri he declared the beginning of Major Occultation during which Mahdi is not in contact with his followers.”

We learn that the tradition of Muḥammad al-Mahdī or this 12th and final Imam is largely held by Shiite Muslims. Within Islam there are two main sects – Shiites and Sunnis. The Shiites represent about 15 percent of all Muslims, while the

Sunnis make up 85 percent. Shiites and Sunnis both believe in the same Quran and the prophet Muhammad. However, they differ in one point and that is who is qualified to serve as the Imam or leader of the Islamic world.

Shiites believe that the Imam must be from the family of Muhammad, while Sunnis believe any Muslim can serve in this role. Because of this there are also certain writings and traditions that are unique to Shiites and Sunnis.

One tradition is the concept of Muḥammad al-Mahdī. What’s fascinating about this apocalyptic figure is how closely he parallels the Anti-messiah or Man of Sin. Many of the prophecies in Shiite Islam are very similar to what the Bible says about the Anti-messiah; seven of those parallels will be presented.

- **Denial of the Son**

The first similarity between Muḥammad al-Mahdī and the Man of Sin is the rejection of Yahshua the Messiah as the Son of Yahweh. Before considering Islamic tradition, let’s first review what the Bible says. “Who is a liar but he that denieth that Yahshua is the Messiah? He is antimessiah, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also,” 1John 2:22.

Denial of Yahshua the Messiah equates to the Antimessiah. This prophecy can be

viewed two ways, (1) as an overall denial of Yahshua the Messiah and (2) as an actual prophecy referring to the Man of Sin. We also see that those who deny the Son also deny the Father.

Over the years I’ve seen numerous people reject Yahshua the Messiah and convert to Judaism. It’s important that we as believers recognize the absolute need for believing that Yahshua is the Messiah and Son of Yahweh.

Based on Revelation 14:12, a saint is defined as one who keeps the commandments and has faith in Yahshua the Messiah. If we forgo obeying the commandments or believing in the Messiah, we disqualify ourselves as a believer in the New Testament. This is why this first similarity is so important; without Yahshua, we have no Messiah, no Savior, and no redemption from our sins.

The information presented here regarding the 12th Imam comes from author Walid Shoebat in his book, *God’s War on Terror*. Shoebat was born to an Islamic father and a Christian mother and was raised in Bethlehem. As a young man he was a staunch believer in Islam and was also part of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

Like his father, he married a Christian woman who later challenged him to examine Christianity. He finally did so and in 1993 converted from Islam to Christianity. Since then, he’s devoted much time to the study

of biblical prophecy from a Middle-Eastern standpoint.

Shoebat notes that while Islam accepts the Messiah as a prophet, they deny His Sonship of the Father. “Doctrinally, Islam and the Antichrist are in perfect agreement because both deny...the Divine Sonship of Christ...Regarding those who do not convert to Islam, the Qur’an states that [Yahshua] will be a witness against them on the Day of Judgment:

“There is not one of the people of Scripture (Christians and Jews) but will believe in him before his death, and on the Day of Resurrection he will be a witness against them” (Qur’an 4:159).

Muslim scholars explain that the phrase “will believe in him before his death” means that Christians and Jews will “confirm that he is alive and has not died and he is not G-d or the Son of God but His [Allah’s] slave and Messenger, and Isa [Yahshua] will testify against those who had called him the Son of God” (*God’s War on Terror*, p. 59).

According to Islam and the Quran, Yahshua never died and He was not the son of Yahweh. Worse yet, Islam teaches that when Mohammad returns, Yahshua too will return to confirm that He was not the Son of Yahweh.

• **Point of Origin**

Another parallel between the Man of Sin and Muḥammad al-Mahdī is their place of origin. According to Islamic tradition, the 12th Imam will come from the ancient territory of the Ottoman Empire. Bible prophecy indicates that the Man of Sin may also come from this same location. We see this in Daniel 8:21.

“And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up,” Daniel 8:21-23.

This king of Grecia represents Alexander the Great, while the four horns symbolize his four generals who inherited his kingdom after his untimely death. The last king mentioned represents the Man of Sin or the Antimesiah. This prophecy shows that this man will arise from Alexander’s kingdom. Interestingly,

Alexander’s kingdom did not include Rome or northern Europe. Based on this, it’s unlikely that the Man of Sin will arise from these areas.

The Book of Revelation provides further evidence that this man may actually come from the Middle East and possibly from the old Ottoman Empire. The first clue is found in Revelation 13:1-3,

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.”

This Beast of Revelation, symbolizing the Anti-messiah or Man of Sin, has seven heads and ten horns, and one of those heads will suffer from some sort of injury. Some believe this refers to an actual injury, although it could be more symbolic.

Revelation 17:9-11 affirms that these seven heads represent seven empires or kingdoms. “And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.”

Seven mountains symbolize the seven heads. Many claim these seven mountains are seven physical mountains in Rome.

Based on the evidence, though, it’s more likely that these mountains represent kingdoms or nations. For example, Micah 4, a prophetic passage referring to the Millennium, states, “...that the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established in the top of the mountains.” Yahweh’s Kingdom will be over all other kingdoms or nations when He returns.

Rome’s Two Capitals

Revelation 17 also makes a connection between these seven mountains and seven kings. A king can also represent a kingdom or empire. Five kings will fall, one was, and one was yet to come. Can we know what

these kings or kingdoms symbolize?

Based on history and the Bible, the five kings that fell likely represent Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece. The kingdom that “was” would be Rome. And the seventh kingdom is probably the Ottoman Empire. How do we establish this final point?

Most agree that the kingdom that existed when this prophecy was given was Rome. When we think of the Roman Empire, it is only the western half that usually comes to mind, represented by its capital in Rome.

The fact is that the Roman Empire had two capitals, one in Rome and the other in Constantinople at the east, which was established by Emperor Constantine in 330 CE. Today, Constantinople is known as Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey.

This later Roman Empire was also known as the Byzantine Empire, which at



A saint is defined as one who keeps the commandments and has the faith of Yahshua the Messiah. Rev. 14:12

its peak controlled parts of southeastern Europe, southwestern Asia, the northeast corner of Africa, Syria, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Cyprus, Egypt, eastern Libya and Turkey. The Byzantine Empire existed for 1,000 years until its overthrow by the Ottoman Turks in 1453 CE.

