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MARCH-APRIL 2022

RESTORATION TIMES



RESTORATION TIMES

VOL. 12 | No. 2 | March-April 2022

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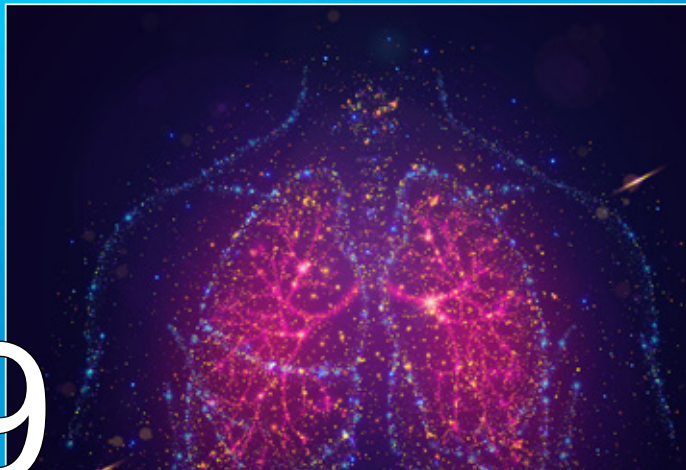


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Restoration Times expounds the close ties between the Old and New Testaments.

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:

Pharaoh with Moses after the Death Angel in Egypt (first Passover). Exodus 12:31

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Passover

The Memorial for Salvation

by the late Donald R. Mansager



Each spring those living in the northern hemisphere eagerly anticipate the warming sun and the coming growing season.

To the sincere Bible students, spring brings to mind much more, however. Warmer weather heralds the month of Abib, a word meaning “to be tender, green, i.e. a young ear of grain,” (*Strong’s Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*). Abib heralds the beginning of the biblical new year, Exodus 12:2.

The ear of grain is barley, which has been planted in the fall. It will be one of the first cereal crops to be harvested, Exodus 9:31. Wheat will follow some seven weeks later when Pentecost arrives.

True Bible believers cannot help seeing the correlation between the earth’s coming to life after a dormant winter and the rejuvenation of our spiritual growth, which we renew each spring at Passover.

Feast Obedience Commanded

In His wisdom, Yahweh has given us seven annual holy times to remind us just why we were born and called of Him. His annual Sabbaths also bring us into a closer spiritual relationship with Yahweh and the working out of His purpose on earth.

A deeper, blessed, spiritual

experience is ours as we participate in the commanded Feast days given us in the pages of the Word. These Feast Days were in existence and given long before Moses, being observed even back in Genesis, as we will show.

Passover is fairly well known to Bible readers. It took place when the Israelites were slaves of the Egyptians, and it was the final plague whereby Pharaoh let Israel go. Passover was observed in the midst of the Egyptians, which is a type of the world. All other convocations took place outside of Egypt.

The lambs were killed, the blood was sprinkled upon the doorposts of the houses and the flesh was eaten with unleavened bread, being shared among the family of believers.

Passover is still observed by Jews around the world. However, they do not slay a lamb, as there is neither a temple nor an altar upon which this can be done. Because they rejected Yahshua’s sacrifice, the Jews have no sacrifice, no blood atonement, and no real Passover. They have unleavened cakes, herbs, and drink, but the true Passover Lamb is not present.

The Jews also practice reclining on couches, wearing a white gown (kittel) and four cups of wine which they have added—are all the traditions of men.

The Passover was taught to the patriarchs long before the Messiah’s day, and can be seen after Adam and his progeny were barred from Eden. Notice Genesis 4:3, “And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Yahweh.” The Hebrew reads, “at the end of days.”

Clearly, Cain and Abel were counting days. The Passover is set for the 14th of Abib, Leviticus 23:5. Cain brought an offering of his crops, the fruit of the ground. Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock.

It has been pointed out that Cain erroneously brought a Tabernacles offering for Passover and so his offering was rejected. Abel brought an offering of the flock (Passover lamb) and his was accepted. They both apparently brought their offerings at the same time.

Abel’s was the proper offering; he came through the blood of the lamb. Cain brought of the labors of his hands, the fruit of the land, which apparently was the wrong offering.

The lesson from Cain is that we cannot approach Yahweh through our own works, our own ideas. We come through the atoning work of the Redeemer of Israel, the Lamb of Yahweh which takes away the sins of the world, John 1:29. Abel brought a sacrifice



Fresco of scenes of Israelites at the Passover, along with Moses and Aaron

of a lamb, and Hebrews 9:22 tells us, “without the shedding of blood there is no remission” of sins.

Jude 11 indicates that Cain’s religion is man’s natural religion, which Yahweh condemns, while Abel brought firstlings, and the fattest ones at that (margin).

Passover is mentioned in Leviticus 23 along with six annual festivals. The Passover is to be kept annually, at the beginning of the year (Ex. 12:2), which is in the spring, either March or April. Deuteronomy 16:1 also commands us to keep Passover in the month of Abib.

The Messiah Yahshua kept all of Yahweh’s laws and commands perfectly, with passion, which included the Passover and all other annual Sabbaths. We read in Matthew 26:17-19, Mark 14:12-18, and Luke 22:8-15 that Yahshua desired to “keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.”

Matthew 26:26-29 shows that He in fact kept the Passover with unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine. He said

He would drink of the fruit of the vine new with the disciples in the Father’s Kingdom. He Himself was offered as the Passover Lamb.

Timing of Passover

There is no biblical precedent for taking the fruit of the vine and the unleavened bread at any other time than at the commanded Passover. Those who partake of the so-called “eucharist,” “mass,” or “L-rd’s Supper” are not following Scripture.

Some even take what they call “the L-rd’s Supper” in the morning before or after breakfast! The only Passover memorial authorized in Scripture is to be taken after sunset as the 14th of Abib begins. Our Savior gave us the example when He and His disciples partook of the memorial in “the same night in which He was betrayed,” 1Corinthians 11:23.

To take this “memorial supper” every three months, monthly, every Sunday, or daily is not sanctioned by Yahweh. We

are told in the Word to partake of these emblems at the time of Passover, in the spring of the year, which is when the barley is maturing but still green.

