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*If I forget you, Jerusalem,
may my right hand forget its skill.
May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth
if I do not remember you, if I do not consider
Jerusalem my highest joy.*

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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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A man in a blue shirt and jeans stands with his arms crossed on a cobblestone floor. Behind him is a large, dark shadow of a muscular man flexing his arms, set against a textured, grey wall.

His Spirit **vs** Our Flesh

by Randy Folliard

Paul's statement in Galatians 5:1 is puzzling to many, and has caused some to misunderstand the truth of the obedience that the Apostle expressed: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Messiah has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1).

What did the Apostle mean when he spoke these words to the brethren in Galatia? Why would he call Yahweh's law a yoke of bondage?

The Jews at that time, just as the majority today, would not accept Yahshua's sacrifice. They taught that the way of salvation was through observing the written Torah law. They denied Yahshua and the importance of His sacrifice. For that reason the Jews had only one way to deal with their sins and that was through keeping the

commandments.

Paul told the brethren in Galatia that there was only one avenue for salvation and that that way was through faith in Yahshua the Messiah. Although in this passage when Paul mentions the yoke of bondage he is referring to one law in general. In the second verse we find that Paul says that if they were to become circumcised that Yahshua the Messiah would do them no good. "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Messiah shall profit you nothing" (Gal. 5:2).

A Covenant by Circumcision

To understand the importance of circumcision a person must return to the Old Testament. In the 17th chapter of Genesis we find the account of Abram (Abraham) receiving the commandment to circumcise

himself before Yahweh. Circumcision was a covenant made between Yahweh and Abraham and his offspring.

In verse 7 we find what the covenant symbolized between Abraham and Yahweh: "And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be an Elohim unto you and to your seed after you" (Gen. 17:7).

The covenant of circumcision was a sign to set Abraham and his seed apart from all other people. No other nation had the privilege of knowing and observing Yahweh's law. "He showed his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He has not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them," (Ps. 147:19-20).

Yahshua was born on earth as a mortal

man and offered Himself as an advocate for our sins. He broke down that wall that was established in the Old Covenant and confirmed with Abraham.

“For he is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us: having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances: for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto Elohim in one

To Them a Stumblingstone

For us to achieve righteousness toward our Heavenly Father we must look toward our Savior Yahshua the Messiah and accept his sacrifice that atones for our sins. “But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at the stumblingstone” (Rom. 9:31-32).

We are no longer under the physical commandment of circumcision, but we are now under the circumcision of the heart. We are now under a spiritual circumcision and not a physical circumcision (Rom. 2:25-26; Phil. 3:3). We must look within our inner being and seek to cleanse not only our physical bodies but cleanse our inner temples.

“You did run well; who did hinder you that you should not obey the truth? This persuasion comes not of him that calls



body by the stake, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off and to them that were nigh” (Eph. 2:14-17).

Paul tells the people in Galatia that if they are to become circumcised for righteousness that they must obey the entire law. “For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law” (Gal. 5:3).

Many today think that through this statement Paul was abolishing the written Torah law given through the prophet Moses. Paul was not speaking of the entire law when he made this statement. On the contrary – he was speaking of circumcision alone.

Paul says that if they would have been circumcised that they would have been denying Yahshua and His sacrifice. “Messiah is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; you are fallen from grace” (Gal. 5:4). We must not look toward the law for salvation, but we must consider the law a mold that shapes us in a way pleasing to our Heavenly Father Yahweh.

The stumblingstone that is mentioned here refers to Yahshua the Messiah (v. 33). The old Israel stumbled because they looked toward the Law for salvation instead of to Yahshua, and no man has ever kept the Law without spot or wrinkle, with the exception of Yahshua the Messiah. “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1John 1:10).

We must look toward the promise through faith and always walk by the spirit of Yahweh. “For we through the spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith” (Gal. 5:5). How could we ever look at Yahweh’s Kingdom in any other light?

Can a man who walks in and pleases the flesh look toward a spiritual kingdom? Can a man walk in darkness and still see the light? The answer to both of those questions is absolutely not.

Paul says that circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but faith in Yahshua which produces love is the key to salvation. “For in Yahshua the Messiah neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision: but faith which works by love” (Gal. 5:6).

you” (Gal. 5:7-8). Paul was concerned for the recent converts’ salvation. There were some that were believing the false doctrine preached by the Judaizers. They were no longer putting their trust in Yahshua but they were looking toward the Law for salvation. They were once again being entangled in a yoke of bondage.

Paul writes. “O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Yahshua Messiah has been evidently set forth, impaled among you” (Gal. 3:1). Paul then uses a metaphor: “A little leaven leavens the whole lump” (Gal. 5:9).

Serve by Love

Throughout the Bible yeast is used metaphorically. Here Paul was telling the Galatians that a little false teaching will



spread and grow throughout the assembly, as with the action of yeast on dough.

In the next verse Paul admonishes them so that they will continue in the truth and will not be persuaded to accept any false teachings. He also says that those who are preaching false doctrine will reap their judgment. "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the stake ceased. I would they were even cut off which trouble you" (Gal. 5:11-12).

Yahshua's return. Each has an active role in this commission that Yahweh has set before His people. Paul says that love is the fulfillment of the Law. "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; thou shalt love your neighbor as yourself" (Gal. 5:14).

Yahshua the Messiah said in Matthew 22:34-40 that love is what the entire law and the prophets cling to. We must remember that the first fruit is love. Without love in one's life, life has no worth

Paul tells us that if we sow toward the flesh we will reap death, but if we sow toward the spirit we will reap everlasting life. "Be not deceived; Elohim is not mocked: for whatever a man sows, that he shall also reap. For he that sows to his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal. 6:7-8).

From the 18th verse of Galatians 5, many think that Paul is abolishing the Law. "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are



Even though Paul preached circumcision he was still persecuted because of his belief in Yahshua the Messiah. The Jews refused to accept Yahshua as their true Messiah and the only way for salvation. Paul warns us not to use our liberty in Messiah as an opportunity to justify ourselves for not observing the law. "For, brethren, you have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13).

We should always try to serve one another in love as Paul has told us to do. "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more" (1Cor. 9:19).

Paul showed great love and service toward all men, and his one goal was to obey Yahweh and spread the Good News. Paul gave up his life to bring life to others. He forsook all things to accomplish this goal. That should be our goal as well.

The command is to obey Yahweh before all else, helping to spread Yahweh's Good News throughout the world before

(1Cor. 13). Paul tells us that we must not fight among ourselves and if we do we will devour ourselves. "But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you be not consumed one of another" (Gal. 5:15).

Overcome the Flesh

Our one purpose and one goal in this life should be to seek Yahweh's righteousness and His Kingdom (Matt. 6:33). We must stay united in Yahweh's truth in this day and age. We have to seek the spiritual and learn to overcome the fleshly habits that possess human beings. "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16).

You cannot walk both in the Spirit and in the flesh, they are contrary to each other (Gal. 5:17; 1Pet. 2:11).

Yahshua said that a good tree brings forth only good fruit and a corrupt tree brings forth only corrupt fruit (Matt. 7:18). The prophet Isaiah said that we will eat the fruit of our doings. "Say to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings" (Isa. 3:10).

no longer under the law." What was Paul implying when he made this statement? If we are walking after the Spirit and not the flesh we will not be sinning, but will be in tune with Yahweh's own written Law.

Dropping down to the 22nd and 23rd verses of Galatians 5 we find the fruits of the Spirit listed. They are: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

These are nine fruits Yahweh expects us to have and implement in our daily lives. The written Torah law and the fruits of the spirit are interchangeable, because without the Law you would not be showing the fruits and without the fruits you would not be keeping the Law. They are in a sense one and the same.

If we are under the Spirit then we would also be in line with the Law. Thus, let us never forget Yahweh's Law; however, let us make it our daily practice to reflect on Yahweh and His ways. Let us think of others and show each one of the Holy Spirit fruits in our daily lives. ✓



Myth-Busting MADE Easy

by Alan Mansager

During a brief discussion with a store clerk, we were asked whether we believed in the Trinity. Her question was a typical litmus test.