Having conquered the Byzantine Empire, the Muslim Ottoman Empire existed for over 600 years until its defeat in 1922. At its peak, this empire controlled Southeast Europe, Western Asia, the Caucasus, North Africa, and the Horn of Africa.

Two important parallels with Alexander's kingdom and the Ottoman Empire are that neither controlled Rome and both conquered much of the Middle East. According to Daniel and Revelation, the Man of Sin will come from somewhere in these locations, likely the Ottoman Empire. According to Revelation 17, the Beast is the eighth and is of the seven, showing that the eighth empire is connected with the seventh.

Shoebat writes: "...the Empire of the Antichrist will not be a new empire; rather it will be the revival of a previous great empire that will have suffered what the Bible calls a 'fatal head wound' (Revelation 13:3)... This empire is the Islamic Ottoman Empire which replaced the Roman Empire after the fall of its remaining Eastern section," *ibid.*, p. 81.

• **Signs and Wonders**

Another parallel with the Man of Sin and Muhammad al-Mahdī is the belief that these men will both do miraculous things.

Yahshua the Messiah in Matthew 24:24 confirms this regarding the Man of Sin. "For there shall arise false Messiahs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

This passage is one of three accounts of Yahshua's Olivet Prophecy, the two others being Mark 13 and Luke 21.

The word "signs" comes from the Greek *semeion*. **Thayer's Greek Lexicon** defines it as, "...an unusual occurrence, transcending the common course of nature." The word "wonders" comes from the Greek *teras* and according to Thayer's refers to a miracle.

This false Messiah will be able to do miracles, which can't be naturally explained. Because of this, he will deceive this world and if possible, the elect. The phrase "...if possible" likely shows that Yahweh will prevent the elect from being deceived. However, some in the faith will be misled. This has already happened and that's without great signs and wonders.

The reality is, just because we're baptized into Yahshua's Name doesn't make us part of the chosen or the elect. This will be determined when Yahshua comes to gather the elect from the four corners of this earth.

Where does the Man of Sin receive his power? We find the answer in Revelation 13:2. "And the beast which I saw was like

unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority."

The dragon, symbolizing Satan the devil, is the one who provides the Beast or the Man of Sin with this demonic power and authority. Nothing we've ever seen will prepare us for what this man and his False Prophet will be able to do.

Scripture declares that the False Prophet will literally rain fire down from heaven and give life to a lifeless image. The signs and wonders that these men will show will be beyond explanation. This is why it's important that we understand these prophecies and know what signs to watch for.

Like the Man of Sin, according to Shiite tradition, Muhammad al-Mahdī will also show great signs and wonders. "Allah will give him power over the wind and the rain, and the earth will bring forth its foliage. He will give away wealth profusely, flocks will be in abundance, and the Ummah will be large and honored," *ibid.*, p. 83.

Like the Anti-messiah, it's believed by many Shiites that this man will be given the ability to perform great signs and wonders. It's fascinating that so many parallels exist between the Man of Sin and this future Islamic leader. While this may or may not be exactly what we'll see, the very possibility should be considered.

• **Birth of a New Religion**

Another similarity between these two men can be found in Daniel 7:25. "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."

What does Daniel mean by "change times and laws"? The word "times" comes from the Aramaic *zeman* and refers to seasons or appointed occasions. The word "law" comes from the Aramaic *dath* and refers to commandments, edicts, or statutes. The Man of Sin will seek to institute a whole new system of worship and law.

According to the eleventh chapter of Daniel, this man will not honor the Elohim or mighty one of his forefathers. No doubt, part of this worship will include the abomination of desolation and the image that the False Prophet will give life.

We also see that this man will rule

as a despot "until a time and times and the dividing of time." This phrase refers to the three-and-a-half years of the Great Tribulation and is almost verbatim to what we see Revelation 12:14.

This will also be the time of persecution for those who believe in the Messiah. According to Yahshua in His Olivet Prophecy, it will be the worst time this earth has ever and will ever experience. It's going to test the faith of Yahweh's elect like nothing before; this is why it's crucial that we as believers build our faith now.

Similar to the Man of Sin, we find that this final Imam will also seek to change times and laws. According to Shoebat, "The Mahdi...will attempt to change the law by instituting Islamic Sharia law as far as he is able to do so...This activism already exists in every nation of the world. Behind all the masks, they all desire to replace non-Islamic legal systems with Islamic Sharia law and replace every constitution with the constitution of the caliphate," *ibid.*, p. 85.

What's amazing is that we're beginning to see this. Whether we realize it or not, there's a push right now by many Islamic organizations to include Sharia law within the U.S., as they've already successfully done throughout Europe.

• **Seven-Year Peace Treaty**

Another parallel we find between the Man of Sin and Muhammad al-Mahdī is a seven-year covenant or peace agreement. In Daniel 9:27 we read that the Man of Sin will form a seven-year covenant with many nations. "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

The Lamsa Bible reads, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for seven weeks and half of seven, then he shall cause the sacrifice and gift offerings to cease, and upon the horns of the altar the abomination of desolation: and the abomination of desolation shall continue until the end of the appointed time; the city shall remain desolate."

The word "week" represents seven years and refers to the seven-year covenant or treaty that this man will confirm with many nations. However, this treaty will be

short lived, for in the midst of the week, or three-and-a-half years later, this man will make this covenant null and void and stop the sacrifices and oblations.

The reference to stopping the sacrifices may indicate a previous form of Hebraic worship and may offer an explanation how believers, even those in the Messiah, could be led astray by this imposter.

When this man brings an end to this agreement he will then set up the abomination of desolation and force all of mankind to worship him and him alone. According to the Apostle Paul in 2Thessalonians chapter two, this man will exalt himself above all that is called a mighty one. He will become the ultimate

The peace agreement will be made for a period of seven years,” *ibid.*, p. 114.

As the Man of Sin will make a seven-year covenant with the nations of this world, we find that this 12th Imam will do the same. He will make a peace treaty with Christianity and the west and then at some point break that covenant to enforce a form of Sharia law.