There is a passage that is supposed justification for partaking of “the cup and the bread” at one’s personal discretion. The portion reads, “. . .this do as oft as you drink it in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you do show the Master’s death until He comes,” 1Corinthians 11:25-26.

Other translations read differently, instead of “oft” and “often,” they use “whenever” (*NEB, NIV*).

In no way does it mean to partake of it whenever we please! If we are told, “Be sure to serve ice cream whenever you observe the Fourth of July,” does it mean we are free to observe the July 4th holiday monthly, weekly, or daily?

Passover is observed on a specific day of the year, as stipulated in the law (Ex. 12; Lev. 23; Deut. 16).

In the New Covenant era, we do

not sacrifice a lamb when we partake of Passover. Paul shows in 1 Corinthians 5:7 that the Messiah is now our Passover Lamb. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Messiah our passover is sacrificed for us."

In the original law of the Passover observance, there was no mention of drinking of wine. The morsel of unleavened bread signifies Yahshua's body. The partaking of the cup signifies His blood. He said in John 6:53-56,

"Then Yahshua said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood,

hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."

Because the cup represents His blood, what liquid must be in the cup?

Nowhere in the Bible is the cup said to contain wine. The Savior called it "the fruit of the vine," thus it could not have been water. It was *gennema* (*Strong's* No. 1081) meaning product of the grape that could be drunk, the squeezed-out juice. Deuteronomy 32:14 says, "...you did drink the pure blood of the grape." The *Companion Bible* says the blood of the grape is metaphorically "red juice" (see also *Smith's Bible Dictionary*).

Isaiah equates grape juice from the wine press with blood: "I have trodden the wine press alone; and of the people there was none with Me. For I will tread them in Mine anger and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment," Isaiah 63:1-3. See Revelation 14:20, where "blood" comes out of the winepress (grape juice).

Paul Observed Passover

Passover from early Bible times looked forward to the greater Passover Lamb, our Savior who was to die for the sins of the world. We are to remember His death by observing the Passover. Then come the seven days of Unleavened Bread.


Notice that Paul kept the Passover. He was of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee. He was the Apostle to the Gentiles and he taught them to observe what are erroneously called the "Feasts of the Jews."

Corinth was a metropolitan community, quite Hellenistic, and a crossroads of trade and commerce. If Passover and Unleavened Bread were done away, why did Paul write to the Corinthians, "Purge out therefore the old leaven that you may be a new lump as you are unleavened. For even the Messiah our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast," 1 Corinthians 5:7-8.

Why could Paul write to the Corinthian brethren about Yahshua being the Passover Lamb if these days were done away at Yahshua's death and not necessary for Gentiles? Why did he further say, "Let us keep the feast!"

Obviously these Feast days were still obligatory some 25 years after the death and resurrection of the Savior. And the record is preserved in the Bible for you and me to follow in our day as well.

We know that the Savior told the disciples, "This do in remembrance of Me," Luke 22:19. He also promised He would partake of the Passover anew in the Father's Kingdom, Matthew 26:29. Leviticus 23:14 says this is a statute forever, throughout all generations.

We show our love for our Savior when we keep His commandments, as instructed in John 14:21. 

Beware of Cheap Substitutes

Why does it seem strange to today's churchgoer to keep the holy days of the Scriptures? For Believers back in the Savior's day, doing so would have come naturally, being Yahshua's teaching for all generations. It was later that secular observances replaced the Bible's annual holy days and Sabbath worship was switched to the first day of the week, none of which is supported by the Scriptures.

"Initially, the faith in the Messiah was a completely Jewish faith. All the believers were Jewish; even the writers of the New Testament were Jewish; the Apostle Paul [Heb. *Sha'ul*] himself being a Jewish rabbi," *Faith and Doctrines of the Early Church*, p. 35.

Eventually, Gentile converts became the majority and they began to question the "Jewishness" of the new faith and New Covenant. A general feeling of anti-Semitism began to take hold.

In an effort to distance themselves from the Jews and to gain new converts from paganism, these later converts found more comfort in observing a different "Passover" known as Easter. Easter, a Babylonian fertility rite named after the pagan deity Astarte, is just one of much baggage brought along by converts from paganism. Another was Sun-day, the venerable day of sun worship.

Aided by such authorities as Roman bishops Sixtus (116-125 CE) and Victor (189-199), as well as Emperor Constantine, such replacement observances became firmly rooted and overshadowed the true biblical days.

The Apostle Paul foretold that this apostasy would happen. "I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them," Acts 20:29-30.

One needs only to pick up a standard encyclopedia and look up any of the popular holidays to be SHOCKED at their origins.

Almighty Yahweh calls the seven annual observances found in Exodus 12 and Leviticus 23 "My Feasts." He says they are to be observed as a "statute forever throughout your generations, in all your dwellings," Leviticus 23:14.

Who is man to change Yahweh's times and laws? (Dan. 7:25)



How Passover Became PASSED OVER

by Alan Mansager

Young voices squeal ecstatically as little private eyes search for caches of tasty blue, gold, and green treasures hidden among trees and in clumps of grass. “I found one,” a five-year-old cries out, reaching for the oval booty. “Me too,” his friend chirps, splitting the grass to reveal a cellophane, chocolate rabbit.

The scene is common in the spring as churches and communities across the country host Easter egg hunts on church lawns, in homes and parks. The rite is as old as the hills, reaching back to the ancient hills of Babylon.

Ask why they indulge in this spring ritual and the parents will shrug and say, “It’s for the kids. We did it when we were young and it is just something we do in fun. . .we don’t ask why!”

As followers of the Word we must ask, Why? Isn’t Easter supposed to be a religious observance? Even those who hardly ever visit their local church typically attend Easter Sunday services. If it is billed as religious,

why Peter Cottontail, egg coloring, hot-cross buns, and parades?

Eastera the Fertile Hybrid

The following statement in a familiar encyclopedia should jar the conscience of every Bible-professing, church-goer today:

“Early Christians celebrated the Jewish feasts. The New Testament contains no reference to distinctively Christian festivals” (*Funk and Wagnall’s Standard Reference Encyclopedia*, 1966 ed., vol. 10, p. 3461).

