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# RESTORATION TIMES



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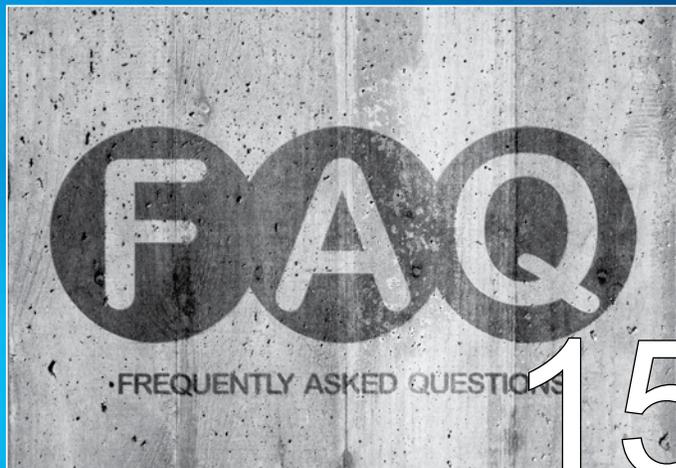


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Restoration Times expounds the close ties between the Old and New Testaments. We teach the continuity and harmony that extend from Yahweh's actions anciently down through His present activity in Yahshua the Messiah. This was also the conviction of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

This publication is sent free of charge, made possible through the tithes and offerings of those who desire to see the truth of Scripture restored in our day.  
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#### COVER:

A carved menorah at Bet She'arim (בית שערים) at Kiryat Tivon National Park (Jewish Necropolis), Northern Israel 220-351AD

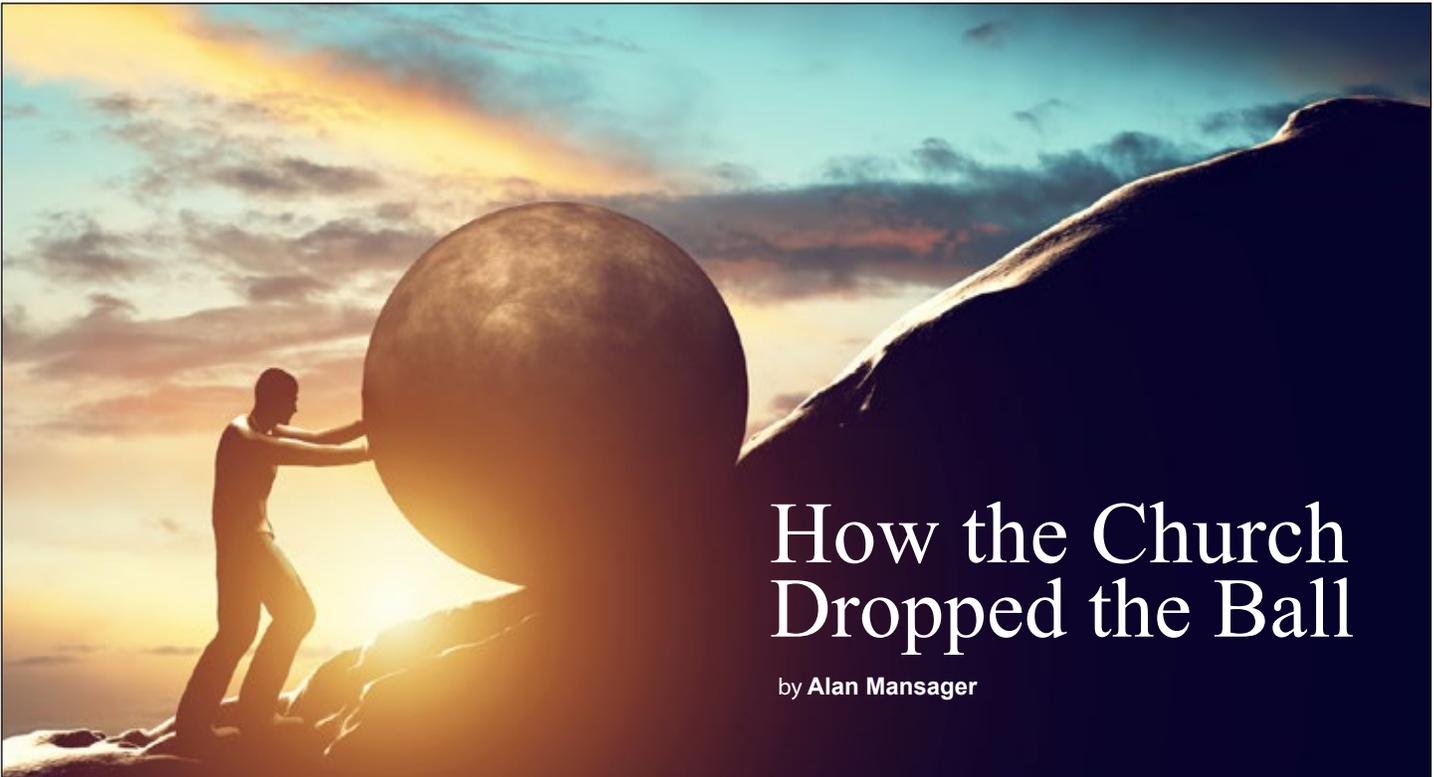
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# How the Church Dropped the Ball

by Alan Mansager

**C**hurchgoers have been arguing for centuries about which biblical teachings are for modern times. There have been reformations big and small conducted over which tenets are salvational. Churches continually split because of it. Arguments, skirmishes, even fistfights have erupted when disagreements reached a boiling point.

## Yahshua's Mission, and Ours

Although the issues can get heated, the matter of Truth is simple to settle. The gold standard for validating what is biblically right and true for us today is whether Yahshua and His apostles taught and practiced it. That's all that's needed for proper and acceptable teaching and practice.

What exactly did Yahshua teach and do? What did He Himself follow and did He give us a new faith to replace the old faith of Israel? Let's discover where Yahshua got His teachings.

- John 4:34 – "Yahshua saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish HIS work."
- John 8:28 – "Then said Yahshua unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."

Paul and Peter teach us to follow Yahshua.

- 1Cor. 11:1 – Paul said, "Be followers of me, even as I also am of Messiah."
- 1Pet. 2:21-22 – Peter said, "For even here unto were ye called: because Messiah also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."

No sin means He was law-observant, by the simple definition of sin which is the transgression of the law, 1John 3:4. Peter clinches it: follow in Yahshua's footsteps, who was obedient to the Bible's commands from Yahweh.

## Was Yahshua New or Old Testament?

If a teaching, belief, or practice is missing in the ministries of Yahshua or His disciples, then toss it out. But if they preached and followed it themselves, there's the gold standard.

Some changes were made in the switch from the Levitical system back to the Melchizedek priesthood – such as the elimination of animal sacrifices, but whatever Yahshua taught and practiced, as well as His followers after Him, is our guide today.

How can we go wrong doing exactly what our coming Judge tells us to do and even did Himself as our pattern?