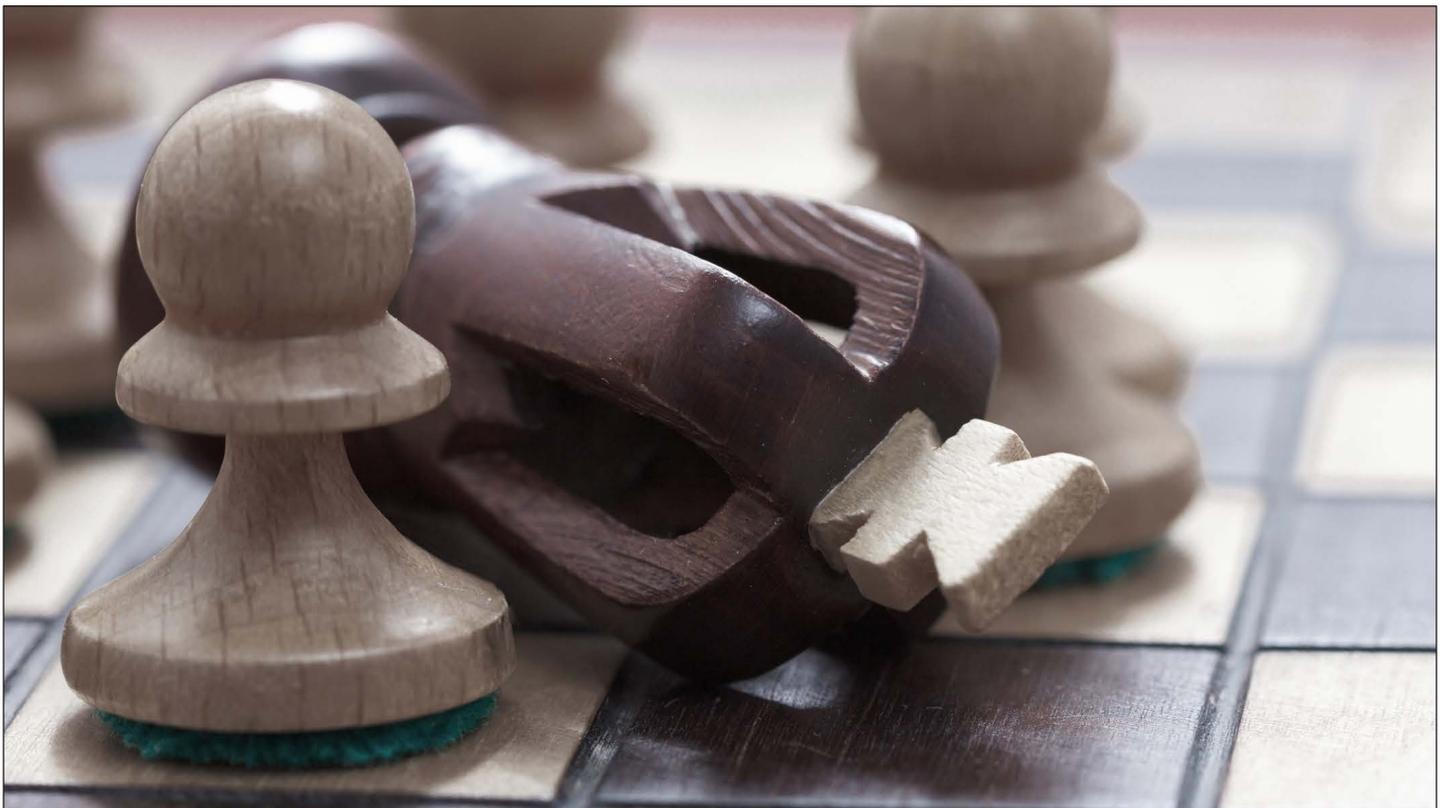
• *Ten Kings*

Another similarity between these men is the connection with ten kings, as prophesied by John of Patmos in Revelation 17:12-13. “And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour

the Return of the Caliphate.’ According to the plan, the Caliph would be assisted in his rule by a ten-member council of ‘Assistant Caliphs.’ These assistants, or council members, are similar to Ministers in many of the today’s government,” *ibid.*, p. 91.

Shiite Islam is planning to establish ten assistant caliphs who would support the Caliph or this Muḥammad al-Mahdī. Again, the parallels here between the Bible and Islamic tradition are remarkable and something we should not overlook.

In Psalm 83:3-8 we find what very well may be prophetic and showing the identity of these ten kings. “They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They



dictator and despot over this world and no one will be able to openly oppose or defy this man.

Like the Man of Sin, according to Shiite tradition, Muḥammad al-Mahdī will also do the same. “One Islamic tradition places the ascendancy of the Mahdi at the time of a final peace agreement between the Arabs and the Romans (‘Romans’ should be interpreted here as referring to Christians, or more generally, the West). Although this peace agreement is made with the ‘Romans,’ it is said to be mediated specifically through a Jew from the priestly lineage of Aaron.

with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.”

Notice that these ten kings have not yet received a kingdom. This “one hour” likely represents the tribulation. They have one mind and their purpose is to serve the Beast.

Before we speculate about who these kings may represent, let’s see how this may correspond with Islamic tradition. “In 2002 a plan for the reestablishment of the Caliphate was written by...the Guiding Helper Foundation entitled, ‘The Plan for

have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee: The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot. “

These ten kings will form a confederacy or an agreement for the sole purpose of obliterating Israel as a nation. It’s

important to know whether this passage is historic or prophetic and whether we know the locations of these kingdoms today. According to many biblical scholars and historians, this event has no historical connections. It is reasonable then to assume that Psalm 83 is likely prophetic.

Do we know these nations today? For the most part, yes. Based on our research, here are the modern countries these nations correspond to:

- Edom - southern Jordan
- Ishmaelites - Arabs
- Moab - central Jordan
- Hagarenes - Egypt
- Gebal - Lebanon
- Ammon - northern Jordan
- Amalek - Sinai Peninsula
- Philistines - Gaza Strip
- Tyre - Lebanon
- Assur - Syria, Iraq

Amazingly, these are all Islamic Middle Eastern nations. Some may say this is only a coincidence and maybe it is, but we believe there's more to it. Until evidence is otherwise shown, it seems these ten nations represent the ten kings found in the Book of Revelation.