If you are not trinitarian then you are considered part of a heretical fringe. She agreed with our response that the notion of three co-equal deities is not found in Scripture. In fact, the Trinity doctrine directly contradicts Scripture in at least eight critical points.

The passage in 1John 5:7-8 is one of only a few celebrated verses used in an attempt to support the Trinity by allegedly teaching that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one individual.

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” The *New International Version* renders it, “For there are three that testify: the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.”

The reason the NIV and other translations omit the bold-face part of this passage is that it is missing in all except one of the 5,400 Greek source manuscripts of the New Testament, and it doesn’t appear in that lone manuscript until after the invention of the printing press in the 15th century CE.

The passage shows up in some Latin scripts, but not in the best manuscripts of the Vulgate, as the *Jerusalem Bible* explains. The

Trinity didn’t become official Roman church doctrine until the fourth century. That means neither Yahshua nor the apostles ever believed it or taught it. See the *Restoration Study Bible* footnote on 1John 5:7-8.

The other verse that some say shows a Trinity is Matthew 28:19: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” The Catholic Jerusalem Bible candidly indicates that Matthew 28:19 was added by the church much later.

Even if the verse is authentic, why did none of the five recorded baptisms in the New Testament use this formula? Instead, we read that New Testament immersions were all done into the singular Name of Yahshua.

A Firestorm of Opposition

Although it’s among the most difficult of doctrines to substantiate, the Trinity is ironically the one belief used most by Christians to test one’s legitimacy as a Christian.

The Trinity doctrine brewed a controversial tsunami among Bible believers. The relationship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit was a subject of hot debate in the first ecumenical council at Nicaea.

The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* says under “Trinity,” “The doctrine of the Trinity is purely a revealed doctrine. That is to say, it embodies a truth which has never been discovered, and is

undiscoverable, by natural reason. With all his searching, man has not been able to find out for himself the deepest things of G-d. Accordingly, ethnic thought has never attained a Trinitarian conception of G-d, nor does any ethnic religion present in its representations of the Divine being any analogy to the doctrine of the Trinity.”

If the Trinity doctrine is unprovable and undiscoverable, then how can it be called a truth, let alone a test doctrine for truth? Even Emperor Constantine, who summoned the council of Nicaea, flip-flopped over the Trinity notion during a debate between Arius and Athanasius.

A confused person wrote on a website: “The Bible presents G-d as one G-d (Deuteronomy 6:4), but then speaks of three Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). How these two truths harmonize is inconceivable to the human mind. When we attempt to understand the inscrutable, we will always fail to varying degrees.”

This person should first have read what the Roman church, which devised this doctrine, says about the Trinity: “For nowhere in the Old Testament do we find any clear indication of a Third Person.

“Mention is often made of the Spirit of the L-rd, but there is nothing to show that the Spirit was viewed as distinct from Jahweh Himself. The term is always employed to signify G-d considered in His working,

whether in the universe or in the soul of man. The matter seems to be correctly summed up by Epiphanius, when he says: ‘The One G-dhead is above all declared by Moses, and the twofold personality (of Father and Son) is strenuously asserted by the Prophets,’” *Catholic Encyclopedia*, “Trinity,” p. 49.

Making Mincemeat of Myths

Yahweh commands at both ends of the Bible not to add to or take away from what is in the Word, Deuteronomy 4:2, Revelation 22:18-19. Regardless, it is the first thing typically done by those out to manufacture their own worship in exchange for a piece of the ecumenical pie.

Yahweh’s Restoration Ministry is on a mission to obliterate myths that so many accept as truth today. The first lesson of myth-busting is to trace the history of the belief or teaching under inquiry. Ask diagnostic questions: What are its origins? How did it develop and who developed it? Often that is all that is needed to make a determination of truth or error.

If a teaching is not in the Scriptures, then it is clearly man-made. No need to give it any more attention.

Yahweh’s Word is what makes a teaching legitimate, not church councils or church traditions, and yet that central truth doesn’t matter to the majority today.

Paul wrote in 2Timothy 3:16: “All scripture is given by inspiration of Yahweh, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of Elohim may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

The popular trend today is to rewrite history to fit societal norms. That mindset chips away at Bible fact as well. The political correctness movement that replaces biblical standards of morality has been a big influence. The commandments are seen as only suggestions and not as solid truisms that have been proved historically.

Churchianity throws out or ignores two-thirds of the Word as only for ancient Israel, and it twists what’s left to make the Apostles into apologists for the church and its doctrines.

At its most basic level, a legitimate belief or practice will arise from the Word, not from outside the Word. Incredibly, many major beliefs and teachings of churchianity have no basis in Scripture.

Beliefs that were not part of Yahshua’s teachings have become church fundamentals: ever-burning hell, going to heaven at death, immortal soul, Christmas, Easter, once saved

always saved, faith alone for salvation, New Testament only, and many anti-law dogmas.

No Reason for the Season

Take the Christmas super holiday, for example. Almost nothing about it is legitimate or accurate from Scripture. Of course multiple pagan trappings were added, but not even the biblical story of Yahshua’s birth is conveyed accurately.

First, no command exists to observe the Messiah’s birthday and so He is NOT the biblical reason for the season.

The December 25th date is as artificial as a tinsel tree and nowhere close to the day of Yahshua’s nativity. Christmas wasn’t observed as His birthday until the 4th century, some 300 years after His resurrection. No one even knew when His birth occurred. If it were meant to be observed, the exact date would have been revealed in the Scriptures, as have the dates for all of Yahweh’s commanded Feasts.

Yahshua never met or even saw Santa Claus or St. Nick – so what is the rotund character doing as a mascot hijacking an observance that is supposed to honor Yahshua?

No statement or evidence exists of the actual number of wise men who visited Him. Tradition says three. There could have been 30 or more. They came to a house and saw a toddler not a newborn in a manger, who by then was about 2 years old.

They presented royal gifts to the toddler not to one another. This was the custom when coming before a king, and He was the prophesied King to come.

The historical facts are all documented in the New Testament but twisted by tradition and heathen ritual.

The common Christmas rites are steeped in the sun-worshipping holidays of the pagan Roman Saturnalia and Brumalia, and much of it having been spun off from Nordic worship of evergreen trees and yule log symbols along with mistletoe, holly, and bright lights. Encyclopedias, newspaper, and magazine articles appearing at year’s end will verify these facts. So will many honest and factual Web articles on Christmas.

‘The World Is My Shepherd’

Most live by the world, not the Word. If the Bible meant more to them, they naturally would want their beliefs to follow scriptural teaching.

Even if done in ignorance, most are guilty of the charge in Matthew 15:9: “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the

commandments of men.” If they were really devoted to Yahweh, they would leave popular error and get serious about their eternal future.

The culture overlooks the many pagan practices of Christmas with the justification that “Christmas is so memorable for the children that I just couldn’t keep it from them.”

Their faith and practice is driven by what pleases children and family, not what pleases Yahweh. That has become the top motivator for indulging in Christmas, Easter, and Halloween today.

The second is the argument, “I could not disappoint or offend my family by not keeping it with them.”

The third is, “But I have kept these holidays all my life and stopping would be too difficult,” which could be called the runaway train defense.

Jeremiah 10 Teaches Otherwise

The prophet Jeremiah wrote in 10:2, “Thus saith Yahweh, Learn not the way of the heathen...” The masses don’t reflect the man of Elohim that Paul wrote of in 2Timothy 3:16, so Yahweh’s Word is not their righteousness.

“Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die” is today’s standard of behavior.

But Yahweh is taking notes and recording everything. There will be a reckoning for each person one day.

Luke 8:17 tells us: “For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither anything hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.” That’s a sobering thought. You can run but you can’t hide anything from Yahweh.

Doctrine by Committee

There were 21 major ecumenical councils throughout history, called by the popes for the purpose of hammering out church teaching on a variety of major issues. These engines of error were responsible for most heresies through the centuries that are still believed today. Watch out for what those councils produced as they enforced their man-made teachings.

New doctrines were being advocated by those who were seeking prominence. When a council was called a matter was debated and a vote taken. The result was a doctrine foreign to Yahweh’s Word now bound upon the church. It was creed by committee, not by Yahweh.

Had there been no councils and no conferences, and if the church had the backbone to stand for Yahweh’s Word as their supreme guide, there would be much less apostasy today. And True Believers would not

look so out of step with the religious world.