After 2,000 years an entirely different worship replaced what Yahshua and His disciples established as New Testament faith and practice. The fundamentals are key, like which day to keep as the Sabbath; what is His Name and His Son's Name that he tells us to honor?

The New Covenant was confirmed by Yahshua's death, according to Hebrews 9:14-15: "How much more shall the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to Elohim, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim? And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." This passage is golden. This whole chapter is about the two covenants.

- Both covenants, one with Israel, and now with Israel as well as with all who are willing to walk in it, were put into effect through a death and blood sacrifice, vv. 7 and 12.
- The New Covenant remedied the fault of the people in the first covenant who proved disobedient, Hebrews 8:8-9.
- Through the second covenant is the promise of eternal life if we remain faithful.

That's where John Calvin fell off the wagon. Calvinism teaches unconditional election – basically, you are predestined to be saved and you can do nothing about it; he also believed in irresistible grace – you can't lose salvation no matter what you do or how you live.

Calvin's teachings have influenced Protestantism all through the centuries in their immortality beliefs and automatic heavenly destiny when you die. But the Bible shouts just the opposite. You can lose salvation if you accept and then reject the Truth, Hebrews 6:4-6.

### Finished Means No More Additions

Paul said in Galatians 3:15 and 17, "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto." Paul says we all know that once a covenant – even one made by man – is confirmed, you can't annul it, change it, or add to it.

"And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of Elohim in Messiah, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect," 3:17.

As Yahshua was dying He cried out in John 19:30: "It is finished." His mission to teach all that Yahweh His Father gave Him was finalized at His death and nothing could be added or changed after that. He both completed and affirmed the terms and requirements of the New Covenant with His death. As we have seen, a death was required to establish a covenant in both testaments. With His death the covenant and all its mandates were as if written in stone.

Yet the church's justification for changing the Sabbath to Sunday worship is that Yahshua resurrected on Sunday morning, which He didn't. Besides that, who decided that a day of resurrection should be elevated to a day of worship? Even Yahshua said that the Father is the One to worship, and that the day He made for rest and worship is the seventh.

Yahshua's mission in bringing a new covenant (New Testament) and showing us how to keep everything in the New Covenant was completed at His death. Anything that happened afterwards was a post-covenant event; therefore it is man-made and has no scriptural authority.

Sunday worship was not in the New

Covenant of salvation and can't be added to the covenant after Yahshua's death.

If we can nail down exactly how the church made its left turns, then the true-hearted and sincere seeker of truth should have all the justification he or she needs to return to the faith once delivered.

### They Got Bad Council

Early in my walk in the Truth I was blown away when I first picked up Alexander Hislop's book *The Two Babylons*. It opened my eyes to the heathen origins of many traditional church observances and beliefs, like Xmas and Easter, heaven, hell, immortal soul, and the development of the Trinity.

The only Bible the early New Testament believers had to teach from and follow was the Old Testament. No other weekly observance but the seventh-day Sabbath exists in either the Old or New Testament or covenant.

In his book, *The Apostasy of the Lost Century*, S. Gusten Olson writes that something monumental occurred in the first 100 years to change worship from the pure teachings of the Scriptures to something resembling mystery worship.

In the ensuing 2,000 years since our Savior and His apostles walked this earth, apostasies continued changing original teachings and worship. Traditions arose based on nothing other than a deliberate desire to find a different path away from Judaism. That led to compromises with heathen teaching and practice which created a totally different worship that hardened into what we see today.

In his book, *History of the Church Through the Ages*, Robert Brumback reveals where modern church teachings originated, and they weren't from the Word.

He observes how hundreds of unscriptural teachings arose through majority decisions of church councils. "New doctrines were being advocated by those who were seeking for prominence." He writes that through consensus, doctrines foreign to Yahweh's Word would be bound upon the church. "Had there been no councils, no conferences, and if people had been content to take Yahweh's Word as their guide, there would have been no apostasy," p. 40.

Brumback includes some examples, like sprinkling to replace immersion: "It is

possible to find the time when the church of Rome changed from immersion to sprinkling for baptism." He writes that Catholic church buildings built prior to the 13th century still had large pools (and not small basins) used for baptistries. Such buildings still stand.

Priestly celibacy is contrary to the teachings of Yahshua and the disciples, he writes. Peter was a married man and Paul taught that a bishop was limited to one wife.

This historian attributes the Trinity to the teaching of the Monarchians, one of the New Testament sects. They taught that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were the same person, p. 46.

Each of us is born into a ready-made world, where for most people their family's religion becomes their own faith by default. And a person's faith becomes a part of who they are and for that reason alone few will go back and prove what they grew up believing.

### Where's the Proof?

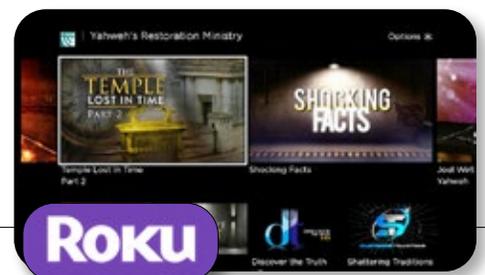
Yahweh demands involvement. The Apostle Paul said to "prove ALL things and to hold fast to that which is good," 1Thessalonians 5:21.

He did not say prove all things unless you choose to rely on tradition or your ancestors or your minister. To hinge your eternal salvation on teachings you never proved is playing Russian roulette with your eternal life. For the vast hundreds of millions the most important issue in life – eternal salvation – is left up to someone else.

"My minister is a good man. He would never mislead me," many will say. But what if he himself has been misled? Seminaries are cranking out misleaders by the thousands.

Certain truths are so self-evident that they don't need explaining. Like Sabbath worship, with its plethora of evidence and examples from Genesis through Revelation. And yet, with no biblical support the Roman church switched worship to the first day of the week and virtually every Protestant denomination swallowed the same bait-and-switch without batting an eyelash.

Sunday-keeping churches have no interest in honoring Yahweh's seventh day



rest as He commanded when He made the seventh day a memorial at creation; they have no esteem for the 4th Commandment, no regard for what everyone in the Bible observed, including their Savior and His apostles, no consideration for Yahweh's statement that the Sabbath is THE sign of His people.

It boils down to the fact that most care more for worship traditions than for truth. They like the churchy feel they get sitting in a pew bathed with stained glass sunshine as candles cast firelight on the pulpit.

### **Names Are Much More Than Labels**

Another clear, self-evident fact universally missed is that names identify, therefore Yahweh's personal Name is necessary in identifying Him as the One we worship.

He commanded His personal name be used when He said in Isaiah 42:8: "I am Yahweh: that is my name: [those seven words say it all plainly and succinctly] and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." It doesn't get more simple and direct than that.

Why would anyone read that clear statement and argue that generic titles are perfectly acceptable to Yahweh to use for His Name? G-o-d is a classification, a category of false mighty ones, and is not a name. No True Worshiper ever called Him G-o-d in the Scriptures. Did any of the millions through the ages reading verse 8 of Isaiah 42 ever say to themselves, "How can 'I am the LORD' be a name?" Names are called "proper" nouns for a reason. There are proper ones and those that are counterfeit, or simply titles.