There are three points to consider: 1) the Bible speaks of ten kings that will reign with the Anti-messiah; 2) there are some in Islam right now trying to form a restored caliphate, which according to Shiite tradition would include ten assistant caliphs;

and 3) in Psalms 83 we find a prophecy of ten Islamic nations forming a confederacy to destroy the nation of Israel.

• **Military Might**

The last parallel between the Man of Sin and the Muḥammad al-Mahdī is the use of military force. According to the Bible and Shiite tradition, both the Man of Sin and Muḥammad al-Mahdī will be men of war. According to Daniel 7:23, "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces."

The fourth kingdom symbolizes the Man of Sin and his empire; his kingdom will be unique as it devours the whole world. No kingdom has ever been able to conquer the entire world, not even Rome.

Daniel goes on to say that this man will tread down and break this world in pieces. No nation will be able to withstand the power of the Man of Sin. This is also the time when the saints will be persecuted for their faith in Yahshua the Messiah.

We see a similar message in Revelation 13:4. "And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" We've already seen how this man will receive demonic power from the dragon, who represents Satan the devil.

Notice the last part of this verse. "... Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" No nation will be able to

challenge or defy this man. He will rule as a dictator and despot over this world. For three-and-a-half years this man will have complete control and seek to destroy all who believe in the Bible and in Yahshua the Messiah.

It's amazing how closely this corresponds to the Shiite tradition of Muḥammad al-Mahdī: "The Mahdī is portrayed throughout the Islamic tradition as being the military leader of the Islamic 'world revolution' that will defeat all the other religions and political systems," *ibid*, p. 93.

The parallels between the Anti-messiah and the final Imam are: both will fight, both will be world dictators, both will persecute the saints, and both will seek to put in place their own system of law and worship.

Be Courageous

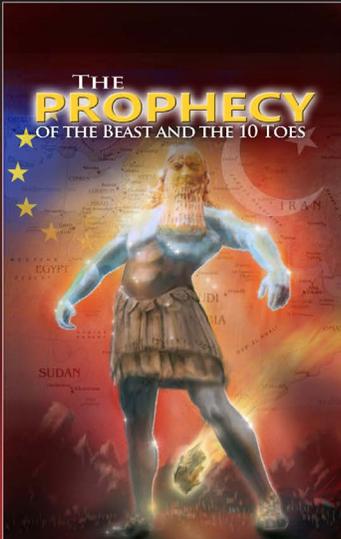
Believers are told to watch and to be alert. Right now we may be seeing the fulfillment of end-time prophecy. This is not the time to be close-minded or asleep as to what is coming.

The Great Tribulation will be the worst time this world has ever and will ever see. While some of the elect will be protected in the wilderness, some will die for their faith. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Yahshua, and for the word of Yahweh, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Messiah a thousand years." Notably, the choice of execution for the Man of Sin will be beheading, a method common to radical Islam.

In the perilous times to come, our greatest defense will be our courage and faith in Yahweh. As Joshua was commanded to be courageous in his conquest of Canaan, as believers we must be courageous in the uncertain days. While no man knows the exact time of Yahshua's coming and the end of this age, it may be sooner than what many believe.

When asked about the end, Yahshua's first words were don't be deceived. There will be false prophets everywhere near the end. Many will claim to be Him.

Let us not be asleep but prepared for the return of our Savior, Yahshua the Messiah, the Son of the living Elohim! 



Who Is the Beast?

According to Daniel's prophecy, the Antimessiah will arise from the territory ruled by Alexander the Great and passed on to his Seleucid generals. Many claim that the Antimessiah is the papacy. While there is more than one problem with this view, the greatest difficulty is found here. For *The Prophecy of the Beast and the Ten Toes*, see online or ordering information on the back cover.



What Are 'Yahshua's Commandments'?

"My doctrine is not mine but His that sent me..." Yahshua said. His entire teaching while on earth originated with His Father in the Old Testament. If those commands of Yahweh have been eliminated, then Yahweh the Father completely reversed Himself and He was not serious when He said, "I change not," Malachi 3:6.

by Alan Mansager

What did Yahshua mean when he used the phrase, "My commandments"? Did He bring His own "new" commandments that replaced the Ten that were given at Sinai? That is what many think when they read that phrase, which Yahshua said three times in the New Testament:

- "If ye love me, keep my commandments.
- "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.
- "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." (John 14:15, 21; 15:10)

Notice in all three passages of "my commandments" that love is at the core and tied to both Yahshua and Yahweh. That is key to understanding what Yahshua meant

by "my commandments".

Most who teach love never get around to explaining what love means in both Old and New testaments. If they did their entire law-less teachings would disintegrate.

Those claiming that Yahshua's teachings replaced all the commands dealing with obedience typically cite John 13:34: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Notice carefully that He did NOT say I give you a new commandment of love to replace all the other commandments. He was simply emphasizing what lies at the very heart of the commandments. The word "new" is from the Greek *kainos* and is used in terms of freshness, not brand new, which is the word *neos* (Strong's Dictionary).

Yahshua is giving a fresh approach to obedience that many had not been exposed to. The *NIV Study Bible* note adds that love

and obedience go together and cannot be separated. Yahshua Himself said in John 12:49, "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak."

For many New-Testament-only believers, Yahshua's commandment to love also represents a superior teaching that the Old Testament must have overlooked. Passages like Leviticus 19:18 explode that perception, however: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am Yahweh."

Loving your neighbor is clearly not a brand new mandate taught only in the New Testament. Neither are many other teachings that many think are only found in the New Testament. (See the *Restoration Study Bible* chart, "Remarkable Harmony of the Testaments.")

of the Testaments.”)

Essence of Scriptural Love

What Yahshua meant by love as a “new” commandment is defined in His subsequent phrase, “as I loved you.” The law wasn’t new, and neither was love, but the way he applied both together was. The *Harper Collins Study Bible* note says, “The love commandment in John is restricted to one another, i.e., the community of [Yahshua’s] disciples.”

later die for them as the supreme act of love. It was the “how” factor, not the “no” factor that was new in the commandment He brought.