The questions begging for answers are, why did the very early New Testament believers continue to keep the Old Testament holy days, and why aren’t today’s most venerated observances like Easter even in the Bible?

A common human desire is to tamper with what is already well and good. In Exodus 12, Leviticus 23, and Deuteronomy 16, Yahweh gave man seven annual observances, beginning

with the Passover. These we are told to keep “forever, throughout your generations” as part of a covenant between us and our Creator.

But these observances were apparently not good enough for evolving, early New Testament churchmen. They wanted to fashion their own celebrations in the image of what they thought was good. They didn’t want those old “Jewish” days. The big problem was, they didn’t follow the Scriptures that Yahweh ordained.

Easter grew from just such a situation.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica reveals, “Unlike the cycle of feasts and fasts of the Jewish Law, the Christian year has never been based upon a divine revelation. It is rather a tradition that is always subject to change by ecclesiastical law,” vol. 4, p. 601.

This source says about the Sabbath, “From the beginning, the church took over from Judaism the

seven-day week. Before the end of the apostolic age (1st century C.E.), as the church became predominantly Gentile in membership, the first day of the week, or Sunday, had become the normative time when Christians assembled for their distinctive acts of worship, in commemoration of the Lord's Resurrection," *ibid.*

As the early Roman church welcomed more and more Gentiles, it adhered increasingly to Sunday, the veneration day of the heathen who worshiped the sun deity. The church gradually switched over its observance of the Passover to Sunday as well.

"The earliest Christian celebrated the Lord's Passover at the same time as the Jews, during the night of the first full moon of the first month of spring (Nisan 14-15). By the middle of the 2nd century, most churches had transferred this celebration to the Sunday after the Jewish feast. But certain churches of Asia Minor clung to the older custom, for which they were denounced as 'Judaizing.'" (*Britannica*, vol. 4, p. 60)

"Eusebius further says that the churches of Asia Minor derived their custom of observing the *pascha* [passover] from the Apostle John and Philip. Without a doubt Christian elements were incorporated into the celebration. It was not a question of whether a day corresponding to the Passover should be celebrated, but a question of the time at which it was to be celebrated," *New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia*, vol. 4, p. 44.

Fiddling with the Calendar

To break clean from the Jews, the Roman Church took the first in a long list of shocking liberties.

Two calendars were extant in the fourth century—the biblical lunar calendar and the Egyptian solar calendar. Judaism held to the lunar reckoning while Rome adopted the Egyptian calculations based on the sun.

Rome wished to adjust the lunar calendar that established Passover to the solar year so that everyone could

observe Easter on Sunday.

"Anxiety over the date of Easter was thus a reason why Constantine the Great in 325 CE summoned the famous council of Nicaea. It was decided that Easter must be celebrated everywhere on the same day and this day must be a Sunday. It must be the first Sunday after the full moon following the vernal equinox, March 21, with one reservation: in the English prayerbook it is stated thus: 'and if the full moon happens upon a Sunday, Easter-day is the Sunday after.' The reason for this exception reveals the depth of the division between the Church and



**Yahweh gave
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churchmen.**

the synagogue. For whenever the full moon fell on a Sunday, Easter would be celebrated on the same day as the Hebrew Passover. Hence, the postponement for a week, to avoid the coincidence" *Encyclopedia Americana*, vol. 9, p. 507.

The Christian church wanted a holy week beginning with Palm Sunday, proceeding to Good Friday and ending on Easter Sunday, commemorating the Savior's supposed resurrection on Sunday. Nevermind that there is no mention of any of these days in either Old or New testaments.

A Mixture of the Strange

Through the influence of converts from mystery religions, this new-

found but ancient celebration called Easter took on abominable customs.

The name Easter itself comes from Eastre or Estera, a Teutonic dawn deity of love to whom sacrifice was offered in April. She traces back to the goddess Inanna, daughter of Anu, the supreme mighty one in Sumerian times before the Old Babylonian period.

The Babylonians called her Ishtar the goddess of love and fertility. The worship of Ishtar through fertility rites carries over to the egg and the rabbit symbolism of the modern Easter celebration.

Easter sunrise services trace directly to the worship of Eastre or Estera, deity of the morning. Ancient pagans worshiped the sun, which they saw as the sustainer of life.

Our Savior was not resurrected Sunday morning but was already gone when the women visited the tomb Sabbath evening. The word "dawn" in Matthew 28:1 is *epiphosko*, meaning "draw on to." This was the end of the Sabbath at sundown, not Sunday morning.

Ironically, Yahweh has strong words against indulging in the only worship ceremony many ever attend—Easter sunrise services:

"And He brought me into the inner court of Yahweh's house, and behold, at the door of the temple of Yahweh, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of Yahweh, and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east. Then He said unto me, 'Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke Me to anger: lo, they put the branch [*ashtoreth*, phallic symbol used in Ishtar fertility worship] to their nose. Therefore will I deal in fury: Mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in Mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them,'" Ezekiel 8:16-18.

In Jeremiah 10:2 Yahweh warns us

not to learn the ways of the heathen. We cannot borrow pagan customs and incorporate them into any worship of the only true Mighty One.

The hot-cross buns so popular at Easter also are a legacy of paganism, condemned in Jeremiah 7 when Judah was perpetuating the practice.

“The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other deities, that they may provoke me to anger,” verse 18.

“Cakes” is from the Hebrew *kavvan*, a sacrificial cake, literally, bun.


The cross placed on today’s hot-cross buns is the symbol for woman. In hieroglyphics the cross means living or life—the worship of life and fertility that Easter of yesterday and today glorifies.

A Choice for True Worship

In our day when more and more churchgoers know less and less about the Bible they profess to follow, Almighty Yahweh leaves us a choice. We can continue in darkness or we can leave the abominations of false worship and come clean, a pure bride ready to join the coming Savior for an everlasting life in His Kingdom.

A true follower finds mixing pure worship with ancient rites of mystery religions incomprehensible. This conviction is upheld in the Word of Almighty Yahweh.

“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,’” 2Corinthians 6:16-17.

Pure worship is described as a narrow, more difficult road, and few will be walking on it. But the rewards for those who do will be indescribable! 