A large part of the error that corrupted the church grew out of the heresies developed in the three centuries after the death of the apostles.

Monumental changes were made in the government structure and doctrine established by Yahshua through the apostles. The Roman church abandoned biblical authority and governance wholesale. Proper leadership of assemblies as given by the spirit in Ephesians 4:11 was abandoned.

The church patterned its government after the pagan Roman government hierarchy. Centralized rule over all churches was introduced, and that bred the many evils of church politics.

Those who coveted prominent positions and authority came out of the woodwork. Misguided, ambitious individuals jockeying for position and glory became the number one destroyer of assemblies.

To reach these goals, doctrine was changed to satisfy the masses.

As we read in *History of the Church Through the Ages* by Robert Brumback, “Human philosophy and paganism crept into the church and it became difficult for the church to preserve the simplicity of the gospel, the purity of the worship and the form of government that existed in the church in the beginning,” p. 16.

New doctrines were formed by combining human philosophy and paganism with

Christianity, making them more palatable to pagan converts. With these changes, the church became an apostate organization and nothing resembling the beginning with the apostles in Acts. The contrast was night and day.

New doctrines don’t come easily, either. There was much infighting among the leaders, many of whom had their own motivations. To settle matters, these special councils were called to hammer out differences. This is how the Trinity doctrine arose.

Know the Devices of Deceit

How can we seek and destroy false beliefs in our lives? It is a critical question. But before that, how can we identify what is right and what is wrong?

Here are some tried and true tests of teachings.

Beware of the one-verse wonders in what could be called “sola versola,” or the creation of an entire doctrine from one verse.

Example. A trinitarian website says that Yahshua has always been Yahweh. They support it by one verse, John 8:58: “Yahshua said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”

Often the sola versola is combined with the “leapus maximus.” In this case they claim that the phrase “before Abraham existed that I exist” means he was always with the Father from the beginning, which is a giant leap to a baseless conclusion – all from a single verse.

Watch for the giant leap off a single verse.

Those who don’t harmonize the entire Bible do it all the time.

Here is another example of leapus maximus from sola versola that we received in the mail. To support the rapture, 1 Thessalonians 5:9 was used: “For Yahweh hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Master Yahshua Messiah.”

The individual said “wrath” means the tribulation; therefore, the saints will be taken out of the world before the tribulation period.

The *Restoration Study Bible* holds the answer, showing the Greek word for “wrath.” It is *orge* and means any natural impulse, desire, or disposition. It came to mean anger as a violent passion. In other words, believers are not to be driven by knee-jerk reactions, especially not anger. That’s a far leap from supporting a rapture before the end-time tribulation.

Then there is the altering of Scripture to match personal belief, which is “versa-twistola” “You must worship Yahshua to be saved” said one man. He used a single verse to support this belief, Romans 10:9: “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Master Yahshua, and shalt believe in thine heart that Yahweh hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

Where does that verse tell us to worship Yahshua? Confess does not mean worship, it means to assent, covenant with. Neither does “believe in your heart” mean to worship Him.

We can do much better than this versa-



twistola. We can go right to the source Himself. In Matthew 4:10 Yahshua told haSatan— and at the same time sending the clear message to us—to worship only the Father. Matthew 4:10: “Then saith Yahshua unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship Yahweh thy Elohim, and him only shalt thou serve” (Deut. 10:20).

At the last several Feasts of Tabernacles we held morning seminars on various topics to show the error in many modern beliefs. Those who don’t attend the Feasts not only are remiss in fulfilling Yahweh’s commanded observances, the only holidays Yahweh gives to His people, but may also miss out in understanding major errors taught today.

We can now apply more principles of myth-busting.

Teachings of Heaven and Hell

It may be comforting to the grieving family to think that their deceased love one is smiling down from heaven. But it isn’t true. The Bible says the dead are dead, their thoughts perish, they cannot praise “in the grave.”

Yahshua said no man has ascended to heaven in John 3:13. Paul wrote in 1Corinthians 15:22-23 that we get life again at the resurrection, not before. Even the prophet Daniel knew in 7:27 that the saints are given the Kingdom “under” heaven, not “in” heaven. That means on earth, as so many other verses attest, like Revelation 5:10 (saints reign on the earth).

Another principle of myth-busting is to examine all verses on a subject before establishing a belief. If there are contradictions among verses, then the belief or understanding is likely faulty.

What about the popular notions about hell? There are three words translated hell: *sheol* in the Old Testament and *hades* in the New. Both mean the grave. Nothing more. The other is *tartaroo*, a place reserved exclusively for fallen angels. If facing someone with a penchant for polemics, explain these terms to him or her and then apply their meanings to the argument.

The traditionally deceived person may cite the parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man in Luke 16, showing the rich man being tormented in flames of hellfire.

First, this is a parable, a story to teach a principle. It reveals that there is no chance of repentance once you die. The parable is filled with symbolism to show the predicament of those who had no use for the Scriptures when living and now wish

desperately that they had.

The first fact encountered in the allegory is that the rich man is in the grave, not in fire. And neither is Lazarus in heaven, but in Abraham’s bosom. That’s a Hebraism meaning dead with Abraham, who is still awaiting the resurrection himself, according to Hebrews 11:13.

The church used hellfire to instill abject fear to control those who would not comply with made-up teachings.

Unknown Name Myth

Exodus 6:3 is a popular verse among critics of the sacred Name.

“And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of El Shaddai, but by my name Yahweh was I not known to them.” They will say, see, even the patriarchs did not know His Name. Keep in

- Abram lifted up his hand in praise to the Name Yahweh, Genesis 14:22;
- Even Abimelech, pantheist king of Gerar, used Yahweh’s Name Genesis 20:4;
- Abraham built an altar to His Name in Genesis 22;
- His Name was revealed to Jacob in a dream in Genesis 28:13.

So why does Exodus 6:3 say His Name wasn’t known? The note in the NIV explains what this Hebraism is actually saying: it wasn’t that they never heard His Name or knew it, but they didn’t know its full implications until they saw Him act in His Name for Israel and in all of the miraculous things He did for them. They did not understand Him as their deliverer and redeemer until then.

The *Companion Bible* note on 6:3 reads, “known, Hebrew = perceived or understood.

Own a Berean’s Dream – The *Restoration Study Bible*

So many misunderstandings and errors in popular beliefs and teachings are cleared up in the 7,000 notes and footnotes of the *Restoration Study Bible* (RSB). You do yourself a disservice trying to navigate the Scriptures without one. We continually get questions that are already answered in the RSB notes.

Through Strong’s Hebrew and Greek dictionaries conveniently added at the back, we go directly to the source languages for root meanings. When the Bible student consults the languages from which the Bible is translated, many misunderstandings are cleared up.

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mind the tactic of sola versola, the one-verse wonders. Look at all the contrary evidence.

Something is obviously amiss when His Name is found 65 times in Genesis alone. Note:

- Eve knew His Name, Genesis 4:1;
- Men in general began to call on His Name Yahweh after Enos, the son of Seth, Genesis 4:26;
- Abram called on Yahweh’s Name, Genesis 12:8;

The name was known as the covenant name; but was not known as to be understood.”

This is also explained in the RSB footnote on Exodus 6:3: “The meaning of this passage is that the patriarchs did not understand the Name, as representing His character and power, as did Moses and the Israelites after witnessing their deliverance from Egypt.”

It is time to leave 2,000 years of error and return to the faith once delivered. 

HISTORY IN CONTEXT -KING CYRUS-



Persian King Cyrus is mentioned only a few times in the Bible. In his first year as king, according to Ezra 1, he released the Jews from Babylonian captivity and allowed them to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Isaiah prophesied that Cyrus would do this, 44:28. There are more details about this man in the book, *The Histories* by Herodotus.

Cyrus' grandfather's was Astyages, king of the Medes. Astyages' daughter had some troubling dreams that were interpreted as such; her baby would one day overthrow the kingdom of the Medes. Astyages felt threatened and commanded his steward Harpagus to kill the newborn baby. Harpagus did not kill the child, though, since he feared that the king might change his mind, and then he would be held accountable. Instead he decided to have someone else do it.