John 13:34-35 is translated the following way in *The New Testament, an Expanded Translation*: “A commandment, a new one, I am giving you, that you should be constantly loving one another with a divine and self-sacrificial love; even as I loved you, you also be loving one another.” This is the very heart of His new commandment.

his life for his friends, John 15:13. This is the added dimension that became His “new commandment.”

Yahshua literally gave His life daily by living for others, starting with His disciples, serving others every day of His life on earth. No Pharisee or Sadducee ever loved like that. Those of the religious establishment had purely selfish motives. Those religious leaders exalted themselves in their quest to control the



Yahshua’s love as in His new commandment was unlike the familiar concept of love. He was not adding the necessity to love your neighbor; that obligation was already commanded in the Old Testament’s covenant.

However, He was teaching another key dimension to love demonstrated in His own actions and behavior toward His brethren in the Truth (“as I have loved you”). He would

It is easy to say I love you and I care about you, but Yahshua’s love goes further and deeper. His love is shown in self-sacrifice for others and reaches all the way out to the ultimate sacrifice of His life for those He loved.

In essence, His new commandment is to “give up a part of one’s own life” for another in any way needed. He also said that there is no greater love than that a man lay down

people. Their obedience did not come from the heart and because of that Yahshua said there would be no place for them in His Kingdom, Matthew 5:20.

Fulfill Does Not Mean Terminate

Yahshua said in Matthew 5:17, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” Yahshua’s “new commandment” to love clearly had nothing to do with replacing the law. That would be tantamount to patching a leak in a dam by blowing up the whole dam.

If love coexists with and defines perfection in lawkeeping, then how can love replace the law? “Fulfill” is the Greek *pleroo* and means to cause to abound, to render perfect, to carry out (*Restoration Study Bible* note on Matthew 5:17). This meaning is expressed in 1 John 5:3: “For this is the love of Elohim, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” A note defining “fulfill” in *The Complete Biblical Library* on Matthew 5:17 says, “but to ratify, but to give them their completion, to perfect.”

Matthew 22:35-40 says: “Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Yahshua said unto him, Thou shalt love Yahweh thy Elohim with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt

Love Commanded from the Beginning

Is love just a New Testament teaching of Yahshua and the apostles that was missed in the Old Testament? Did Yahshua fix His father’s oversight by replacing obedience with love? Several passages in the Old Testament law show otherwise:

Deuteronomy 6:5 – “And thou shalt love Yahweh thy Elohim with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”

Deuteronomy 7:9 – “Know therefore that Yahweh thy Elohim, he is Elohim, the faithful El, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.”

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 – “And now, Israel, what doth Yahweh thy Elohim require of thee, but to fear Yahweh thy Elohim, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve Yahweh thy Elohim with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of Yahweh, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?”

Deuteronomy 11:1 – “Therefore thou shalt love Yahweh thy Elohim, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always.”

Joshua 22:5 – “But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of Yahweh charged you, to love Yahweh your Elohim, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” These two divisions of the law encompass all laws.

How does that work? When we love Yahweh we keep His commandments, 1John 5:3. That covers the first four of the Ten Commandments. The last six of the Ten Commandments involve our relationship with others, including family and neighbors. That covers “loving your neighbor as yourself.”

Now to Delve Deeper

The first and greatest commandment is to love Yahweh with all our being, which is what the first four of the Ten Commandments teach us. In doing so we comply with all Yahweh’s laws and therefore it stands supreme.

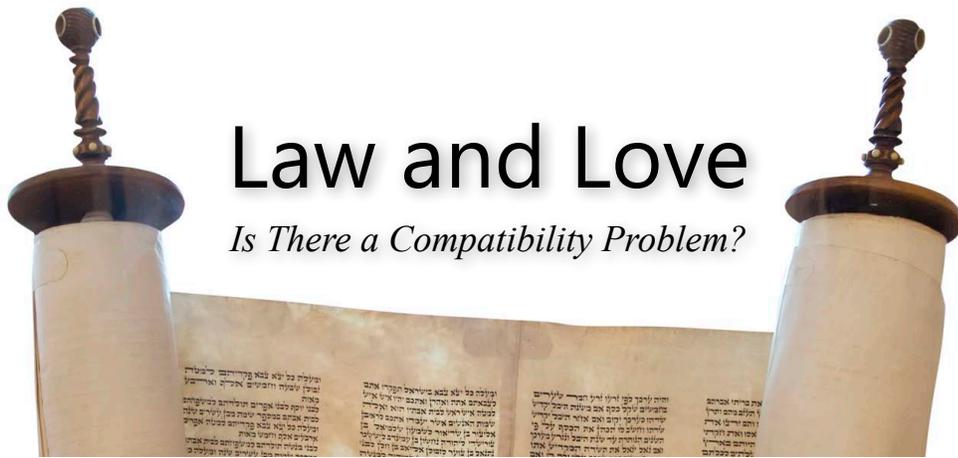
Specifically, we love Him by putting Him above everything else (First Commandment), by not making or worshiping idols (Second Commandment), by showing proper reverence and honor for His name (Third Commandment), and by worshiping Him on His holy Sabbath day (Fourth Commandment).

Yahshua further said, “And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (verse 39). In quoting Leviticus 19:18, He provided the basic intent of the remaining six commandments: to show love to others. All six teach us how to show a love for others by not doing what could prove harmful to them. Paul wrote, “Love does no harm to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13:10).

We fulfill the last six by: honoring our parents, not murdering or committing adultery, not stealing or lying, and not coveting anything our neighbor has. When we love Yahweh and our fellow man by being obedient to these two great divisions of the commandments, we then fulfill the law.

By His life Yahshua showed what it means to love Yahweh perfectly and to love others properly. His model of perfection was capped by His sacrificial death to pay the penalty for what our sins earned (John 3:16; 15:13; Mark 10:45).

To learn how to fulfill Yahshua’s commandments to love Yahweh and your neighbor, simply follow Yahshua’s examples. He sacrificed in every way for others. Believers, also, must live for others as well as themselves. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of Elohim, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto Elohim, which is your reasonable service,” Romans 12:1. ✓



Law and Love

Is There a Compatibility Problem?

In a new article in a Christian magazine, a young cleric in a megachurch says that Christians no longer need to obey the Ten Commandments. He wrote, “Participants in the new covenant (that’s Christians) are not required to obey any of the commandments found in the first part of their Bibles. Participants in the new covenant are expected to obey the single command [Yahshua] issued as part of his new covenant: as I have loved you, so you must love one another.”