Imagine chiseling out a monument to a famous person and then misspelling his name. That would be bad. But far worse is refusing to honor Yahweh's Name by using a common title that applies to false deities! Such disrespect is reprehensible for the Creator who has the power to give either everlasting life or eternal death.

Some will reason, why be name-specific when everyone knows who you mean? We must because He commands it and that's good enough. The whole point is, right worship results from obeying the one you worship by honoring His wishes in everything, including His Name.

The sincere person will stop fence-sitting and discover just how steeped in error modern traditions really are.

In 2Timothy 2:15 the Apostle Paul wrote: "Study to show yourself approved unto Elohim, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." He says check the facts because there is a lot of error and confusion out there. We all should be fact checkers for truth when it comes to what we believe.

Rightly dividing means to study it out carefully, measuring a belief or tradition against the uncompromising Word. If you don't find agreement, then something is wrong. Maybe there is a translation problem in the version you are using, or an erroneous interpretation that needs to be resolved.

The entire Bible harmonizes from Genesis through Revelation because it is all



***The gold standard for validating what is biblically right and true for us today is whether Yahshua and His apostles taught and practiced it.***

inspired by Yahweh, and all teachings must conform to the authority of the Scriptures or else they are flawed. If an understanding looks like it fits in one place but conflicts with passages everywhere else, then question it. Dig into the verses that deal with it.

Even 2,000 years ago while Paul was writing his letters there were major problems with spurious teachings in his day that had no basis in Scripture. He spent a lot of time exposing heresy. You can read about some of these bogus beliefs in the Book of Acts.

If any of the very men who sat at the feet of Yahshua the Messiah during His earthly ministry could witness many of today's teachings, they would be blown away to see outright falsities eagerly agreed to like

bubbleheads nodding up and down on the rear windows of cars.

Beyond grace and loving your neighbor, they would expect to hear about repentance from sin and overcoming the pulls of the world, changing personal behavior to emulate the Savior's own life, the keeping of the commandments, and observing the commanded holy days of Scripture.

All of which were taught and practiced by the Messiah Yahshua and His disciples and which were emphasized in their own ministries time and time again. But where are these teachings today? Why don't we hear the rest of the story? There's a lot of useless fluff mistakenly accepted as core Bible.

### **A Bit Too Graceful**

In today's worship environment people are given heavy infusions of Romans 5:20 (grace) and little of Romans 6:1 (don't continue in sin to try to make grace abound). This was warned of in Jude 1:4 when heretics were using grace to justify their disobedience:

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, wicked men, turning the grace of our Elohim into lasciviousness, and denying the only Sovereign Yahweh, and our Master Yahshua Messiah."

The Apostle Paul instructed the young Timothy at the onset of Timothy's ministry in 2Timothy 4:2 to "preach the 'Word,' be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

Paul was speaking of the Old Testament, but the decline has gone even further when not even the fundamentals of the New Testament are preached today.

So why is most of today's worship so foreign to the worship and teachings of the New Testament? How did so much get changed? What exactly happened? Something went awry to transform a powerful and vibrant Hebraic faith into something on par with Gnosticism.

### **Along Come Heretics**

A great deal of doctrinal transforming was going on in the early New Testament. The times were awash in heresy. This was even foretold by Yahshua in Matthew 26:31: "Then saith Yahshua unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it

is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.”

Deviant doctrines exploded once Yahshua was gone. Would-be Messiahs tried to usurp leadership roles. Apocryphal, false writings abounded. What became known as Christianity was a mishmash of foreign beliefs, divergent teachings, and conflicting practice. It was not this neat package containing the faith that Yahshua and the Apostles engendered. It was instead an unholy mess. Sadly, little has changed.

There were so many heretics coming out of the woodwork, there was so much foreign worship influence, there was such a divergence of beliefs that to find the Truth took a lot of sifting and searching. And so the “Catholic church” came along, and coagulated this mess into one big belief system (Catholic meant universal).

It couldn’t do it alone, however; it needed the power of civil government to force heresies, which was supplied by Emperor Constantine. He enforced by edict the doctrines that the Catholic church councils would impose.

### Not So Rock Solid

Their spurious doctrines got their spiritual authority allegedly from the Apostle Peter and supposedly through Yahshua Himself. Yahshua said to Peter, “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my assembly; and the gates of the grave shall not prevail against it,” Matthew 16:18. So Peter became the first pope, the church said.

But wait. Yahshua didn’t say, “Upon you, Peter, I will build my assembly.” He said “upon this rock” I’ll build my assembly. Think:

- When did Peter ever become a Roman Catholic?
- How can Peter be the head of the assembly when Yahshua already was?
- They missed the play on words. “Peter” is the Greek *petros*, meaning a stone, a small rock. “Rock” as in “upon this rock I will build my assembly” is *petra* and means a great ledge of rock (not Peter) but Peter’s solid rock of confession that Yahshua is the Son of Yahweh. In the Greek it is, “You are *Petros* and upon this *petra* I will build my Assembly.” Two different rocks, two different meanings.

Over the next two centuries many churches throughout the Empire, recognizing the secular benefits of Sunday worship, followed Rome in adopting the first day of the week as a holy day. Almost all of these, however, with the exception of Rome and Alexandria and their satellites, continued to observe the seventh-day Sabbath.

The result was that the two worship days were honored side by side in many countries. Even as late as the fifth century almost the entire Christian world observed either Saturday or Sunday for worship. Obviously, the early Church did not regard Sunday worship as a substitute for the Sabbath. That came later.

We must put the proper pieces back together to form the Truth, and then follow it. Shouldn’t the goal of Bible teaching be to turn and follow Yahshua’s example of obedience

as He obeyed His father? Growing up in the conventional church I was never challenged to change my life and conform to my Savior. We never studied the true Sabbath or feasts or much of anything at all about the obedience of Yahshua and the apostles. It was all faith, love, and grace. The coming Kingdom and our potential role in it was kept utterly secret. The need to prepare for it was never brought up. The minister also mistaught heaven as our goal, not rulership in a Kingdom established by Yahshua right here on earth. “And hast made us unto our Elohim kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth,” Revelation 5:10.

The minister’s low-impact sermons were boring and I left them at the church door on my way out. So I wondered, what was the purpose of going to church, other than to socialize? It was one big social club where the Bible is literally left at home on the shelf.

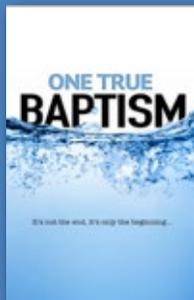
The preacher fully knows that as soon as he starts teaching doctrine he opens the way to division, and if he teaches obedience to the Word he’ll have a real fight on his hands.

So most ministers shy away from teaching the Word as commanded. They abdicate their sacred responsibility and go along just to get along.

The true shepherd will preach the Word, when it is convenient and when it is not, 2Timothy 4:2. The Scriptures are either absolute or they are obsolete. Yahweh expects total obedience to them. 

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# Where is this taught in the Bible?