He summoned a herdsman to expose the child in the wilderness. The herdsman returned home with the baby he was to kill and was met by his wife. They both were expecting their own baby to be born, but it had miscarried that very day.

They decided to switch babies, to keep the live one for themselves and to show Harpagus their dead child, thus deceiving him. Cyrus was this baby.

Cyrus's identity remained hidden until he was ten years old. He and some other boys were playing the game of "King." Cyrus was picked to play the king and the other boys played his subjects. One of Cyrus's friends refused to listen to Cyrus's commands, so Cyrus ordered his arrest and whipped him.

After the game had finished, the young boy who had been beaten complained to his father, a distinguished man in the kingdom, of the mistreatment he had received from the son of a herdsman. The father was so angry at what had happened that he took the matter before King Astyages.

Astyages commanded that the ten-year old boy Cyrus come before him and explain his actions. Cyrus explained what had happened, that he was chosen to play the king because the boys thought him the best to hold that office and that the one boy was beaten because of his disobedience.

Cyrus saw nothing wrong in what he did since he was made king but was willing to be punished if the king saw he had done wrong.

Astyages was amazed at the boy's response and started guessing that this was no mere child of a herdsman. That was a kingly answer to his questions, not one of a peasant. He also saw that the boy had a

likeness unto his own. Suspecting that this was his grandson, he asked the herdsman, Cyrus's surrogate father, where he had received the child. The herdsman affirmed that it was his son, but when Astyages threatened him with torture, the herdsman confessed that Cyrus was not his own and retold what had happened.

Astyages was glad to have his grandson again but was angry at Harpagus, who had disobeyed his order to kill the child. To return his anger onto Harpagus, Astyages ordered him to bring his son to a banquet in celebration of the return of Astyages's grandson.

Astyages murdered Harpagus's son of thirteen and cooked him up in a meal for Harpagus. Harpagus was forced to eat his own child. Harpagus never forgot this horrible act of the king.

When Cyrus was older and was living with his biological parents in Persia, Harpagus saw in Cyrus a way to destroy the king and his Median kingdom. Cyrus was very brave and very popular among the Persians. So Harpagus convinced Cyrus to gather the forces of the Persians and fight the Medes. The Persians won, Astyages was dethroned, and Cyrus was put in his place. And in his first year of reign, he set the Jews free. ✓



WHO IS THE ANGEL OF YAHWEH?

by Randy Folliard

There is a mysterious figure in the Old Testament known as the angel of Yahweh, often incorrectly referred to as the “angel of the Lord.” This Being or *mal’ak* appears throughout the Tanakh, beginning in Genesis and appearing 54 times in the Old Testament of the KJV. He serves as a messenger, guide, and protector of Israel.

Perhaps the most fascinating part of this Being is in the connection to the Messiah. Since antiquity, many theologians and scholars from both Judaism and Christianity have discerned a special uniqueness about this *mal’ak*. They have discovered a greatness with the angel of Yahweh and a special link between Him and the Messiah.

To explain, the following is an excerpt from the book, *No Ordinary Angel, Celestial Spirits and Christian Claims About Jesus*: “But the logic of such a reading of [Yahshua] into accounts of the angel of the LORD went deeper. Many Jews before and during the time of [Yahshua] were deeply interested in angels. Some understood the angel of the LORD as a

being completely separate from G-d—a sort of angelic vizier or righthand angel, who served as head of the heavenly host and in other important capacities, including as a mediator between god and humans. Further, some Jews routinely appropriated language used in Scripture to describe the angel of the L-RD and used it to characterize certain of G-d's attributes, including G-d's word, glory, wisdom, spirit, power, and name... almost as if these aspects of the Deity were themselves independent angels. In other words, quite apart from Christianity there was talk among ancient Jews of G-d's word, G-d's glory, and so forth in terms highly reminiscent of the angel of the L-RD. So, when early Christian authors like Justin Martyr connected [Yahshua] with G-d's word and that word in turn, with the angel of the L-RD, they were not inventing from scratch so much as adding a new layer to well-established ways of reading Scripture," Susan R. Garrett, p. 27.

Much evidence throughout the Old Testament displays the exceptional and distinctive nature of the angel of Yahweh. Examples include His authority, ability to forgive sin, connection to the Father, role as a mediator, and redeemer of Israel. Interestingly, similar attributes can be found with Yahshua in the New Testament.

Establishing Yahshua's Pre-existence

Before we delve into the Old Testament showing the numerous parallels between the angel of Yahweh and the Messiah, let's consider three passages from the New Testament showing that Yahshua existed before His earthly birth.

The first is from Colossians 1, starting in verse 14. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible El, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him" (Col. 1:14-16).

To whom is Paul referring? Verse 14 states that we have received our redemption through His blood. This is obviously a reference to Yahshua the Messiah. What we learn here about the Messiah is that He is the image of the invisible El and the firstborn of every creature.

The word "image" is from the Greek *eikon* and refers to a likeness or resemblance. Since we know that Yahshua is the Son of Yahweh, it makes sense that He was created in Yahweh's likeness. Keep in mind, though, that this does NOT indicate that He and the Father are one being; in fact it shows the contrary.

Another word to consider is "firstborn." This comes from the Greek *prototokos* and according to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* means, "the firstborn of Christ, the first born of all creation." This passage verifies that Yahshua the Messiah was created in His Father's image and was the first being of creation. Based on this, Yahshua had to exist in the Old Testament.

In 1Corinthians 10:1-4 we see that Yahshua traveled with the Israelites leaving Egypt in the Old Testament. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Messiah."

According to *Barnes' Notes*, the cloud refers to the cloud that followed the Israelites throughout the wilderness. It was a cloud by day and a fire by night. Paul shows a connection between this cloud and the Messiah. Yahshua was the cloud that led the Israelites through the wilderness. This fact indisputably supports His preexistence.

There is one additional passage to consider. John 5:37 states, "And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."

If no man has seen or heard the Father, who then was the Yahweh who spoke and appeared to mankind in the Old Testament? Based on the biblical record, it was the preexistent Messiah. It was Yahshua in His preexistence who served as the mediator and Word of Yahweh in the Old Testament. Angel in the Wilderness

One of most important passages providing insight into the angel of Yahweh is Exodus 23:20-23.

"Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into

the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off."

This passage provides much insight into the angel of Yahweh. First, we see that this *mal'ak* would go with them, an obvious reference to the cloud by day and fire by night. We also see that this angel had authority to give commandments and to forgive sin. The only other Being with that authority is Yahshua the Messiah.

Also, this *mal'ak* had Yahweh's Name in Him. This is an amazing point, as it shows a strong connection between this angel and the Messiah. Besides the angel of Yahweh, no other angel shared the divine Name.

For example, Gabriel and Michael are two of the most well-known angels in the Bible, but neither one has Yahweh's Name in his name. Gabriel means, "El is my strength" and Michael means, "Who is Like El." Understand that "El" is not a name but a title. In this case, it refers to Yahweh, but is not His Name.

Yahshua said in John 5:43 that He came in His Father's Name. As a side note, this is one reason we use the name "Yahshua" and not "Yeshua." As Yahshua came in His Father's Name in the New Testament, it only makes sense that He would have done the same in the Old. Therefore, the description here is a perfect fit for one Being who is Yahshua the Messiah.

We also read that this *mal'ak* would fight for Israel and be an adversary to Israel's enemies. Depending on how some view the Messiah in the New Testament, they may have a hard time seeing Him as this angelic warrior in the Old Testament. But remember what we find in the Book of Revelation. Yahshua will return with vengeance and a sword. Zechariah 12 and 14 prophesy that He will bring a plague upon and destroy all the armies of the earth who oppose Him.

An amazing continuity exists between the Old and New testaments. As Yahshua



fought for His people in the Old Testament, He will do the same when He returns at His Second Coming. More about this momentarily. This passage, then, offers an incredible parallel between the *mal'ak* of Yahweh and Yahshua the Messiah.

The Burning Bush

Let's now consider a few activities of the angel of Yahweh in the Old Testament. The first is in regard to Moses in Exodus 3:1-8, where the angel of Yahweh manifested Himself in a burning bush.