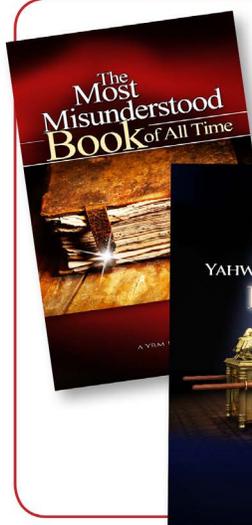
His reckless heresy means that Bible believers can be lawless, that the law against murder, adultery, stealing and lying no longer apply to today’s worshiper. (The Sabbath commandment was dispensed with centuries ago.)

If he knew the New Testament he claims to preach and was honest, he would realize that he missed some very pivotal passages:

- Matthew 5:17-18: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”
- Matthew 5:19: “Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”
- Matthew 19:17: “...if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.”
- 2 Timothy 4:3-4: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

Does loving one another as Yahshua loved His disciples override the law? To the contrary. The law and love go together. Love means to do nothing to harm, hurt or destroy another. Therefore, if we love we don’t murder, steal from, or commit adultery against another. Therefore loving another fulfills the law. Love is anything but a replacement command; it is instead a unifying command.

We still have a sinful nature and unrepentant sinners will not inherit the Kingdom, 1Corinthians 6:9-10.



Lawkeeping in the NEW Testament?

For many in churchianity, advocating obedience to the Word today is bondage to a bygone era, and an attempt to earn salvation. Nothing could be further from the truth. The law represents the character and values of Yahweh and Yahshua, which believers are to emulate in their lives. Forget misguided church teachings. Get the facts. Request or go online to read the dynamic duo of booklets, **Yahweh’s Perfect Law** and **The Most Misunderstood Book of All Time**.

Q Are there any activities permitted on the Sabbath, particularly those related to medical emergencies? Could you also clarify what kind of “good” we can do on the Sabbath?

A In a medical emergency on the Sabbath you do what your faith allows. Doing good on the Sabbath would mean helping others in serious circumstances that can’t be done at other times. That would not include routine work or involvement in commerce, but in extreme cases pulling an ox out of the ditch would be doing good because you are saving life in what is not a normal circumstance.

This seems to be the key by which Yahshua lived when it came to unusual Sabbath activities. Such activities include when He healed on the Sabbath or when His hungry disciples picked and ate from stalks of grain as they walked through a field. We do good on the Sabbath when we help others in their walk of faith.

Q What if a person has no money to attend the feasts or is disabled? I’m thinking of all the instances in which a person may not be able to go, such as no transportation or money to travel. Or they may be in a wheelchair and haven’t been healed of a disability yet. How are they supposed to be able to travel very far? I mean, even if we’re tithing and doing everything we’re supposed to be doing...but still don’t have the money or are in some way bound to our homes, how is it even possible?

A Anyone with a sincere desire will find a way to attend each Feast. Those who are immersed into Yahshua’s Name have no choice. For transportation when a person’s vehicle is inoperable one can ride with others or take a public conveyance. For finances, one can put some away each month or even make a loan or borrow from relatives.



Y a h w e h obviously knew that a lack of finances would impede some from obedience, and therefore He gave a clear command in Deuteronomy 14:22-27 to save for the Feasts in a second tithe. There are always ways to be obedient when you trust Yahweh.

We have seen many obstacles disappear when a sincere individual trusts in serving Yahweh and commits to Him no matter the challenge. Yahweh doesn’t list any extenuating circumstances or statute of limitations on age or health that give one an excused absence. He says simply, “Go,” and be blessed. He then leaves it to you whether or not to obey.

Your choices now will determine your rewards in the Kingdom: “...and I will give unto every one of you according to your works,” Revelation 2:23. “And he that overcomes and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations,” Revelation 2:26.

One brother who is wheelchair bound comes to the Feasts with a vehicle that he drives himself, modified with a ramp. May this help and encourage you to look for ways to go and not for ways to say no. Feast commands are not discretionary. Our responsibility as one of Yahweh’s called-out is to be obedient.

Q Do former members of the Worldwide Church of God need to be rebaptized? They don’t believe in the Trinity but still submit to baptism “in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19).

A We find many problems with immersing in the trinitarian words of Matthew 28:19: The Catholic *Jerusalem Bible* questions whether that verse is liturgical (church-added) or inspired; the Hebrew version of Matthew omits it; the *Harper Collins Study Bible* says it probably derives from early Christian worship; most important is that no one in Scripture was ever baptized in this trinitarian formula; all five of the baptisms recorded in the New Testament were in Yahshua’s Name only. Even if legitimate, the command is in one name, not three. The only legitimate baptism is into Yahshua’s Name. Galatians 3:27 says, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Messiah have put on Messiah.” All whose immersions did not comply scripturally will want to be re-immersed properly, Acts 4:12.



The Lost Temple of the Jews

We sat down with Christian filmmaker Ken Klein, who produced the documentary “*Jerusalem and the Lost Temple of the Jews*,” and discussed the possibility of the true location of Solomon’s Temple in the City of David, Jerusalem. Watch this fascinating discussion.

Watch ‘The Temple Lost in Time’ Parts 1&2
On our Roku or YouTube channels

Q If the Holy Spirit is not a person, how can we “grieve” the Holy Spirit, as found in Ephesians 4:30?

A The Bible is a very rich book, using many idioms and figures of speech in which words are used outside the usual sense or manner. Some of the more familiar are:

Simile, where one thing is said to resemble another. (“A righteous man is like a tree planted by a river,” Ps. 1 :3.)

Metaphor, in which one thing is another. Yahshua in Luke 13:32 said of Herod, “Go. and tell that fox. . .”

Hyperbole, an overstatement, such as the disciples being accused of “turning the whole world upside down,” Acts 17:6.

Synechdoche, where a part is put for the whole, or the whole for the part, such as bread for food (Matt. 6:11) or blood for life (Matt. 27:4).