Easter’s One Verse Wonder

One Verse in One Version

In a careful examination of the Scriptures we discover the word Easter only one time, as a mistranslation, and in only one Bible version. The account is Acts 12:4 after Herod imprisoned the Apostle Peter. Verse 4 in the King James Version reads, “...intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.”

Notice how all other versions properly translate this same passage:

“...intending to bring him before the people after Passover,” **The New King James Bible.**

“...intending after the Passover to bring him out before the people,” **New American Standard Version**

“...Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover,” **New International Version**

“...with the intention of producing him to the people after Passover,” James Moffat.

“... intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people,” **Revised Standard Version**

“...intending to bring him out to the people after the Passover,” **New Revised Standard Version**

“...Herod’s intention was to deliver Peter to the Jews for execution after the Passover,”

Living Bible

“...intending to bring him out to the people after Passover,” **Modern Language Bible**

“...meaning to produce him in public after Passover,” **New English Bible**

“... intending after the Passover to bring him forth to the people,” **The Webster Bible**

“...purposing after the Passover to bring him forth to the people,” **The Amplified New Testament**

“...intending to bring him out to the people after the Passover,” **The New Berkeley Version in Modern English**

“...intending, after the pasch to bring him forth to the people,” **Douay-Rheims** (Catholic).

In the above translation, “pasch” is simply the near Greek word for Passover, Pascha. “Passover” is found 28 times in the King James New Testament, while Easter appears only once!

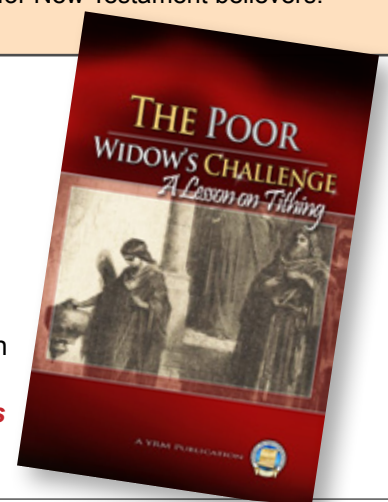
As the King James **Newberry Reference Bible** shows in a side column note on Acts 12:4, the word “Easter” in the King James should have been “Passover” (Newberry includes the Greek letters for “Pascha”).

Amazing, isn’t it? Easter is the second biggest religious celebration of the Christian world. Yet, its only scriptural evidence in the entire Bible is one mistranslated word. Clearly the Passover is the proper observance for New Testament believers.

Blessings from the Heart

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

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



Breathing the Name

by Ryan Mansager

Is it possible that with every breath you take you are saying the name Yahweh? It has been said the Jewish sages associated the name with breath. The uniqueness of this two syllable form YaH-WeH can indeed be breathed, try it. Inhale “Yah” and exhale “weh,” or you can exhale Yah and inhale weh. The *yod*, *heh*, and *waw* (which make up the Tetragrammaton) are semivowel letters in Hebrew, commonly called *matres lectionis*, from the Latin “mothers of reading” and are consonants that are used as vowels. In Biblical Hebrew they are used for the unchangeable vowel combinations in Masoretic vowel pointing.

Ancient Jewish historian Flavius Josephus backs this up in his description of the inscription on the miter of the high priest: “A mitre also of fine linen encompassed his head, which was tied by a blue ribbon, about which there was another golden crown, in which was engraven the sacred name: it consists of four vowels.” The *Wars of the Jews*, 5.235. Could Josephus be indicating the name is an onomatopoeia (formation of a word from the sound associated with it)? I’m pretty convinced he is. I am also convinced they considered yod, heh, and waw as *matres lectionis* and I believe the Hebrew tells the story.

Vowels are spoken with the open mouth and to inhale and exhale air you

must open your mouth. It is no accident that the Tetragrammaton is made up of semi-vowel letters.

Yahweh told Moses in response to his question, what shall I call You, in Exodus 3:14 said: “I Am that I Am.” I Am is from the verb of existence HaYah in Hebrew, which means to become, come to pass, as well as sustain. His name is attributed to life. Our very sustenance is the air we breathe. Maybe this is why David wrote: “I will bless Yahweh at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.” Psalms 34:1. To breathe is the very essence of life. Yahweh’s Holy Spirit is called the *Ruach HaKodesh* in Hebrew. *Ruach* literally means breath, wind or spirit.

Yahweh’s very breath filled life into the lungs of man, Genesis 2:7; 7:22.

In Psalm 150:6 Scripture says: “Let every thing that hath breath praise Yah. HalleluYah.” Psalm 150:6 retains the short form Yah in the Masoretic text.

It is properly vowel pointed to “Yah” (yod, qamets, heh) twice in the text. The final heh in Yah contains a mappiq dot indicating the heh is to be pronounced as a full aspirated consonant “YaH,” rather than just the qamets vowel “Ya,” adding the breathy “h” sound to Yahh.

Many rabbis know the importance of the Tetragrammaton YHWH in relation to breath. The Jewish prayer book, the *Siddur*, teaches, “*Nishmat kol chai*

tivarekh et-shimcha, YHWH elohenu” — “The breathing of all life, praises your Name, YHWH our Elohim.”

This is yet another proof of why the simplicity of the two-syllable name Yah-weh is authentic and why so many of the complex three-syllable variations are incorrect and cannot be breathed.

In Genesis 2:7 Yahweh breathed into Adam the breath of life and made him live. “*Nishmat khayyim* (breath of life).” *Khayyim* is represented in the popular *Chai* symbol of the two Hebrew letters *Het-yod*, popular among Jews in the land of Israel and worn as necklaces symbolizing life.

Recall the phrase in the movie *Fiddler on the Roof*: “to life to life l’chaim.” In Jeremiah 23:36 we see the Hebrew phrase “*Elohim khayyim Yahweh sebaowth Elohenu*” or “Elohim of the living, Yahweh of Hosts our Elohim.”

Pronounce the tetragrammaton the way it is written: YHWH. Notice you actually breathe the name? It really is quite amazing! You really don’t even need the vowels to say the name. This is the beauty of these aspirate consonants that make up the name and how fascinating Yahweh’s name really is.

From the first man Adam till now, no matter your religion, if you believe in the Bible, or an Atheist, the name of Yahweh will be on every ones lips until your last breath.