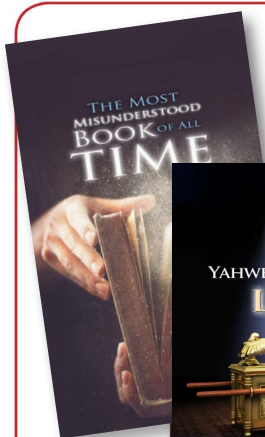
"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of Elohim, even to Horeb. And the angel of Yahweh appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when Yahweh saw that he turned aside to see, Elohim called unto him out of the

midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the Elohim of thy father, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon Elohim. And Yahweh said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites."

As the angel of Yahweh appeared before Moses in a fire, we see a similar occurrence of the glorified Messiah in the Book of Revelation, "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters," Revelation 1:14-15.

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**.





This passage says that the ground where Moses stood was holy because of the presence of the *mal'ak*, further showing His holiness and consecration. Such reverence is not observed for other angels.

We also see this Being referred to as both the angel of Yahweh (v.1) and Yahweh (v. 4). This does not imply that this is Yahweh the Father or that the Father and Son are one being. While we believe that Yahshua in His preexistence likely shared Yahweh's Name, He was separate and distinct from His Father.

Genesis 19:24 shows this distinction: "Then Yahweh rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Yahweh out of heaven." Here are two Yahwehs, one on earth and one in heaven. The Yahweh on earth represents the Son and the Yahweh in heaven represents the Father.

This may sound complicated, but in fact it's elementary. Because the Son served as a mediator, or spokesman, between Yahweh and mankind, He literally came in the name of Yahweh. He was NOT the father, but represented the Father.

In addition, we see here that the angel of Yahweh conveyed to Moses that He had seen the affliction of His people and that He would deliver them from their bondage.

We see a link here between the angel of Yahweh and the Messiah. As the *mal'ak* of Yahweh would free Israel from the bondage of slavery, so Yahshua through His sacrifice has freed us from the bondage of sin. He will also free Israel from annihilation at His Second Coming!

Abraham Almost Sacrifices Isaac

Another activity of this angel of Yahweh is in Genesis 22:9-18. "And they came to the place which Elohim had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of Yahweh called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest Elohim, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and

offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Yahweh Yireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of Yahweh it shall be seen. And the angel of Yahweh called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith Yahweh, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”

Abraham was told to offer up his son Isaac as a burnt offering. As a father I can't read this without putting myself in Abraham's place. The thought of sacrificing your own child is beyond words. For a father, there would be no greater sacrifice. Even though Abraham believed that Yahweh could resurrect his son from the dead (see Hebrews 11:19), such courage and faith is extraordinary.

As Abraham was about to plunge his knife into Isaac, the angel of Yahweh stopped him and saved his son's life. In lieu of Isaac, Yahweh provided a ram as a burnt offering. Because of this, Abraham named the place Yahweh Yireh, meaning Yahweh provides or Yahweh sees.

This was one of the most important events in Abraham's life and in it was the *mal'ak* of Yahweh, who interceded between Yahweh and Abraham. As Isaac would have died without the intervention from the angel of Yahweh, we would certainly die in our sins without the intervention from Yahshua the Messiah.

Gideon and Manoah

Two similar accounts are found in the book of Judges, one is in connection with Gideon and the second concerns a man named Manoah.

Gideon's experience with the angel of Yahweh is told in Judges 6:12-22. “And the angel of Yahweh appeared unto him, and said unto him, Yahweh is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my master, if Yahweh be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not Yahweh bring us up from Egypt? but now Yahweh hath

forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. And Yahweh looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? And he said unto him, Oh Yahweh, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And Yahweh said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again. And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it. And the angel of Elohim said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. Then the angel of Yahweh put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of Yahweh departed out of his sight. And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of Yahweh, Gideon said, Alas, O my Sovereign Yahweh! for because I have seen an angel of Yahweh face to face.”

At this time the Israelites had forsaken Yahweh and done evil. Therefore, He delivered them up to the Midianites. The message to Gideon from the angel of Yahweh was that He would save Israel from the hands of Midian. Gideon did not realize this was an angel. He believed it was only a man. As a show of respect Gideon asked the *mal'ak* to stay and eat.

Gideon realized it was the *mal'ak* of Yahweh when the food was consumed by fire. His response was utter fear because he had seen the *mal'ak* of Yahweh face-to-face. His reaction is reminiscent of Yahshua's appearance to John of Patmos in Revelation 1:17: “And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last.” In the case of John of Patmos, it was Yahshua the Messiah in His glorified state. In the case of Gideon, the evidence points to the

preexistent Messiah.

Another similar account occurred with a man named Manoah in Judges 13:13-21.

“And the angel of Yahweh said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe. And Manoah said unto the angel of Yahweh, I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee. And the angel of Yahweh said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto Yahweh. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of Yahweh. And Manoah said unto the angel of Yahweh, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour? And the angel of Yahweh said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret? So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto Yahweh: and the angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of Yahweh ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground. But the angel of Yahweh did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of Yahweh.”

Manoah was the father of Samson. Before the angel of Yahweh appeared to Manoah, he first appeared to Manoah's wife, Samson's mother, who was told not to eat or drink anything from the vine. This was in accordance to the Nazarite vow; therefore, Samson was a Nazarite from birth.

When the angel of Yahweh ascended in the flames of fire Manoah and his wife realized that this was not a man, but the angel of Yahweh. Like Gideon before them, upon realizing this, they were afraid of dying, especially Manoah.

In verse 18 Manoah asked the angel for his name. Keep in mind that Manoah did not realize this was an angel. The response to his inquiry was that the angel's name was a secret, or in Hebrew *piliy*, meaning “remarkable.” **Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon** defines this word as, “wonderful, incomprehensible, extraordinary.”

The Apostle Paul in Philippians 2:9 says, "Wherefore Yahweh also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." When we understand the meaning of the Hebrew in Judges and realize that Yahshua was given a preeminent name, we can see another parallel between the angel of Yahweh and the Messiah.

Consider this: Gabriel and Michael

of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh," 2Kings 19:32-26.

Sennacherib was the king of Assyria, one of most ruthless kings in one of the most ruthless nations of antiquity. This is the same nation that conquered the ten northern tribes of Israel, and it was all but certain that the same fate would now come upon the nation of Judah.

But this was not to happen. Yahweh

After the armies meet at Armageddon, or Tel Megiddo, the Bible shows that they will then march onto Jerusalem where they will attack the city. It will be at this precise time when Yahshua the Messiah returns to fight for the Jewish people and the people of Israel. The Jews will be surrounded, but not forsaken. As we see in verse 8, Yahweh will empower and defend His people.

He will do this through the angel of



The Lachish relief, found at Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh, depicts his brutal war campaign against Judah. The Sennacherib Prism validates that he never entered Jerusalem.

are high-ranking angels, but they never hid or concealed their names. This seems to indicate that this *mal'ak* of Yahweh was greater than Gabriel and Michael, once again pointing to Yahshua the Messiah. The Redeemer of Israel.

Yet another incident involves King Hezekiah. "Therefore thus saith Yahweh concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith Yahweh. For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. And it came to pass that night, that the angel of Yahweh went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king

sent Isaiah to prophesy to King Hezekiah, who was assured that not even an arrow would enter Jerusalem. Rather, an angel of Yahweh had delivered Judah from Sennacherib and his army.

As we read in Exodus 23, this angel would be an enemy to Israel's adversaries, which is precisely what we find here. For those who can't envision Yahshua killing a hundred and eighty-five thousand men, even worse will be done when He returns.

We see this in Zechariah 12:8-9, which depicts the final battle and the return of Yahshua the Messiah. "In that day shall Yahweh defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as Elohim, as the angel of Yahweh before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem."

Yahweh. This *mal'ak* will fight against those armies that will come against Jerusalem and the Israelite people. As he defended ancient Israel from the Assyrian army, He will do the same for future Israel. However, this time it will not be only one army, but many armies that attack the holy city.

From the biblical evidence the angel of Yahweh and Yahshua the Messiah are the same being. As the angel of Yahweh protected and defended Israel of Old, Yahshua the Messiah will do the same when He returns to gather the elect.