Personification is another figure of speech employed in the Bible, where things are given human qualities. For example, Paul wrote that death reigned from Adam to Moses, Romans 5:14. Are we to believe that death sat on a throne holding a scepter? Or that all of men must face up to the fact that we are always subject to dying? Death’s ever-present sway over mankind is given the attributes of a ruling monarch. Personification makes the point more forceful.

Similarly, the Apostle Paul personifies agape love as always patient and kind, never jealous, not boastful or conceited; is not rude or selfish, does not take offense, and is not resentful, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. He expresses love in human characteristics.

The Holy Spirit is the invisible power of Yahweh (Hebrew *ruach*; Greek *pneuma* = wind, force) that is manifested in many ways. Yahweh’s creative power is shown when His Spirit “moved upon the face of the waters,” Genesis 1:2. It rejuvenated the earth and gave life. His invisible power working in us gives us His mind, His expressed will for our lives, and the strength to live up to His expectations.

To “grieve the Holy Spirit” is to act contrary to the expressed will and expectations that Yahweh has for His people.

Q Should I read and study the Apocrypha? Some refer to the books of Jasher and Maccabees as if they were Scripture.

A Apocrypha means “things hidden or concealed.” It is from the Greek word *apokryphos* and it concerns writings that at first were not read publicly. Later, Apocrypha came to be understood as spurious and uncanonical writings.

The trend toward including these works as part of the Scriptures was initiated by the Catholic Augustine in 354 to 430. Augustine admitted there was a definite difference between these “outside books” and the Inspired Word. The books generally recognized as the Apocrypha of the Old Testament are: 1 and 2 Maccabees; Prayer of Manasses; 1, 2 Esdras; Tobit; Judith; Wisdom; Ecclesiasticus (a.k.a. Sirach); Baruch and Epistle of Jeremy; supplements to Esther, three additions to Daniel, The Song of the Three Children, Susanna and the Elders, the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon, and the Letters of Jeremiah.

The New Testament apocrypha include: Gospel of Peter, Gospel of Nicodemus (also called the “Acts of Pilate”), Gospel of Bartholomew, Gospel of Marcion (mid 2nd century), Gospel of Judas (also called the “Gospel of Judas Iscariot”), Gospel of Mary (also called the “Gospel of Mary Magdalene”), Gospel of Philip, Gospel of Thomas, acts of the various apostles....

Following are eight reasons the Apocrypha are not Inspired Scripture:

- Unlike with the Scriptures, none of the apocryphal writers claims to be inspired.
- The apocryphal books were not permitted among the sacred books during the first four centuries of the common era.
- Unlike the Old Testament books, the Apocrypha are nowhere quoted in the New.
- The Apocrypha are tainted with errors in fact and time, exposing their uninspiration.

For example, in the two books of Maccabees, Antiochus Epiphanes is made to die three different deaths in three different places.

- The Apocrypha contain odd statements that not only contradict the canonical scriptures but also themselves.
- The Apocrypha include doctrines at variance with the Bible, such as prayers for the dead, sinless perfection, and immortality of the soul.
- The apocryphal books were never acknowledged as sacred scriptures by the Jews, custodians of the Hebrew Scriptures. In fact, the Jewish people rejected and destroyed the Apocrypha after the overthrow of Jerusalem in 70 CE.
- Not one of the apocryphal books is written in the Hebrew language, which was used by the inspired writers of Scripture, even in the New Testament. All apocryphal books are in Greek, except one that exists only in Latin.

Q You say that the word Easter in Acts 12:4 should be translated Passover in the King James Bible. Easter seems a far more appropriate holiday for a pagan like Herod.

A The Herods were Idumaeans or quasi-Jews. Herod Agrippa I in Acts 12 was a vassal ruler from Rome who played both sides with the Romans and the Jews. In Acts 12 he pleased the Jews when he killed James and, being on a roll, then took Peter also. If he were trying to placate the pagans he would have infuriated the Jews, which was the last thing he or Rome wanted. Caligula put Herod in as an go-between ruler to act as a cushion between themselves and the Jews who despised Rome.

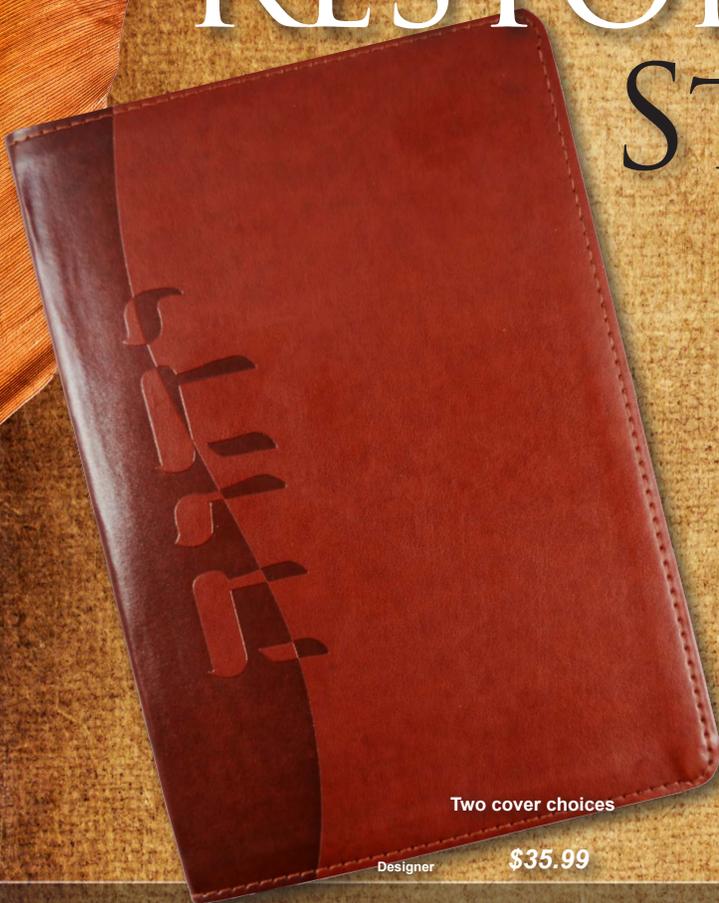
Easter is a clear mistranslation of the Greek *Pasch* or Passover. The Jews didn’t celebrate Easter in Judea in Acts. Every other modern translation of the Bible renders it Passover. The Christian translators of the KJV made a big blunder by inserting their holiday of Easter for Passover, which we explain in the **RSB**.