Is the ‘Immortal Soul’ Biblical?

by Randy Folliard

Most assume that when loved ones “die” they instantly waft off for an eternal existence in heaven – even before they are judged and before the decision is made as to their future. Where was the judgment? Something is amiss. Are humans immortal or not?

The belief that we have an immortal soul goes back to the early church and even beyond.

According to many scholars and historians, this notion arose from the Egyptians’ belief in the afterlife. The Greeks also believed in the immortal soul, and then passed the idea on to Judaism and Christianity.

But is this concept found in the Bible? Many theologians acknowledge that the notion of an immortal soul is nowhere found in the Old Testament.

In this article we will view several sources showing the origin of the immortal soul belief nowhere found in the Old Testament. We’ll review the meaning of the words *nephesh* and *psuché* and see how these words are used in the Old and New testaments.

Finally, we’ll observe instances in the New Testament that are often used to support the notion of an immortal soul.

Origins of the Immortal Soul Belief

The *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* provides a key reference: “Perhaps we may say that the idea of immortality assumed a more definite shape among the Egyptians, for they recognized not only a dwelling-place of the dead, but also a future judgment. ‘Osiris, the beneficent god, judges the dead,’ and, ‘having weighed their heart in the scales of justice, he sends the wicked to regions of darkness, while the just are sent to dwell with the god of light.’ The latter, we read on an inscription, ‘found favor before the great God; they dwell in glory, where they live a heavenly life; the bodies they have quitted will forever repose in their tombs, while they rejoice in the life of the supreme God.’ Immortality was thus plainly taught, although bound up with it was the idea of the preservation of the body, to which they attached great importance, as a condition of the soul’s continued life; and hence they built vast tombs, and embalmed their bodies, as if to last forever.”

From this quotation we learn that the concept of the immortal soul is found in the religion of the ancient Egyptians and did not originate with the early church,

as many believe. This is an important truth. Like so many other beliefs in nominal worship, this popular notion arose through the adoption of pagan ideas.

As a side note, we also see that the Egyptians viewed a connection between the soul and the body, which is why they went to such great lengths to preserve the body through the practice of mummification.

Influence of the Greeks

Our next resource, the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, supplies this information: “The belief that the soul continues its existence after the dissolution of the body is a matter of philosophical or theological speculation rather than of simple faith, and is accordingly nowhere taught in the Holy Scripture. . . . The belief in the immortality of the soul came to the Jews from contact with Greek thought and chiefly through the philosophy of Plato, its principal exponent, who was led to it through Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries in which Babylonian and Egyptian views were strangely blended.”

This is quite a statement! According to this source, the belief of the immortal soul is nowhere to be found in the Holy Scriptures. Also, the Jews received this concept of the immortal soul from the Greeks. Before this, there was no concept of an immortal soul for the Jewish people.

We also see a reference to Plato, a Hellenistic Jewish philosopher who lived between 20 BCE and 50 CE. You may be asking, what is a Hellenistic Jewish philosopher? This was a Jew who adopted Greek ideas in his own Jewish culture. According to what we see here, Plato was instrumental in the Jews adopting the belief in the immortal soul.

There was also a connection to Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries, both of which were connected to Greek belief systems, which helped to solidify the concept of an immortal soul. Plutarch, a Greek philosopher, and Platonist, who lived between from 46 to 119 C.E., said this about the Mysteries: “Because of those sacred and faithful promises

given in the mysteries, we hold it firmly for an undoubted truth that our soul is incorruptible and immortal.”

I also want to point out that we see mention of the Babylonians. As with all things pagan, there seems always to be a connection back to the Babylonians.

Continuing, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* tells us: “Human beings seem always to have had some notion of a shadowy double that survives the death of the body. But the idea of the soul as a mental entity, with intellectual and moral qualities, interacting with a physical organism but capable of continuing after its dissolution, derives in Western thought from Plato and entered into Judaism during approximately the last century before the Common Era and thence into Christianity.”

Again, we are shown that the Hellenistic philosopher Plato brought this belief into Judaism, which would then pass it on to Christianity. It’s incredible how much we can learn by simply reading references like these two mainstream encyclopedias. If somebody wants to understand the truth, it’s not hard to find. We need to have an open mind and be willing to study.

The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* states, “We are influenced always more or less by the Greek, Platonic idea that the body dies, yet the soul is immortal. Such an idea is utterly contrary to the Israelite consciousness and is nowhere found in the Old Testament.”

One more reference is found in the *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, which reads, “. . . the ‘departure’ of the *nephesh* [soul] must be viewed as a figure of speech, for it does not continue to exist independently of the body, but dies with it. . . . No biblical text authorizes the statement that the ‘soul’ is separated from the body at the moment of death.”

Again, there is NOTHING in the Bible to support an immortal soul or that the soul is somehow independent or separate from the body.

Defining “Nephesh”

Let’s move on now and see what we can learn regarding the Hebrew word

nephesh, from which the word for soul is derived. *Strong’s* defines it: “**nephesh**, *neh-fesh-* from H5314; properly, a breathing creature, i.e. animal of (abstractly) vitality; used very widely in a literal, accommodated or figurative sense (bodily or mental).”

Brown-Driver-Briggs states, “soul, living being, life, self, person, desire, appetite, emotion, and passion.”

Notice that *Strong’s* defines *nephesh* as a breathing creature, of men and animals. There’s nothing indicating an



No biblical text authorizes the statement that the ‘soul’ is separated from the body at the moment of death. The Hellenistic philosopher Plato brought this belief into Judaism, which would then pass it on to Christianity.

immortal soul, i.e., a soul independent of the body.

From the *blueletterbible.org* we read, “The KJV translates Strong’s H5315 in the following manner: soul (475x), life (117x), person (29x), mind (15x), heart (15x), creature (9x), body (8x), himself (8x), yourselves (6x), dead (5x), will (4x), desire (4x), man (3x), themselves (3x), any (3x), appetite (2x), miscellaneous (47x).”

While *nephesh* primarily refers to

a breathing or living being, whether human or animal, it can also refer to the emotions and passions in us, but it's always connected to a living being or person. What we don't see biblically is the concept of a distinct entity or soul that lives on for eternity. Nothing in these definitions indicates a soul that is separate from the body.