This correlation between the angel of Yahweh and Yahshua the Messiah is important. First, it recognizes the uniqueness and special position of the angel of Yahweh. Second, it shows Yahshua's important contributions before His birth as a man. And third, it shows the amazing continuity between the Old and New testaments. ✓



When Troubles Surround You

by Alan Mansager

Phil Martin died recently. But there was no funeral. No relatives came to his home. No one sent cards or flowers to the family. Phil's death was spiritual.

You could see it coming as surely as falling leaves in autumn. The signs were all there:

- Previously eager to discuss his latest studies in the Bible, Phil showed increasingly less interest in reading and studying Scripture
- Although knowing the power of regular prayer to help him overcome problems, he found himself praying less frequently. Before he "died," he had quit communicating with Yahweh entirely.

Once one of the most regular of worshipers at his local Assembly, Phil came less frequently to Sabbath services. A few months before his spiritual demise, he had stopped attending entirely.

His drift from pursuing a life of a True Believer soon became evident in

his relationship with his family. His wife noticed that he had become more irritable. He shouted at her and the children more often. His sleep was restless. Tranquilizers became a daily supplement.

The spiritual disorder that led to this man's spiritual death was not insidious, like some malignant growth slowly devouring a vital organ. Like so many others in his situation, Martin knew it was there. In fact, he could have taken steps to stop it but instead let it overcome him. He had given up. And then he blamed Yahweh.

Does Yahweh Care?

Like many who lose interest in the Bible and living a life for the Messiah, Phil was a victim of personal troubles and he allowed those troubles to come between him and his Heavenly Father.

First, he lost his job. Then came the financial difficulties, followed by the news

that his son had been arrested for drug possession. "Why would Yahweh allow this to happen to me? What did I do to deserve it?"

In desperation, Phil asked the perennial question first raised by Job: If Yahweh is merciful, why do the righteous suffer? Job in despair had cried, "Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom El has hedged in? For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet: yet trouble came," Job 3:23, 25-26.

Men have argued for centuries over Yahweh's motives for allowing the hardships that almost crushed Job. Remember that Job was not aware of the wager between Yahweh and Satan that took place before his afflictions.

Perhaps this is one lesson to be learned from Job's tribulations: we are not always privy to the reasons for our hardships,

but hardships have a rationale even if not immediately apparent to us at the time. Yahweh is working out His plan in our lives and we need to trust Him.

Phil, Job, and others who suffer real problems and setbacks in life begin to search for a reason. Too often their search stops short, ending in frustration and bitterness. Frequently from the depths of their depression they may even doubt Yahweh's existence. "Yahweh doesn't care about me or He would not be letting all of this happen," they conclude. "Maybe He doesn't even exist."

Just as regrettable is the conclusion drawn by some that their painful situation is a sign of their unworthiness in the Heavenly Father's eyes. Unconsciously they concede that if they are not worthy, then there is no point in continuing to seek righteousness.

Some even put off baptism into Yahshua's Name because they believe they are "not good enough." Yahshua never demanded that we be worthy before we turn our lives over to Him. In fact, we need Him precisely because we are UNworthy — but desiring with all our being to change what we are to conform to His ways.

Whatever the rationale, spiritual suicide is commonly the tragic consequence of personal trials when the very opposite should result.

Why Troubles Come

One reason Yahweh allows personal troubles is the same reason a parent punishes his child — to correct him and channel him in a right direction. It often takes some rough sandpaper to make a knotty board smooth.

Realize that Yahweh never tempts us into committing sin. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of Elohim; for Elohim cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempts He any man," James 1:13. But He will allow us to experience some trials to teach us important lessons in humility and faith.

The prophet Daniel wrote, "Yahweh did not hesitate to bring the disaster upon us, for Yahweh our Elohim is righteous in everything He does; yet we have not obeyed Him" (Dan. 9:14, NIV).

Our Father knows that when all is going well that we have a tendency to forget Him as the one behind the blessings. From being self-sufficient we become self-confident, thinking we no longer need a Provider because we seem to be providing well

enough for ourselves. That is when we cross the line and when the danger of sin born of arrogant self-reliance becomes real.

It was just this situation that prompted Yahshua to say, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Yahweh," Matthew 19:24. For a fully-loaded camel to go through the eye of a needle (a small door fixed in a gate), it had to be tediously unloaded. So must a rich man — who may feel self-sufficient — be unburdened from any materialism.

When we suffer severe difficulties and see no way out, our natural reaction should be to turn to Yahweh for help. That is exactly what He wants, because often the reason we are having trials is that we have strayed from righteousness to sin. And like a child, sometimes the only voice we will listen to is the voice of chastisement.

Yahweh has not deserted you when you find yourself up against the wall, chin-deep in problems. He probably is trying to get your mind away from the ways of the world and focused on the only true Way to happiness. He cares about you, as a parent cares for the child he corrects. "My son, despise not the chastening of Yahweh: neither be weary of His correction: for whom Yahweh loves he corrects: even as a father the son in whom he delights" Proverbs 3:11-12.

Yahweh wants each of us to be filled with humility, as was Yahshua. When He sees us deviating, He is quick to correct us out of His deep love for us.

As difficult as it may be, we should rejoice at trials, for whom Yahweh loves He chastens, as a father does his children, Proverbs 13:24. David expressed it this way: "I know, O Yahweh, that your judgments are right, and that you in faithfulness have afflicted me," Psalm 119:75.

The desired result is the voice of Yahweh echoing down through the centuries: "For they have turned their back on Me, and not their face: but in the time of their trouble will say, Arise, and save us," Jeremiah 2:27. Isn't that nearly always the case? We are at our humblest when we are helpless to solve our own problems!

Grow Spiritually, Overcome Evil

When you have trials, should you despair — or even worse — become angry at Yahweh? If you do, you are no more mature than a child who when punished walks off pouting.

Human nature often causes us to target something or someone other than ourselves for our problems. Rather than giving up in despair or going around looking for someone to blame, we should be glad that we have the opportunity to examine and correct our lives.

Rejoice that Yahweh cares enough about you to want to turn you around. As we read in Job 5:17, "Happy is the man whom Elohim corrects: therefore despise not the chastening of the Almighty."

It is not easy, but the truly sincere person will put his pride aside as he examines himself in an effort to root out what is corrupting his life.

Others react with despair in the face of adversity. They are eager to throw in the towel, to give it all up as hopeless. Satan knows you are vulnerable during trying times — willing to do almost anything to get out of your predicament. Will you allow the devil to dominate your life?

One of Satan's favorite strategies is to tempt us when we are in a weakened state. He did it to Job while Job was under distress: Job was subjected to his wife's taunt, "curse Yahweh and die."

The Adversary also adroitly tested Yahshua as well after the Messiah's 40-day fast — when Yahshua was weakest physically and most susceptible to giving in. The first thing he tempted the Savior with was food (Matt 4:3). But Yahshua stood up to the Evil One until the Deceiver gave up.

He had prepared for the encounter through 40 days of fasting and prayer. Prayer is the greatest weapon against personal difficulties, problems, and satanic attacks.

Our preeminent earthly leaders — like Washington, Lincoln, Churchill, and Roosevelt — were those who kept pushing forward even during their countries' darkest hours.

They not only had the fortitude to withstand the pressures themselves (obviously a strength given by Yahweh), but they also realized the necessity to buoy up the flagging spirits of others by encouraging them and strengthening their resolve not to give up when the hour was darkest.

Scriptural men of Yahweh displayed like but greater qualities, because Yahweh directed all their paths. Paul expressed his deep faith when he paused to reflect on the plight of the True Believer. He wrote, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

persecuted but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed,” 2Corinthians 4:8-9.

Persevere and Resist

We endure pain for relatively brief moments, fully knowing that it shall pass, as it always does. So with prayer and faith we hold on until the storm passes.

Yahshua prayed that Peter would resist the onslaught of Satan and that his faith would remain unshaken, Luke 22:32. He didn’t make it any easier for Peter, but knew through overcoming adversity that Peter would rise to a greater spiritual closeness to Yahweh.

Yahshua also admonishes us that once we make a decision to follow Him, we must not fail to continue to the end. “No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of Elohim,” Luke 9:62. He promised in Matthew 5:13 that those who lose their faith – possibly from trials – will be cast away from salvation.