# GOOD VS BAD FRUIT

by Randy Folliard



In this installment I close my series on the fruits of the Spirit by asking why fruits matter. Throughout this series I have explained that the fruits of the Spirit form the bedrock or foundation of Yahweh's Word. They exemplify what Yahshua called the weightier matters. For these reasons alone we must apply and live by the characteristics we find here.

We will now explore this topic from two divergent extremes – the negative example from the scribes and Pharisees and the positive examples from Yahshua the Messiah and the Apostle Paul. First, the Scribes and Pharisees.

## Exceeding the Scribes and Pharisees

The fruits of the Spirit allow us to exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees.

Yahshua in Matthew 5:20 said, "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

If we desire to achieve Yahweh's Kingdom, we need to exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, two distinct Jewish groups. As you might

assume by the name, the scribes dealt with recording or writing documents. For example, they would draft marriage contracts, loans, inheritances, sales of land, and other forms of legal documents. They were also knowledgeable of the law.

The Pharisees were a prominent Jewish sect during the time of the Messiah. It's believed their ancestry harks back to the Hasideans during the time of



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Maccabees, around 165 CE. Like the scribes, the Pharisees were also experts with Jewish law, including their rabbinical law, for which, as we'll see later, Yahshua reprimanded them.

The Pharisees were also part of the Sanhedrin, in some ways similar to our Supreme Court. Also, unlike the Sadducees, another competing Jewish group, the Pharisees, believed in angels and the resurrection.

So why did Yahshua say that we have to exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees to enter into Yahweh's Kingdom? These were men who were known for their hypocrisy, abuse, and misapplication of Yahweh's law.

As a side note, not all Pharisees were terrible people. An example of a good Pharisee is Nicodemus in John 3. This man was a disciple of Yahshua the Messiah.

Yahshua's main contention with the Pharisees mentioned in Matthew 5 was that in addition to being hypocritical and abusive, they also neglected many of the fruits of the Spirit, and therein lies the connection between the two. It wasn't the physical law that they had an issue with; it was with the heart applications that they

failed miserably.

As an example of this, I want to review most of Matthew 23. This passage is known as the seven woes because within it, Yahshua reprimands these men seven times, always beginning with, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.”

### Hypocrites in Matthew 23

“Then spake Yahshua to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Messiah; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Messiah. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted” (Matt. 23:1-12).

I’ll stop here to provide some background. Verse 2 tells us the scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat, which was an actual stone chair where the officials would sit when reading from the Law of Moses. This is why Yahshua said we are to follow them when reading from Moses’ seat, because they were teaching from the Law of Moses and not their added rabbinic law.

Yahshua also said not to follow their examples, for they would lay heavy burdens on the people that they themselves were not willing to do. This is why they

were called hypocrites and also showed they had no love or concern for the people.

We also see that they were motivated by men’s praise and approval, making broad their phylacteries and enlarging their borders. Phylacteries were leather boxes that contained parchments of texts from the Torah, which they placed upon their foreheads. Wanting to be seen and noticed by men, they enlarged these phylacteries and insisted on titles like rabbi and master.

Yahshua condemned these practices and warned His disciples not to follow in these ways. I believe the main reason for this condemnation is that this violated the fruits of the Spirit.

nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! You fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of Yahweh, and by him that sitteth thereon” (Matt. 23:13-22).



Continuing in verse 13: “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater judgment. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of Gehenna than yourselves. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is

### Ancient Money Grubbers

We see in the above passage several examples of where these Pharisees fell short. For example, verse 14 speaks about how they would devour widows’ houses. In other words, they would take advantage and defraud these poor widows of their possessions and propriety. We see something similar today with the health, wealth, and prosperity TV evangelists.

It also states they would make long prayers as a show of their righteousness and piety. According to *Adam Clarke’s Commentary*, these men would often pray for up to three hours! This is one reason I’m not inclined to give long prayers.

I've known instances where men insist on giving a sermon including quoting and explaining Scripture within a prayer. I can assure you, Yahweh knows Scripture and does not need a sermon. Ecclesiastes 5:2 says, "Let not your heart...be hasty to utter any thing before Elohim: for Elohim is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."

Another point to consider is how the Pharisees viewed the temple. They placed more emphasis on the gold of the temple than the temple itself. As Yahshua explained, it wasn't the gold, but the temple that made it holy.

But as we also see many ministers today who seem to be out for profit having the same issue. They focused on wealth and prestige, not the Word of Yahweh.

Beginning in verse 23, the Messiah gets to the heart of the issue. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Matt. 23:23-28).

In verse 23 we find that the Pharisees were commanding tithing, but leaving undone what Yahshua called the weightier matters, which He defined as mercy, judgment, and faith. He says they should have done these things, referring to tithing, but not to have left the other things undone.

We see here two essential truths. First, Yahshua supported the law of tithing and obedience to the commandments in general, and secondly, He verified that there are weightier matters within the Word. I believe this second point goes to the heart

of why the fruits of the Spirit matter.

As believers, we must obey the commandments, but if we're not living by the fruits of the Spirit, then we're missing the point and are no better off than the Pharisees whom Yahshua condemned. For example, we can keep the Sabbath without blemish, but if we're not showing love and concern for our brother or sister in the faith, then we're wasting our time.

Remember, the Pharisees were keeping the Sabbath and other commandments within the Torah. For them, obedience was not the issue; their issue was hypocrisy and a lack of love and concern for their fellow man.

We must be careful we don't fall into this same trap where we believe we're doing the right things, but in the end, miss the mark because we're not living by the weightier matters.

It wasn't cleaning the outside of the cup that infuriated Yahshua, but the inside. He compared these Pharisees to whited sepulchres; they looked good from the outside, but within were full of all uncleanness. If we go through the motions of obeying the law without applying the fruits, we risk falling short as the Pharisees did before us.

### Fruits Exemplified

Reading from 1Peter 2:21-24, I want to move on and look at how the fruits of the Spirit bring us to Messiah. "For even here unto were ye called: because Messiah also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

Here we see that Yahshua left us an example that we're to follow and as we know from the Word, Yahshua exemplified the fruits of the Spirit. For instance, when He was reviled, He reviled not again. In Greek, the word "revile" means to reproach or vilify. By doing this, Yahshua showed peace, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, and temperance.

We also see that He bore our sins through His sacrifice. This is an example of the greatest of all the fruits: love. We're to follow this example; everything we do should mimic Yahshua.

Let's now consider a few specific examples of where Yahshua exemplified the fruits of the Spirit, and as we do, remember that we're to follow in these examples.

### Love

In John 15:9-13 we read about the importance of love. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 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. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

We show our love to our Father in heaven by keeping His commandments. This is reminiscent of what we find in 1John 5:3: "For this is the love of Elohim, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

Not only is there a relationship between love and keeping the commandments, but also that the commandments should not be grievous. The word "grievous" comes from the Greek *barus* and refers to something that is a burden. Let me ask, do you see Yahweh's commandments as grievous or as a burden? I hope the answer is no; as believers in Messiah, we should never view the commandments as a strain or hardship. Yahshua also speaks about the greatest form of love and that is when we lay down our life for another. To sacrifice your life for another is the most selfless act a person can show.