We also see that the top three ways this word is rendered in the *KJV* are "soul" at 475 times, "life" at 117 times, and person at 29 times. The word "soul" for *nephesh* is used far less in modern translations, which instead will use life or person.

But again, what we don't see here is the phrase "immortal soul." In fact, to my knowledge this phrase is absent in all translations, including in the New Testament.

Examples of 'Nephesh'

Let's now consider some Old Testament instances of *nephesh*.

- Gen 2:7 – (man became a living "soul" or living person): "And Yahweh Elohim formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
- Gen 1:20-21, 24 – (creatures of the waters of the land): "And Elohim said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And Elohim created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and Elohim saw that it was good. . . And Elohim said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so."
- Gen 9:10, 12-13, 15 – (creatures or animals that were with Noah; rainbow, token of the Noahic covenant): "And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. . . And Elohim said, This is the token of the covenant which I make

between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. . . And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh."

- Gen 1:30; 19:19 – (soul refers to a life – both animal and human): "And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. . . Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:"
- Ex 12:16 – (reference to UB, soul = man): "And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you."
- Gen 14:21; 35:6 – (*nephesh* = persons, people): "And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. . . So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, he and all the people that were with him."
- Lev 27:2; Num 5:5-6 – (*nephesh* = persons, person): "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for Yahweh by thy estimation. . . And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, to do a trespass against Yahweh, and that person be guilty."
- Psalm 107:9; Prov 27:7 – (*nephesh* = person who is hungry): "For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. . . The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."
- Deut 12:20; 14:26 – (*nephesh* = a person who desires some): "When

Yahweh thy Elohim shall enlarge thy border, as he hath promised thee, and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul longeth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after. . . And thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and thou shalt eat there before Yahweh thy Elohim, and thou shalt rejoice, thou, and thine household."

Defining "Psuche"

We transition now to the New Testament and see how the word "soul" is used in Greek. While it's a not a perfect match, the closest word to the Hebrew *nephesh* is *psuché*. **Strong's** defines this word as, "From *psucho*; breath, i.e. (by implication) spirit, abstractly or concretely (the animal sentient principle only; thus distinguished on the one hand from *pneuma*, which is the rational and immortal soul; and on the other from *zoe*, which is mere vitality, even of plants: these terms thus exactly correspond respectively to the Hebrew *nephesh*, *ruwach* and *chay*)."

We find that the primary definition of *psuché* is breath. Remember that Strong's defines *nephesh* as a "breathing creature." From this standpoint, the words *nephesh* and *psuché* are nearly identical – with both referring to a breathing or living being.

Also mentioned are the Greek *pneuma* and *zoe*. *Pneuma* corresponds to the Hebrew word *ruach*, which refers to the wind or spirit. In fact, the phrase Holy Spirit comes from the Hebrew *Qodesh Ruach* (*qodesh* meaning "holy" and *ruach* meaning "spirit"). According to **Strong's**, *pneuma* can also refer to the immortal soul.

While the Greek word *pneuma* is beyond the scope of this article, nowhere do we find this usage in the New Testament. As we've already seen, the concept of the immortal soul came from the Greeks, which would explain why the Greek *pneuma* includes the meaning of the immortal soul.

Focusing on *psuché*, we see that **Thayer's Greek Lexicon** gives this

definition:

1) Breath

a. The breath of life; the vital force

b. Life

c. That in which there is life; a living being

2) The Soul

a. The seat of the feelings, desires, affections, aversions

b. ...the soul regarded as a moral being designed for everlasting life

c. The soul as an essence which differs from the body and is not dissolved as death.

Thayer's breaks this word between breath and soul. In the instance of breath, it refers to life or the breath of life. In the case of the soul, we see two main definitions; one is a reference to our feelings and emotions and the other refers to the soul as separate from the body that is not dissolved by death. The last definition refers to an immortal soul.

Before looking at the evidence **Thayer's** provides for this definition, I want to share how this word is translated in the KJV. From blueletterbible.org, "The KJV translates **Strong's** G5590 in the following manner: soul (58x), life (40x), mind (3x), heart (1x), heartily (with G1537) (1x), not translated (2x)." What we don't see in these renderings is the phrase "immortal soul."

Again, to my knowledge, the phrase "immortal soul" is absent from all translations in both the Old and New testaments. *Psuché* means "breath" and like *nephesh*, refers to a breathing or living being.

Proof for the Immortal Soul?

Let us now review the evidence that **Thayer's** offers for the immortal soul. **Thayer's** provides four passages in the New Testament, i.e., Matthew 10:28, Acts 2:27, Revelation 6:9, and Revelation 20:4.

None of these verses supports the belief of the immortal soul. The one most often used is the one we'll look at first: Matthew 10:28. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in *Gehenna*."

Based on what is seen here, many believe that Yahshua shows that the soul is immortal. How do we explain this? The word "body" here comes from the Greek *soma*. **Strong's** defines this word as the body (as a sound whole).

The word "soul" comes from the Greek *psyche*, which, as we've already seen, means "breath" or "life."

What is the context here? Yahshua is speaking about *Gehenna* or the lake of fire. When Yahshua uses the word "soul," He's referring to the breath of life in us and states that only He can destroy life in *Gehenna*. As we see in Revelation 20, Yahshua will be the one who will judge all of mankind based on their works. Inevitably, the wicked will be destroyed in *Gehenna* or the lake of fire. Yahshua confirms that only He can extinguish a person's *psyche*, or life, forever, as He will do in *Gehenna*.

When taken in context, we don't see here the Messiah endorsing or supporting the notion of an immortal soul. Yes, we see a difference between our physical body and the life that only Yahshua can destroy, but nothing shows that this life is immortal.

Next is Acts 2:27: "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in the grave, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." This passage speaks about the resurrection of Yahshua the Messiah.

Some will claim this passage shows evidence that the soul is immortal or lives on forever, but there is no evidence here supporting this belief.

We see that Yahweh did not allow Yahshua's body to see corruption or decay in the grave. As we know from Scripture, Yahweh raised Yahshua from the grave and transformed Him into a spirit being. As a side note, this passage clearly shows a separation between the Father and Son, refuting the erroneous concepts of the Trinity and Oneness.