Those new in the faith need to take special care not to become discouraged. Satan tries his hardest on those he thinks might be weakest. Yahshua’s parable of the sower in Matthew 13 is a graphic example. The seed that fell on stony places sprouted, but for lack of deep roots was soon scorched and killed by the sun’s heat.

This sprout represents one who cannot withstand the harsh reality of thriving in a tough and sinful world. He is not firmly established in sound doctrine. When tribulation comes, as happens to all of us, he withers and dies spiritually. Why? Because he lacks spiritual resolve, a product of deep faith, to continue in adversity.

Strength Through Suffering

The other reason Yahweh allows afflictions to come upon us is to strengthen us. Paul saw the actual benefits of tribulation. He wrote in Romans 5:3-4, “And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation works patience; and patience experience; and experience, hope.” By overcoming trials through trust in Yahweh, we develop character.

Bodybuilders know that the way to develop strength and endurance is to work against a formidable, opposing weight. So it is in developing spiritual strength and stamina. By overcoming problems that work against his never-ending quest for the Kingdom, the determined True

Believer grows spiritually and strengthens correspondingly.

With each crisis we overcome, we are better prepared to handle the next one. Having traveled the rough terrain of life’s trials, we are more equipped to offer support to others when they face similar difficulties. The mature believer will look at the experience as a way to help guide many to Yahweh.

Yahshua was a veteran at conquering temptation and hardship, and He is our example and inspiration for overcoming. “For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need,” Hebrews 4:15-16. Just knowing that our Savior faced – and overcame – the same difficulties we have is the greatest reassurance.

In Romans 12:12 is this admonition: “Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.” When we seek Yahweh’s help in overcoming a particular trial, He promises He will come to our aid.


In Isaiah 41:10, Yahweh offers great hope: “Fear not; for I am with you: be not dismayed; for I am your Elohim: I will strengthen you; yes, I will help you; yes, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness.” Such a promise should give all of us great peace of mind.

You Can Overcome

Yahweh promises that He will not allow us to have problems or temptations greater than we can handle. We read in 1Corinthians 10:13, “But remember this – the wrong desires that come into your life are not anything new and different. Many others have faced exactly the same problems before you. You can trust Yahweh to keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can’t stand up to it, for He has promised this and will do what He says. He will show you how to escape temptation’s power so that you can bear up patiently against it,” Living Bible.

What an uplifting promise! The next time you face a severe test, ask Yahweh in prayer to help you endure it and learn whatever lesson He is teaching by it. Keep in mind that He loves you and wants more than anything for you to benefit from your trial – becoming stronger spiritually through

temperance and patience. If you have not led the perfect life, then repent of your sins and start living for Him.

Never lose hope. Remember that the light at the end of the tunnel is not an oncoming freight train, but the shekinah glory of our Savior as He offers eternal life to those who walk in His ways and persevere to the end, Mark 13:13. 

New Testament Synonyms for ‘Repent,’ ‘Repentance’

(From the Companion Bible, Appendix 111)

I. The Verb.

1. metaneo = to change one’s mind, always for the better, and morally. Because of this it is often used in the Imperative (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Acts 2:38; 3:19). Not merely to forsake sin, but to change one’s apprehension regarding it. It occurs 34 times. It answers to the Latin resipisco - to recover one’s senses, to come to one’s self.

2. metametomai = to regret; to have after-care or annoyance at the consequences of an act of sin rather than a deep regret at the cause from want of not knowing better. Hence it is never used in the imperative. It occurs six times, and in each case (except Matt. 21:29, 32) never in the real Biblical sense of “repentance toward [Yahweh].” It is from meta = after, and me/o = to be an object of care. See notes on 2Cor. 7:8 and 10. It is used of Judas Iscariot (Matt. 27:3); negatively of Paul’s regret (2Cor. 7:8); and of [Yahweh] (Heb. 7:21).

II. The Noun.

metanoia = a real change of mind and attitude toward sin itself, and the cause of it (not merely the consequences of it), which affects the whole life and not merely a single act. It has been defined as a change in our principle of action (Gr. nous) from what is by nature the exact opposite. It occurs 24 times, and except Heb. 12:17 is a real “repentance toward [Elohim].” It is associated with the work of the Holy Spirit, and is connected with the remission of sins and the promises of salvation.

Q Does prophecy say anything about China and its involvement in the end times and the battle of Armageddon?

A China's power and influence in recent years have been on a dramatic rise since they discovered capitalism. China's economy is second only to that of the United States as it pursues global dominance. China is rapidly building up its military and technological strength, building ships, planes, and aircraft carriers while intimidating Hong Kong, Tibet, Taiwan, and inserting itself into other regions. Politically, China is increasingly involved in the Middle East, Africa, and the western hemisphere, selling weaponry like missiles to Iran and North Korea. It is even making overtures to Russia.

The likelihood that China with its 1.4 billion population will be part of the invasion hinges on the prophecy of an army of 200 million (Revelation 9:16) and occasional reports of China's capability of equipping such a vast army. It is not hard to imagine that the "kings from the East" who one day will march into Israel will include China.

China is not mentioned by its present name in the King James Version, but its role in the final war in the Middle East is clear. Isaiah apparently had China in mind when he wrote, "Behold these shall come from far; and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim," 49:12. The Septuagint indicates that Sinim was east of Judea, and suggests extreme

remoteness. Strong's says of Sinim, "A distant Oriental region."

Napoleon, who was defeated at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, once gave a remarkable prediction, "China? There lies a sleeping giant. Let him sleep, for when he wakes he will move the world."

Notice Revelation 16:12, "And the sixth

Highway. This arterial link joins highways from Sinkiang, the northwest province of China, through Afghanistan and Pakistan to the Persian Gulf. A branch also goes to the Euphrates River. Thus, China has linked Sinkiang province to Havelian, located 60 miles north of Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan.

This highway is 32 feet wide, and traverses an area where five nations converge: China, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Russia. Islamabad has good rail, air, and road connections to Karachi, the Pakistani port on the Arabian Sea.

While many Bible teachers assume that Ezekiel 38 refers to the coming invasion of Israel by Russia in our time, this cannot be. Ezekiel 38 has to do with the time after the second resurrection when fleshly Israel is again brought back to life and placed in Judea. The ten tribes are yet in exile.

Most likely, China and those with her are also referred to in Daniel 11:44: "But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him [Antimesiah]; and he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly sweep away many."

The epicenter of world events in the near future will be the Middle East. Biblical prophecy always centers on the Middle East and on the nations that come in contact with Israel. Psalm 83 speaks of 10 Arab nations around Israel, which could well be the 10 toes of Daniel's prophecy. In league with these nations will be China. But in the final war, nuclear weapons no doubt will be employed, a technology China possesses.

Apparently demonic spirits drive the kings of the east to march on the Euphrates River area. Revelation 16:12 tells of the drying up of the water. Verses 13-14 relate that unclean spirits like frogs will come out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. Signs and miracles accompany them to bring the great kings of the world to prepare for battle. These then gather at the place of Har-Magedon (ASV) where the greatest earthquake of all time then takes place.



angel poured out his bowl upon the great river, the river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the sunrising," ASV. Land of the Rising Sun means the orientals, including Japan, which has the red sun as its national symbol.

The Chinese and oriental armies can now march along the completed Karakoram



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Q If we saints are here on earth during the Millennium, as shown in the other Scriptures, can you explain what Paul meant in 1Thessalonians 4:16-17? Is this a rapture?

A In 1Thessalonians 4:16-17 we see that the saints will rise to meet Yahshua in the air as He returns. The Greek word “meet” here is *apantesis*. It is the same Greek word found in Acts 28:15, where Paul is heading for Rome. Some of the Roman brethren heard that Paul was coming and they went out to meet (*apantesis*) him.

Did Paul then reverse course and return to Malta with all who came out to meet him? No, they all continued on to Paul’s destination, which was Rome, v. 16.

Similarly, when the saints “meet” Yahshua in the air (*apantesis*) He doesn’t reverse course and head back to heaven. Notice where He is headed:

“And his feet shall stand *in that day* upon the mount of Olives, which [is] before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south” (Zech. 14:4).