We know that Yahshua gave His life so that we might have the hope of everlasting life in the Kingdom. Remember, we're to walk as Yahshua walked, to mimic and follow His examples in our everyday lives. I believe that this would include what we find, i.e., the willingness to sacrifice our lives for others.

(Please turn to p. 14)



# What's Wrong With the Hollyday?

by the late **Donald R. Mansager**

**S**oon much of the world will again pretend to give homage to the Savior's birth, the One who the Bible reveals came to redeem lost humanity. Surprising as it may seem, the celebration of Xmas on December 25 was already in vogue long before the Savior was born at Bethlehem. About the third week in December homes were decked out with evergreen wreaths and a fir tree, as festivities and frolicking filled the air before the approaching holiday. There is no manger scene or star of Bethlehem to be seen, however, nor is jolly old Saint Nick present with his reindeer and sleigh.

## **Sell Out to the Celts**

This December celebration came from the pagan Druids and first began as a special time of appeal during the days of the winter solstice. During these shortest days of the year came the hope that the sun would return in strength.

This sun festival apparently has its origin with Nimrod and from his Babylon it spread abroad. In spite of the confusion of tongues at Babel, the pagan worship of the sun and moon survived, being found in almost every culture.

Many early believers continued to observe the weekly Sabbath and carefully kept the Fourth Commandment. But the early assembly underwent a drastic change as those first Israelite leaders died

off and were replaced by gentiles.

The influence of pagan converts soon dominated the church and Sunday became the day of worship. The special time of sun worship, known as Saturnalia by the pagans, has come to us as the religious festival of Christmas.

Actually, the Council of Nicea is responsible for adopting December 25 as the birthdate of the Savior. A national Roman Catholic monthly magazine has from time to time pointed out that Christmas is indeed a pagan holiday and admits that it is a “grotesque counterfeit.” Editor-Priest Peter J. Riga has stated,

“The Christmas season has been perverted so grossly that it has become a threat to mental and emotional well-being.” Riga adds, “It is time to come out of the land of Babylon, which the hucksters of wares and materialism have taken over...and leave December 25 to the pagans.”

### **Protestants Protesting Paganism**

Observing Xmas was one of the major contentions of the Protestant reformers. It is a day shown each year, even by the news media, to be pagan to the core.

Xmas has nothing to do with the birth date of the Savior, but is a heathen festival that was accepted by churchianity to allow converts from paganism to continue observance of their ancient, pagan day but now with a different meaning.

This winter celebration was now said to celebrate the birth of the Redeemer of Israel. No command is given anywhere in the Bible to remember the Savior’s date of birth.

Many early settlers in America were Protestants trying to escape Roman domination. They came primarily to this rugged wilderness to seek freedom of religion and raise their children apart from pagan practices that had become enmeshed in the teachings of churchianity in Europe.

The early settlers rejected the Romish Christmas as pagan to the core and did not observe it.

The first official record of tree decorating in America was at Harvard College in 1832 by a German professor. Many considered the trimming of a tree in December a pagan practice traced to

the Roman feast of Saturnalia at the winter solstice. Candles were used in ancient sun worship to beckon back the sun, and were given a key role in the Yule celebration.

German Pastor Henry J. Schwan is said to be the first to trim a tree in his Cleveland, Ohio, church during the Xmas season. He faced accusations of decorating his place of worship with a pagan symbol.

In 1856 President Franklin Pierce was the first to keep Xmas in the White House, and an annually decorated tree has been a custom since.

### **Huge, Worldwide Bash**

The Yuletide celebration has become arguably the biggest bash of the year in Japan and other parts of the world. This despite the fact that the Japanese are not known for their belief in the New Testament!

Christmas springs from a pagan Roman holiday based on the winter solstice. Known as Saturnalia, this heathen celebration honored the “birth of the unconquerable sun.” Santa Claus was added later. Saturnalia was popular many years before the Savior was born. The celebration has continued, merging with the supposed birth of the Savior in December.

### **Much Ado About Nothing**

The following appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, Dec. 16, 1967, under the title, “Why So Serious About Christmas?”:

“Christmas, to begin with, is scarcely a Christian holiday at all. There is certainly no evidence that [Messiah] was born on that day, nor was the day celebrated as such for some three hundred years after His death. Instead, there were various festivals commemorating the winter solstice on December 21, and December 25 was officially decreed to be the birthday of the ‘unconquered sun,’ climaxing the orgiastic week of Saturnalia. Teutonic and Celtic tribes added the rites of the Yule log, and the Christmas tree apparently dates from a fir tree planted by St. Boniface to replace the sacred oak of Odin in eighth-century Germany. Added to all this, from various places in various times, came Santa Claus, Good King Wenceslaus, and the office Christmas party.”

### **A Myth-cellaneous Mix**

The following is from *The Phoenix Gazette* of January 25, 1971, in “My Answer,” by Billy Graham:

*Question:* “What should Sunday School teachers tell their pupils about Santa?”—G.H.

*Answer:* “Tell them the truth. Explain that Santa is a mythical character, that he symbolizes the merriment accompanying the yuletide season, that he has no connection whatsoever with the real meaning of Christmas, which is the celebration of the birth of [Messiah].

“The name Santa Claus probably comes from Saint Nicholas, bishop of Myra, and patron saint of Russia, young people and sailors. His day is actually Dec. 6, but somehow through the years, Santa Claus slipped into Christmas. He has come to be more associated with folklore than with the birth of the [Messiah]—but, since it has become custom to portray him as the one who brings gifts on Christmas, his intrusion into the holy day seems to have been inevitable.

“Little children must have difficulty separating the two, and this is unfortunate. I have talked to people who, as children, found out that Santa was a myth, and dismissed [Messiah] as a myth too.”

History shows that Xmas and the Saturnalia were adopted directly from the heathen festival celebrated December 24 and 25 in honor of the son of the Babylonian queen Astarte and observed centuries before Yahshua by the Chaldeans.

Tertullian lamented in the middle of the third century that Christians were beginning to observe the customs of the heathen. He wrote, “Gifts are carried to and fro and New Year’s Day presents are made with din, and sports and banquets are celebrated with uproar.”

By the third century, the church had become filled with pagans since Constantine’s reign. To recruit ever more to church membership, the December 25 pagan festival was adopted and became “Christ-mass.”

### **Should YOU Celebrate?**

The Word in Jeremiah 10:2-4 clearly tells us not to mix pagan worship or customs with the truth of the Bible.

“Thus says Yahweh, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people [are] vain: for [one] cuts a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.”

Bible students have often referred to the above verse as applying to the evergreen tree brought into the house and adorned for the Christmas season.

We are to be a clean people before Yahweh and not contaminate our thoughts with pagan beliefs and concepts. Dabbling in paganism is like a cancer that grows and affects the entire body. Our physical body is to be a temple where Yahweh’s Spirit resides.