We also see this in the promise of our resurrection – Yahshua will resurrect us, and when He does, our bodies will change from physical to spiritual. But even here, it's not an immortal soul, but an immortal life,

and again this happens only at the resurrection. There is nothing here supporting the belief of an immortal soul.

The remaining two examples are from Revelation. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of Elohim, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Yahweh, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." (Rev. 6:9-11)

Many will claim this passage refers to the souls of the martyrs or those who were slain for the Word of Yahweh, and I would agree with this interpretation. But some will further explain that the souls crying out here show a consciousness of the soul, proving that the soul lives on after the death of the body or is immortal.

How do we explain this? This is simply an allegory showing the promise of salvation to those who die as a martyr for the Word of Almighty Yahweh. Yahshua said this in Matthew 10:39: "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it." The message we see in Revelation 6 is the same message we find in Matthew 10:39, and that is, those who die as a witness to Yahweh's truth will be given white robes, symbolizing the resurrection to eternal life at Yahshua's coming.

We have a similar example of this type of figurative usage in Genesis 4:10 in reference to the blood of Abel. "And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

We know that blood does not literally cry out. Abel's blood crying out is symbolic of what Cain did when he murdered Abel, his brother, similar to what we see in Revelation 6.



Let's now look at Revelation 20:4. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Yahshua, and for the word of Yahweh, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Messiah a thousand years."

Many will claim this passage also shows proof for the immortal soul. But this shows the same context we saw in Revelation 6:9, i.e., those who die in Yahweh will receive eternal life at Yahshua's coming and will rule with Him for 1,000 years. There's nothing in this verse to prove that the "soul" is immortal. This idea is nothing more than the construct of Greek philosophy, going back to the Egyptians and Babylonians.

Perish the Thought

I want to share one more passage, showing that we lose all thought or consciousness in the grave when we

die. Psalm 146:4 tells us:

"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."

From Ecclesiastes 12:7 we learn as well that our breath or *ruach* returns to Yahweh when we die. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit [or *ruach*] shall return unto Elohim who gave it." Here, the *ruach* refers to the breath of life that Yahweh imparts upon all living creatures. We also see that we return to the earth. This is simply describing the natural way our physical bodies break down or decay in the grave.

The last thing mentioned in Psalm 146:4 is that our thoughts perish or come to an end when we die. The word "thoughts" comes from the Hebrew *eshtonah* and is only found here. In Hebrew, it means "to think."

In summation, when we die our breath or *ruach* returns to Yahweh, our bodies decay in the grave, we lose all thought or consciousness, and we remain in this state

until the resurrection of the dead. The fact that we lose all awareness in the grave shows the erroneousness of the immortal soul concept.

In Conclusion

Here is a synopsis of what we have covered in this article:

- (a) As we find from many historians that the concept of the immortal soul goes back to the Egyptians and Babylonians.
- (b) We also know that the Greeks passed this on to Judaism and Christianity.
- (c) According to biblical scholars, there's no such concept as the immortal soul in the Old Testament.
- (d) In the Old Testament, the word soul comes from the Hebrew *nephesh*, meaning a breathing creature.
- (e) The three main ways *nephesh* is rendered in the Old Testament are soul, life, and person.
- (f) The word for soul in Greek is *psuché*, meaning breath.
- (g) And the three main ways *psuché* is rendered in the New Testament are soul, life, and mind. ✓



Q Why do you avoid the words god, lord and church? Why do you say “halleluyah” instead of “amen”? The scriptures say the Law was nailed to the cross, and was a shadow of the truth, which is [Messiah] and was given to Yahweh’s chosen people, the Jews. So, why do you believe the sabbath and the feasts must still be observed?

A We avoid the common titles, Exodus 23:13, because they aren’t names and we are commanded to call on and honor His true Name, Yahweh, Psalm 68:4; Joel 2:32; Psalm 83:18. And we must also take the names and titles of the pagan Baalim (lord, god) out of our mouths. “Church” is from the name of the Greek goddess called Circe, who changed men into swine and whom the pagans worshiped. “Church” (Scottish kirk) was never applied to the body of believers in the Word. Translators brought it into the text from their own traditions. There is nothing wrong with saying “amen” (a Hebrew adverb meaning truly, so be it), but we prefer halleluYah because it means “praise Yah.”

As to the law nailed to the tree, you probably mean Colossians 2:14. It refers to man-made ordinances (handwritten by man) that Yahshua took away, such as “touch not, taste not, handle not.” Such are not Yahweh’s royal, salvational laws but man-made dictates the Jews added to the law. Yahweh’s law defines sin, which is simply the transgression of the law, 1John 3:4. Without Yahweh’s law there is no sin, Romans 4:5, and therefore without law in effect we are all sinless and have no need of the Savior!

If you are ever at a loss about how to worship or what to practice, just follow the Messiah Yahshua, who obeyed the law perfectly and was sinless. He is our model – and most importantly, our future Judge who will judge all people for salvation’s sake.

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Q I know the Bible teaches the Father is the only true Elohim (John 17:3) but what about the verses that call Yahshua Elohim, like: John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and the Word was Elohim.” Here we see there are two mighty ones. In the same evangel of John where only the Father is true Elohim, we see Elohim being in the beginning with Elohim. That’s TWO. How is that possible? This same language is used in Hebrews 1:8 where the Father calls the son Elohim. Please explain these two verses.

A In John 1:1 the Word refers to the preexistent Messiah. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim and the Word was Elohim.” The Greek *Diaglott* clarifies by saying “a mighty one

[Elohim] was the Word.” *The Complete Bible, an American Translation*, reads, “In the beginning the Word existed. The Word was with (Elohim) and the Word was divine.” Elohim is generic for mighty ones. In the Old Testament the word Elohim applied to Yahweh as well as to false deities, angels, and even to man.

Hebrews 1:8 is a quotation from Psalm 45:6. The word “Elohim” there is from the Greek *theos* and refers to the Son. Both *elohim* and *theos* are broad in meaning. *Theos* here is not confirming equality with the Father but simply that the Son is also considered divine. See the chart “Father and Son Relationship,” p. 1872, *Restoration Study Bible, 4th ed.*

Q I was reading through your statement of faith and found a curious statement I was hoping you’d elaborate for me. It reads, “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. Is that what you believe?