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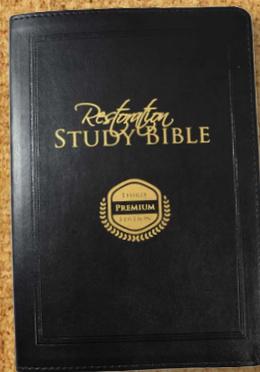
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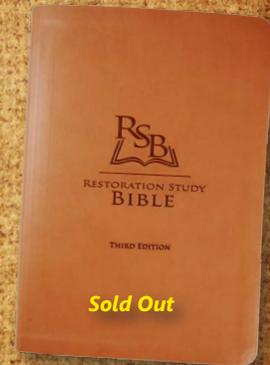
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"I am very happy with all that you are worshiping and publishing for the world and more! I am very pleased with your ministry and how you worship Yahweh and Yahshua our Messiah!" – **RF, Jr.**

"I love your website! You are truly doing Yahweh's work!" – **CD**

"I have been listening to the discussions and messages in your network. It was by chance I came across YRM. I have been attending a Messianic Christian Church. The music began to take more preeminence than the message. There were times there were no messages but loud, latest trend in music. Code of dressing became no different than going to a social party. I was hungering to be spiritually fed. I want solid messages to help me grow." - **VC**

*We encourage you to take it slowly and learn all you can. Send for the **Restoration Study Bible**. With more than 2,000 notes it will expand your understanding exponentially. You can also download any of our 40 booklets on different teachings in Yahweh's Word. Join us live each Sabbath for worship as well.* – **ED**

"My husband found this ministry and we have been listening ever since, he more than me. I have to admit I have made so many mistakes coming into the Truth, mistakes I am so ashamed of. I was listening to Alan, I don't have a problem with him or any of them who are proclaiming the Truth of Abba's Word. I

am trying to learn. I have looked for so long to be a part of Yahweh and His people. My husband is coming in slowly, I'm not sure what I am to do with my past, do I leave it there or delete it or start over? Can I be a part of your ministry? I hope I said that right. I am still kinda confused about the Torah. But I believe with all my heart that His Torah is Truth and we must let others know. I believe in your ministry and I don't know what I can do to help, but I will do whatever I can." - **LT**

"Your information and booklets have inspired me and filled me with so much information regarding Yahweh and His laws. I am very happy that Ruach haKadash has led me to your website. I pray that YRM enlightens others as much as it has enlightened my life." – **YR**

"I can't begin to tell you the joy I have being able to talk to someone about what scripture really says. About 30 years ago I fell in love with words and started looking into the meaning of Hebrew and Greek words. And I started finding a different Bible. All that I had been taught wasn't so. But when I took what I had found to those I respected I was told that I was mistaken. So through the years I have quietly held onto these truths, only recently have I begun to teach about the law, trinity, heaven, hell, the rapture and more, which will ultimately get me removed from teaching at this church. And that's ok if it happens. It gave me courage to find others who have found this same truth, but there is one thing that haunts me. Backsliding is as hazardous to the people of Yahweh today as it was with Israel of old. Read in the New Testament Book of Hebrews, 6:4-6: 'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good word of Elohim, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they impale to themselves the Son of Elohim afresh, and put him to an open shame.' I have had a hard time staying the course not knowing what was

real and what wasn't. Maybe deep down I knew but it has only been recently that I truly understood how important it is for me to live what Yahweh has revealed to me. I am truly sorry for my inaction and lack of faith of turning away in discouragement. I have a new resolve now but is it too late?"

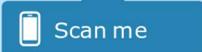
– **Stephen**

It is never too late to find forgiveness for the truly repentant heart. – **ED**

"I am 16 years old and I recently discovered your ministry and I've taken great interest in trying to learn more and more on how I can truly be saved. This is coming from a teen who has been growing up as a southern Baptist. When I exposed myself to the REAL truth y'all are conveying through Yahweh's Word I became dumbfounded at how much of what I've been living is untrue in His Word and honestly I'm quite frightened and concerned about the state of my faith and that of dear family. I feel like it would take forever to adjust to the feasts, keeping the real sabbath, keeping a scripturally clean diet etc. There is also the fact that especially as a teen I find it a constant struggle to keep true to His Word in the environment I live in as a teen. And these facts often fill my heart with angst and melancholy when I evaluate my faith, as well as my family's. I recently showed my parents ya'll's website which somewhat alarmed my parents due to how different it was to how they live their faith and how they go about worshiping but they, particularly my mother, were proud of how I have been striving to learn the Truth. My main concern regarding my and my family's faith is what kind of first steps I can take, considering my position as a young person, to transform our [my and my family] lifestyle from half-hearted and misled to full-hearted and informed because I do fear the end times may be near and I want to take steps to be prepared and eventually fully commit myself to Yahshua's Name." – **WN**

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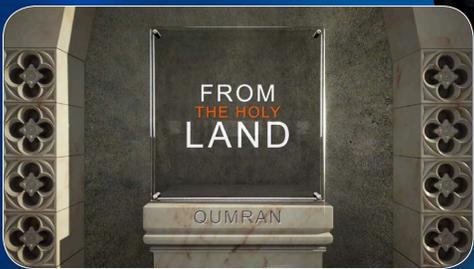
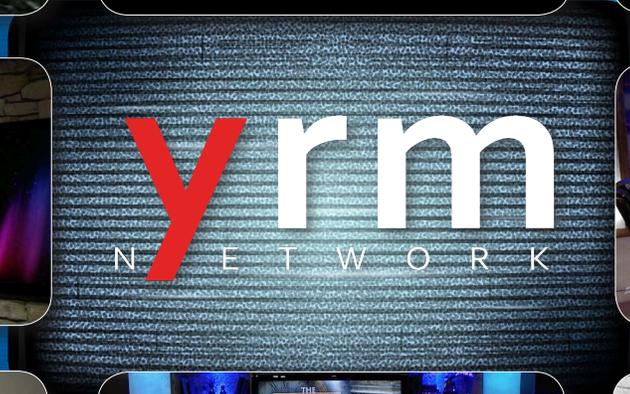
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