“And what agreement has the temple of Elohim with idols? for you are the temple of the living Elohim; as Elohim has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in [them]; and I will be their Elohim, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be separate, says Yahweh, and touch not the unclean [thing]; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says Yahweh Almighty” (2Cor. 6:16-18).

Another religious publication, *The Evangel* (December 1984), discusses the Babylonian origin and Nimrod’s part in pagan holidays:

“It appears from ancient history, that these individuals became involved in the worship of the heavens through the zodiac (astrology) placed on top of the tower of Babel on the plains of Shinar. The end result was that [Yahweh] confused their language and scattered them throughout the earth. It would seem that this Babylonian system was one through which Satan planned to circumvent the truth of [Yahweh]. From Babylon it spread to the ends of the earth and to where,

Scripture records, Abraham was chosen of [Yahweh] to flee these idolatrous nations and thus preserve the truth of [Yahweh]. (And this would explain how so many different nations of the world are found to have common religious traditions interwoven into their cultures).”

Following the ways of the pagan nations around them was a common practice for Israel. They easily became enamored by the practices of their neighbors with their strange rites and leering idols. Whatever the heathen nations did, Israel soon followed.

We read in 2Kings 17:11-15, “And there

keep my commandments [and] my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in Yahweh their Elohim. And they rejected his statutes and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that [were] round about them, [concerning] whom Yahweh had charged them, that they should not do like them.”



### Today, Error Is King

When we see in our media that Xmas is a pagan festival and the Savior was born likely in late September, and not the winter month of December, we should take the lesson seriously. Yahweh does not stand for mixing paganism with His pure worship.

Adding pagan teachings and ideas to Yahweh’s worship is known as syncretism, which He hates. It is the subtle inclusion of choice bits and pieces of paganism that eventually permeates one’s entire outlook. The same happens culturally. Soon the pagan customs overpower and dominate the true religion found in the Bible. Objects of other worship are brought in, special holidays observed, and Yahweh’s Name becomes obscured and lost.

Notice that Isaiah says in the following verse that we are not to follow the pagan ways of Babylon or their Chaldean priests. He promises that in following the truth of Yahweh He will see to it that we are being provided for:

“Go forth of Babylon, flee from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say, Yahweh has redeemed his servant Jacob. And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out. There is no peace, says Yahweh, unto the wicked”

(Isa. 48:20-22).

### New Testament Testifies

The New Testament also calls to us to leave the ways of Babylon and not to be involved in Babylon's pagan worship. Note that the Babylonian religion is worldwide! All nations have been poisoned by her pagan ways. Xmas as a global celebration is a prime example.

“For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and Elohim has remembered her iniquities” (Rev. 18:3-5).

Jeremiah says Yahweh's people have been led astray by their shepherds. The teachers in churchianity have forgotten Yahweh's ways and followed the ways of Babylon. The time is coming when the wickedness and idolatry of Babylonish religion will be banished from the earth.

“My people have been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away [on] the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place. All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against Yahweh, the habitation of justice, even Yahweh, the hope of their fathers. Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks. For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from hence she shall be taken: their arrows [shall be] as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain” (Jer. 50:6-9).

Yahweh still remembers His people. He begs them to flee from the ways of Babylon, to give up their pagan ways. Babylon will not change, but will be destroyed and no longer will her religious ways interfere with the pure worship of Yahweh.

“For Israel has not been forsaken, nor Judah of his elohim, of Yahweh of hosts;



## Lupercus and the 1st Christmas

A pagan shrine called the Lupercal was found near the Basilica of St. Anastasia in Rome. Constantine commissioned this basilica to be built in the 4th century CE. The Romans honored Lupercus on February 15. As a fertility festival a major ritual was the purification of women. Continuing this pagan festival, the Roman Church originally held the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin on February 15. “Now, a top Italian scholar thinks a church built on the site of the shrine was where Christmas was first marked on Dec. 25 — making it a symbolic place in efforts to link pagan practices and Christian celebrations. ‘This is very probably the church where the first Christmas was celebrated.’ Andrea Carandini, a professor of archaeology at Rome's La Sapienza University, told reporters... Angelo Bottini, a scholar who did not take part in the research and Rome's archaeological superintendent, said Carandini's hypothesis was ‘evocative and coherent’ and ‘helps us understand the mechanisms of the passage from paganism to Christianity.’” **ABC News**

[abcnews.go.com/Technology/story?id=4043711&page=1](http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/story?id=4043711&page=1)

though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel. Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of Yahweh's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompense. Babylon has been a golden cup in Yahweh's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go everyone into his own country: for her judgment reaches unto heaven, and is lifted up [even] to the skies” (Jer. 51:5-9).

Almost the same words are given us in the New Testament. Paul urged the Corinthians to clean up their act and not to participate in the unclean life:

“And what agreement has the temple of Elohim with idols?for you are the temple of the living Elohim; as Elohim has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in [them]; and I will be their Elohim, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be you separate, says Yahweh, and touch not the unclean [thing]; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says Yahweh Almighty”

(2Cor. 6:16-18).

The last book of the Bible tells us what the saints, the true people of Yahweh, will be doing. They will be keeping the Commandments that will make His people a target of the Adversary.

Other passages in the Bible, however, tell us Yahweh will protect His people who are faithful to Him.

“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 the Messiah” (Rev. 12:17).

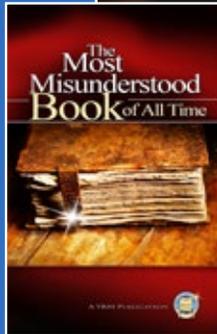
### Honor the Proper Observances

Instead of Christmas, New Year's, and Easter, start now to keep the biblical Feast days that will be kept in the Kingdom. Plan to keep Passover and the days of Unleavened and prepare to learn more of Yahweh's ways. By keeping the same holy days the Savior kept we learn more of Him and realize this is the sign Yahweh says sets us apart as His people.

“Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I [am] Yahweh that sanctify them” (Ezek. 20:12 and 22).

For their faithful obedience Yahweh will give His people positions in His coming Kingdom that will last forever. ✓

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*(continued from p. 9)*

## Joy

In addition to love, another fruit of Spirit mentioned in John 15 is joy. In verse 11 Yahshua states, "...that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

As we've explained in the previous installments, joy is a sense of happiness or gladness not determined by circumstance. In other words, no matter what we're going through in life, we should have joy within our hearts, and it should be based on the promises of Yahweh's Word; the greatest of those promises being His Kingdom.

So we find that Yahshua had love and joy, the first two fruits of the Spirit mentioned in the fifth chapter of Galatians.

## Shalom

In John 14:27, we find that Yahshua also had peace. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Yahshua is speaking to the apostles and imparting His peace, His shalom, and He tells them don't be troubled. When we have the peace of Messiah indwelling within us, we should not be afraid of those things around us.

For example, many people fear the future and the unknown. As Yahweh's people, we're to have faith and know that Yahweh is supporting us.