Yahshua receives His Kingdom government and journeys to earth, Luke 19:11-12. On His way to earth He is joined by the saints who rise to meet and accompany Him the rest of the way, “and so shall we ever be with the Savior,” 1Thes. 4:17.

He will establish His Kingdom on the earth, Revelation 5:9-10, Matthew 6:10, Isaiah 2:2-4; 35:1-2, 5-7; 65:21-25. The saints will reign with Him 1,000 years on earth, Revelation 20:6.

Q I’ve discovered that Lucifer is Latin for lightbearer or morning star. Why does Yahshua refer to Himself by these titles—bright and morning star, and day star (Rev. 22:16, 2Pet. 1:19)?

The name Lucifer appears only once in the

A Scriptures: Isaiah 14:12. It is a Roman Catholic invention in a Latin word first appearing in the fourth century Vulgate. The Hebrew is *hey/el*, from the primitive root *halal*, meaning to be clear, to shine, hence to make a show, to boast, and thus to be clamorously foolish.

We know that Satan was once a perfect, beautiful creature, Ezekiel 28:13-15, but he fell because of personal vanity surrounding his beauty. He fits the meaning of *halal* perfectly. Satan became perverted by his beauty. Yahshua is perfect in His beauty. Yahshua also is given the appellation of brightness, shining, and the sun. But His is the pure and true light of righteousness, not a perversion.

Satan is the exact counterfeit of Yahshua, a reverse image of everything good that Yahshua is or represents, including a perverted “beauty” of light and radiance that rightly is our Savior.

Q If we use Yahweh’s Name, aren’t we in danger of blasphemy? The Jews believe we blaspheme when we use His Name, which they say is too holy to use.

A Leviticus 24:15-16 is often cited as the reason the Jews stopped proclaiming the Name Yahweh and disguised or substituted other appellatives such as Adonai (L-rd) to hide the Name.

The verses read, “And you shall speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curses his Elohim shall bear his sin. And he that blasphemeth the name of Yahweh he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land when he blasphemeth the name of Yahweh shall be put to death.” (The Septuagint reads, “names the Name” for “blasphemes.”)

Because His name is indeed holy and precious, no one should invoke Yahweh’s Name flippantly or use it in a degrading manner. The death penalty was decreed on one who would bring disgrace or blaspheme

the personal Name Yahweh.

The Third Commandment clearly shows the sacredness and high esteem we should all have for Yahweh’s Name, as declared in Exodus 20:7: “You shall not take the name of Yahweh your Elohim in vain; for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain.”

To stop calling upon His Name lest one might blaspheme it violates numerous passages that command us to honor and call on His Name. Acts 4:12 says there is only one Name through which we find salvation. We must learn to handle rightly Bible truth and not do away with or circumvent any of His commands.

Joel 2:32 directly opposes the Jews’ prohibition against the Name: “And it shall come to pass, that whoever shall call on the name of Yahweh shall be delivered...” King David clearly teaches in the Psalms that we are to call upon the Name Yahweh and all nations will come and worship before Yahweh and “shall glorify your name,” Psalm 86:7-9. The one whose Name is Yahweh will spare us according to Psalm 91:14, “Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high because he has known my Name!” There are a number of Psalms with this and other promises.

Oddly, the admonition in Jeremiah 44:26 is used as “proof” that Jews were not to call on Yahweh’s Name while in Egypt—and apparently some teachers would like to include us in the prohibition as well. One must read the entire 44th chapter.

Calling on Yahweh’s revealed Name was a privilege Yahweh granted His people, promising to answer. But in the case of verse 26 He prohibited them from invoking His Name as punishment for their gross idolatry while in Egypt. He did not want His Name mixed in with heathen worship. To claim they are not allowed to use His Name at all today is to say that they are still guilty of that idolatry. From this we also conclude that He prohibits the use of His Name Yahweh by those today who mix it with the heathen titles “God” and “Lord.”

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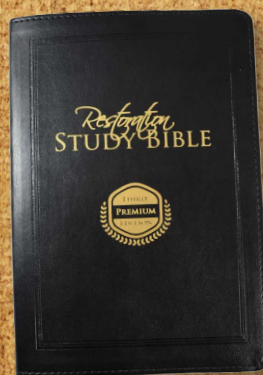
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"I and approximately six others are in the process of leaving [our affiliation] due to improper doctrinal teachings/changes and completely denying the use of the correct names of our Father in heaven, Yahweh and His Son Yahshua. I knew something was wrong earlier, but didn't realize what it was until I was made aware, from these others, that have been intensely researching the issues for some time. That's when I decided to start following YRM and watching your video's and website. It is amazing to me how much more I have learned from YRM and will continue on this path, as this "awakening" has really had a great effect on me. I feel that I am now on the correct path to salvation and must stay on it. All I can do is pray for all those involved in letting themselves be deceived and hope they, too, have an awakening." – CK

"I am so blessed by Yahweh's Restoration Ministry. I have learned, and am still learning, so much by this Ministry. I feel the Kadosh Ruach and the love here. I love YRM and you all! BIG blessings to you all." – LM

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"I was extremely happy when I saw your "Drive-by Teaching" on the trinity. I have had trouble believing it since I was a very young child in Sunday school. Yahweh seemed to keep me from trusting what my teachers told me no matter what they said. I have much to learn and am thankful I found you." – SJ

"Ever so grateful for ministries as yours bringing us back to biblical truth." – JB

"Hope to see more [messages]. I like downloading and listening to them. Overall, love the site and information shared. It keeps getting better and better." – N

As more Bible students learn the truth they wonder how the disconnect happened. Below is the main cause:– ED

Many errors in today's beliefs can be traced to ecumenical compromise.

Constantine: The Great Compromiser

He was a skillful politician, this Roman emperor who branded Christianity with compromise. What Constantine's true convictions regarding this new religion were, no one knows for certain. But to grow his Roman Empire he saw that harmony had to be reached between the incoming religions of heathenism and his new Christianity.

As *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* explains, "Thanks to the profound political insight that was his by nature and to his sensible course of action, he directed his religious policy to the end of consummating the transition from the old to the new era without shattering the empire... Though the goal of his religious policy was to free the world from heathenism and transfer it to Christianity by the utmost that the State could do, nevertheless both prudence and conscientiousness dictated the one method of procedure—to go slowly in attacking religious sensibilities and be content with small things and details, tedious to be sure, but less dangerous, and more certain in results," *Constantine*, p. 251.



Constantine was willing to sacrifice for the sake of his realm whatever newfound convictions he held. He therefore allowed the pagan cults to exist along with Christianity. Because of that foundational compromise, particularly, modern worship today is steeped in the heathen influence of the mystery religions that eventually merged with it. One of those mystery religions—Mithraism—was to have such an impact that many of its practices survive, cloaked in Christianity today.

"There were many points of similarity in the two religions; and where differences did appear, the Christian often absorbed the Mithraic ritual. They had the same holy day (Sunday), similar Christ-mas and Easter festivals, a similar sacrament in the mass, and many instances of similarity in vocabulary and litany...Mithras is often represented as carrying a lamb on his shoulders, just as J-sus is. Midnight services were found in both religions. The virgin mother Isis was easily merged with the virgin mother Mary. . . . Thus was the way made easier for the spread of Christianity. It had all the beauty of ritual and liturgy of the ancient cults. . . ." *Religions of the World*, by Gerald L. Berry, pp.57-58.

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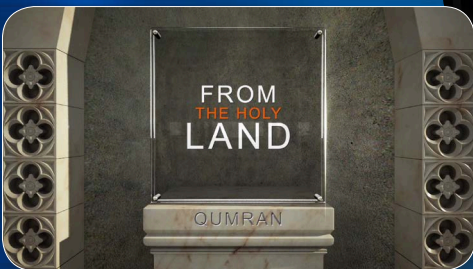
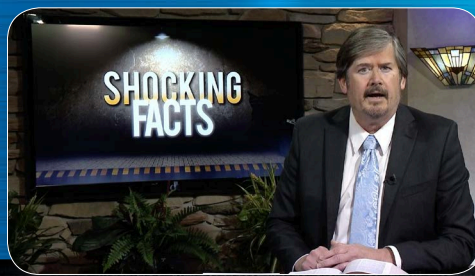
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