We should also have faith that no matter what happens in this life, Yahweh will bless us in the end. If nothing else, we will be blessed at Yahshua's coming when we are changed from flesh to Spirit. Our faith and these promises should give us great hope and peace. Yahshua knew hardship, but He never allowed it to take away His peace, and as believers in Him, neither should we.

## Longsuffering

Another fruit of the Spirit is found in 1 Timothy 1:16, this time concerning the Apostle Paul. "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Yahshua Messiah might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

As we know from the Word, Paul was very much opposed to those early believers in Messiah. He was there for the stoning of Stephen and was responsible for imprisoning many believers. Paul in the beginning was not a friend to those in the Messiah. But Yahshua woke Paul up on the road to Damascus and

he became one of most fervent believers in Messiah.

Earlier in the above passage, Paul says he did these things in ignorance and because of this he obtained mercy. Considering everything Paul was guilty of, how was it possible that he obtained mercy? He explains that it was through Yahshua's longsuffering, which as we know, is another fruit of the Spirit. This was done as a pattern for those who would come after. As Yahshua showed longsuffering, we must also show longsuffering, which refers to patience.

As believers, we must be patient with those in the world, our families, and those in the assembly. It's not always easy to be patient and show long suffering, but we must follow Yahshua's examples.

In this article we have reviewed why living the fruits of the Spirit is essential. Chiefly, this brings us to Messiah. Along with this, as we saw through the example of the scribes and Pharisees, we must go beyond simple obedience, avoiding obedience riddled with hypocrisy and self-righteousness. As believers, we must strive to find balance between obedience and living by those spiritual principles exemplified through the fruits.. Only by doing so will we be found worthy of Yahweh's Kingdom! 

**Q** Please explain Colossians 2:16-23. I've read a few explanations (commentary) but they aren't sitting well with me. Would you be so kind to help me understand, or guide me to a sermon or teaching you may have pertaining to these passages?

**A** In these passages Paul compares proper observances with man-made, false and worthless ones. First, in verse 16 Paul warns the Colossians not to let those outside the faith make judgments regarding proper observance when keeping the laws of clean foods, holy days, new moons, and Sabbaths. These days are prophetic keys, or shadows, to the future. Then verse 27 says rather, let the body of Messiah, the true believers, make determinations of what is right and wrong when it comes to the propriety of observing such biblical statutes. The believers understand the truth of these things, so listen to them, not to those outside the faith who are ignorant of such Truth.

Note that the word "is" is in italics in most translations, meaning it was added by translators. Take it out and the sentence clearly reveals this truth. Verses 20-23 show the worthlessness of man-made ordinances such as touch not, taste not, handle not, which perish with the using.

These rites have no purpose, value or meaning in Yahweh's economy. They amount to man-made worship that Yahshua condemned the Pharisees for in Mark 7:8. They do nothing to enhance and promote the spiritual, as they are without honor and are not backed by Yahweh or blessed by Him, Col. 2:23.

If you haven't already, we suggest that you obtain the **Restoration Study Bible** from YRM, which explains in detail these and many other problematic passages in the footnotes and elsewhere. We have also dealt with such troublesome passages in seminars during the commanded Feasts. We encourage you to attend with us the seven annual holy times outlined in Leviticus 23, which were kept by your Savior and His apostles as models for us to follow.

**Q** If Yahweh gave the Israelites quail to eat why did he then wipe them out even while they were in the act of eating them?

**A** We read in Numbers 11:4 that the mixed multitude ("rabble") who were with Israel in the wilderness "had a strong craving." The rabble were a mixed group of non-Israelites. In verse 34 we read that it was those who had the craving that Yahweh killed by plague, meaning the mixed

multitude. It was they who incited Israel's complaining. "So that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had the craving," Numbers 11:34, **New Revised Standard Version**. Yahweh was not pleased that the rabble helped push Israel to continually sin through complaints that sowed discord, one of the seven things Yahweh hates, Proverbs 6:19.

**Q** There are a few key points in the Bible I have been particularly interested in, one of them is the 144,000. Will this group die in the tribulation and if so, do they go on to heaven when they die or do they remain on earth during the thousand-year millennium?

**A** The 144,000, who have Yahweh's and Yahshua's Names on their foreheads, are redeemed from the earth and are with Yahshua when He stands on Mt. Zion, Revelation 14:1 and 3. The **RSB** note reads that "redeemed" conveys approval. They are the worthy firstfruits of the first resurrection, which doesn't occur until Yahshua returns, 1Corinthians 15:23. This is at the end of the tribulation.

The 144,000 follow the lamb wherever He goes. No guile is found in them, being without fault before Yahweh's throne. When resurrected their bodies will change from physical to spirit. They may have access to the angelic realm, but their dwelling and reign will be on earth to serve as priests in the millennium, Revelation 5:10. Earth and not heaven is rewarded to the faithful.

**Q** I was reading through your statement of faith and came to a curious statement I was hoping you'd elaborate for me." The Holy Spirit is placed within those who are baptized into the saving Name of Yahshua the Messiah through the laying on hands of the presbytery, Acts 2:38; 5:32; 8:17; 19:6; 1Timothy 4:14; 2Timothy 1:6. This seems to indicate that the Holy Spirit only resides after baptism? But what is the force that awakens sinners and quickens them before baptism and causes one to desire baptism? It seems from scripture that this, too, is the work of the spirit inside of a person before baptism. Your thoughts?

**A** Yes, the Holy Spirit accomplishes many things. Not only does it draw one to the Truth, Acts 10:47, but also indwells those who repent and are baptized, Acts 2. Yahweh accomplishes physical acts by His power of the Holy Spirit, as well as spiritual influences. The **Restoration Study Bible** in the Topical Reference section provides more information. <https://yrm.org/identifying-father-son-holy-spirit/>



**Q** I have polio and have had it since I was 8 months old. I'm now close to 74 years of age, and polio has crippled my body to the point that I am confined to a wheelchair. My point is that I am unable to be baptized. I was baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I left the church because of the light that I have received from Bible study. I believe that in my search for the true church, I have been led to YRM. My question is, would I have to be baptized again to become a part of your church, considering that I am physically unable to do this?

**A** Although baptism is not how membership is achieved, John 3:5 says that baptism is necessary for salvation. It is how we memorialize Yahshua's death and resurrection leading to the forgiveness of our sins, Romans 6:3-4: "Know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Yahshua the Messiah were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Messiah was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

The Word doesn't allow extenuating circumstances to excuse us in any part of our walk in Truth. There are personal situations that would clearly preclude baptism as being not physically possible, like that suffered by the repentant thief who was impaled with Yahshua. You must determine whether there is absolutely no physical way that you can enter the baptismal waters. As the adage goes, where there is a will there is a way.

Some who have backslidden have asked whether they should be rebaptized because of their actions. Romans 6:5 tells us that in baptism we have been planted together in the likeness of His death. Verse 10 says, "For in that He died, He died unto sin once..." Being that baptism mirrors His death, and because He died only once, then baptism occurs only once. We must not make baptism a common event whenever we feel repentant.

**Q** Revelation says the devil will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone where he will be tormented day and night forever. Don't you teach that he will ultimately die?

**A** Revelation 20:10 reads: "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." "Are" is italicized, meaning it was added by the translators of the **King James Version**. The **New Revised Standard Version** uses "were" meaning "were cast," so that they were no longer there but annihilated.

The KJV implies that the beast and the false prophet will be tormented forever as well. However, the beast and false prophets are both human beings. Does this mean that they are will be tormented along with the devil?

The troublesome word "tormented" gives the answer. It is No. 928, *basanizo*, from No. 931, a touchstone, meaning to test metals by the touchstone, then to torture. Some scholars contend that the sense is that the awful record left by Satan will be a deterrent for disobedience, and a force for good for future lessons for man.

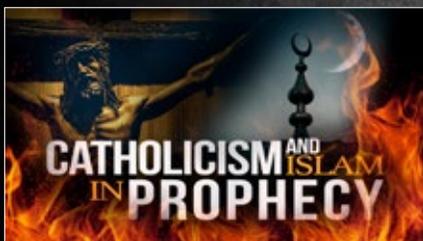
Spirit beings can be destroyed, as this is the question the demons asked Yahshua: "Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with you, you Yahshua of Nazareth? Are you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of Yahweh," Mark 1:24.

Although spirit beings don't die, they can be destroyed: "But they who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal to the angels; and are the children of Elohim, being the children of the resurrection," Luke 20:35-36.

Let us look at other verses in the Bible for a complete view of this subject, which indicates that Satan will be destroyed.

"You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created till iniquity was found in you...therefore I will cast you as profane out of the mountain of Elohim: and I will DESTROY thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire... therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of you; it shall DEVOUR you, and I will bring you to ASHES upon the earth in the sight of all of them that behold you. All they that know you among the people shall be astonished at you: you shall be a terror: and NEVER SHALL YOU BE ANY

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MORE,” Ezekiel 28:15-19.

“How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How are you cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations! For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of Elohim: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet you shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see you shall narrowly look upon you, and consider you, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that shook kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed her cities; that opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But you are cast out of your grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; AS A DEAD BODY trodden under feet,” Isaiah 14:12-19.

“And the Elohim of peace shall BRUISE Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Sovereign Yahshua Messiah be with you,” Rom. 16:20, KJV. The NIV translates bruise as “crush,” as does the NRSV. The word “bruise” in the King James is Strong’s No. 4937, *suntribo*, to crush completely i.e., to shatter, and is translated break in pieces, broken to shivers.

Thus, Paul says that Satan and evil will be crushed utterly, destroyed by Yahshua.

**Q** *I have a dilemma. My family wants to cremate my grandfather to save costs, but it violates my sensibilities. What does the Bible say?*

**A** Cremation historically was practiced by pagan peoples like Greeks and Hindus. In India the ashes of the cremated are poured out over the Ganges River to commune with the “sacred” river deity. Pagans also thought that the flames from a cremation helped the person’s immortal soul lift off to heaven.

Cremation was not commonly practiced in the Bible by any instruction from Yahweh. Burning of human beings was reserved for only two reasons: for serious offenders and for those who were cursed. For example, a man who marries both a woman and her mother was to be consumed in fire (Lev. 20:14). A priest’s daughter who becomes a prostitute

*(Please turn to last page)*

**בִּיבְלִיתָל  
מֵעֲבֵרֵשׁ וּוּרְדָה  
לֵשׁוֹן**

**נָא**  
**T**

**Na**  
“naw”

Composition: Nun, Qamets,  
Aleph.

A prim. particle of entreaty or  
exhortation.

Translation: please, beg, beseech,  
implore

“Please say you are my sister, that it  
may be well with me for your sake,  
and that I may live because of you.”

Genesis 12:13

403 Occurrences

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"Age 71... New to Torah, Sabbath, Feasts since Aug 2020. Have kept all the Sabbaths since then.. Well.. trying not to do any work of any kind, and reading/studying Bible, listening to hundreds of different Sabbath type teachings... Fumbled through the Feasts as best I could alone. Still learning what I should be and not be doing." – **Greg**

"Shalom. While typing this question to you, I am listening to one of your podcasts right now. It is the first podcast that I am listening from podcast of Yahweh's Restoration Ministry. (smile)" – **AD**

"I have been rethinking my observance of Christmas again recently. It's disconcerting when Christians condemn those who are turning away from the so-called 'holiday'."

(Q&A, continued from p. 17)

was to be destroyed in flames (Lev. 21:9).

No wonder that Yahweh used fire to destroy sinful people. For example, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by Yahweh with burning sulfur or brimstone for practicing homosexuality and other sins. Israel burned conquered cities of their heathen enemies in a demonstration of total, destructive judgment (i.e. Jericho, Hazor, Ai, Laish).

Individually, in Joshua 7:15 we read that Achan sinned and brought judgment on Israel by taking items from Jericho that were devoted to fiery destruction. So Israel stoned him and his family and then burned their bodies.

The scriptural practice for the upright who died was burial, not cremation. Abraham bought a burial cave called Machpelah for himself and his family, Genesis 23. Joseph was embalmed and placed in a coffin, Genesis 50:26. Yahweh Himself buried Moses, Deuteronomy 34:6.

In contrast we see Saul, who had turned from Yahweh, suffered partial cremation. The body of Saul and his sons had been mutilated by the Philistines and, apparently to prevent further mutilation or to conceal what was done, their bodies were burned by the people of Jabesh. Yet the bones were spared and David later gave them a proper burial.

Moses took the bones of Joseph from Egypt as the sons of Israel had vowed to do. Joseph was so devout

that even at death he was concerned that his very bones would not remain in a pagan land. Joseph's bones were buried in Shechem, where Yahweh first appeared to Abraham. These show the regard we should have for bodily remains and that we should provide a proper burial if possible.

Cremation completely obliterates the body and reduces it to ashes. Yahweh reserves burning for the truly wicked. Malachi 4:3 reads,

"And you shall tread down the wicked: for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do [this], says Yahweh of hosts."

Lack of a proper burial signifies Yahweh's judgment. See 1Kings 14:10-11; Jer. 7:33; Ezek. 29:5.

The people will so hate Yahweh's two witnesses in Revelation 11:9 that they won't give them a burial. Even our Savior was wrapped in a linen cloth and put in a tomb owned by Joseph of Arimathaea. Many other incidences show that burial, not cremation, is the proper way.

True Believers attest to their belief in a future resurrection of the body by being buried to await the trumpet call when they will be given spirit bodies, 1Corinthians 15:51-52:

"Behold I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed."

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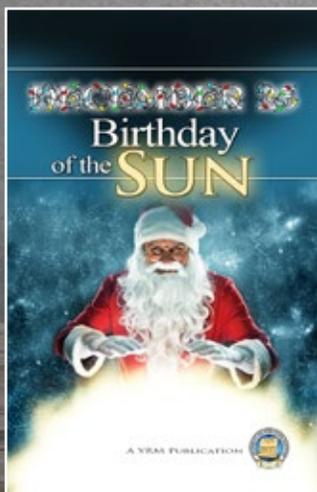
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