A Yahweh uses the Spirit to accomplish many of His works, including to call a potential believer to the Truth. The distinction is that after immersion into Yahshua’s Name the Holy Spirit is endowed to live within the believer for the long-term. The Spirit remains so long as we obey Yahweh and don’t reject Him or His laws, Acts 5:32. Even then the Spirit is given only partially at the time of baptism. From then on we grow in grace and knowledge into the fullness of the Spirit.

The *Restoration Study Bible* (4th ed.) note on 2Corinthians 1:22 reads, “Who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” The word “earnest” is of Hebrew origin and defines part of a purchase, a down payment.

At baptism the saints receive a portion or down payment of the Holy Spirit, waiting for its fullness at the return of Yahshua and the resurrection. Paul wrote in Romans 8:23, “And not only they, but ourselves also who have the firstfruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption to wit, the redemption of our body,” Also 2Corinthians 5:5, “Now He that hath wrought us ... is Elohim, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the spirit.”

Ephesians 1:13-14 reads, “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the good news of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”



Q I noticed in my RSB that the name James is from *Iakobos* or *Iakob* (2385 in **Strong's Greek Dictionary**). How did the name of the Old Testament patriarch Jacob end up being the name James in the New Testament?

A The change in that name came about through various language transformations. *Iakóbos* was transliterated as *Iacobus* or *Jacobus* in the Greek. In late Latin a slight change in spelling and pronunciation occurred, and the name was written as *Iacomus* or *Jacomus*. Early French adapted the Latin name and shortened it to *Gemmes* or *Jammes*. English shortened it further and it took on the form James.

Many Hebrew names in the Word have been Anglicized. Some were totally changed, as in this case in the New Testament. This has helped to pull the reader away from the Bible's Hebraic heritage and flavor, not unlike artwork in Bibles depicting Old Testament peoples dressed in the clothing of the Middle Ages, the era when many translations were made into English.

Q I go to a messianic assembly and for Passover I've seen them provide lamb. I've told my teacher that I thought the Passover sacrifice was to be killed only in Israel at the place where he put his name at the temple and that Messiah is our Passover lamb. He tells me according to the New Testament that we can still eat the sacrifice because our body is the temple. Am I in error?

A The emblems of the bread and cup that Yahshua presented at that last Passover with His disciples, Matt. 26, are what we are commanded to use for the Passover. They are not to be neglected or substituted, for salvation's sake, John 6:53-56. In Matthew 26:28 He calls the emblem of the cup the blood of the New Covenant. The lamb was the emblem of the Old Covenant, which did not ensure salvation.

Some sacrifice a lamb in lieu of the emblems Yahshua gave us, which does not comply with His command or the New Covenant. Those who do so are not observing the New Testament Passover.

Eating lamb during the Feast of Unleavened bread has no more meaning than eating steak or chicken. What matters is that for the Passover memorial we partake of the unleavened bread and cup, as our coming Judge Yahshua commanded.

In John 2:21 Yahshua spoke of the temple of His body. It is His temple, His body, that matters, not our temples.

Q Some groups keep a Passover meal together just before taking the emblems of the Passover. Is this scriptural?

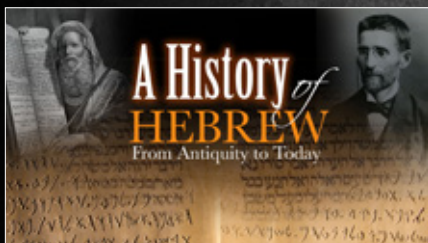
A In Exodus 12 we learn that Israel was to roast the lamb and eat its charred carcass with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. No beverage was mentioned. This was nothing like a feast. It was a solemn memorial, eaten in fear (12:11— where "haste" is the Hebrew *chaphaz*). It was a solemn, apprehensive time, just the opposite of a joyful feast or fellowship meal.

Perhaps the groups' practice mimics the Jews' traditional meal called Seder, meaning "the order of the ritual," on the 14th prior to their Passover on the 15th. The Seder grew out of the biblical Passover on the 14th, the true Passover time (Ex. 12:6). While the main Passover was kept at the Temple, the Seder was kept as a family prior to it.

The Seder meal had added rituals. Its four cups of wine are a Talmudic legacy. After the Temple was destroyed many of its Passover rituals, except for the paschal lamb, were transferred to the home service.

In the New Testament Yahshua instructs the disciples to prepare the Passover lamb and unleavened bread for the memorial service in the large upper room (Luke 22:7). This is the same observance Israel kept in Egypt when they killed, roasted, and ate a lamb and the unleavened bread

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that went with it. As they were eating the lamb and bread, Yahshua stood up and gave them new symbols to be used to represent Him: the cup with the fruit of the vine for His blood and the unleavened bread to represent His body.

They were NOT eating a regular meal prior to the formal Passover service. They were observing the Passover itself by eating the sacrificial lamb (Luke 22:15). It was all one observance and one activity.

Paul chastises the Greek-influenced Corinthians for having a fellowship meal at Passover. Paul says, "When you come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Master's Supper. For in eating everyone takes before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have you not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise you the Assembly of Yahweh, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not" (1Cor. 11:20-22).

The Companion Bible says this was a social meal. This custom was Greek and called for each to bring his own food, so the rich ate well while the poor did not. It also led to the exclusion of some. Paul condemns them, saying they are destroying the spirit of the Passover by this prior meal (vv. 23-31). It is not a time for fellowship meals—not before, during or after. The Bible is clear: the Passover is a solemn occasion both in commemoration of the passing over of the death angel and as the memorial of our Savior's death.

Q Can a deacon ordain someone into eldership? Can he perform the laying on of hands at baptism? Will that elder who was ordained by a deacon be legitimate or have authority to baptize/ordain others? What needs to be done to those who were baptized by such a minister?

A The qualifications for deacons are discussed in 1Timothy 3:8-13. The office of elder is detailed in vv. 1-7. A key duty of elders is the ability to teach, which is not a prerequisite of a deacon. Ordaining requires an elder, not a deacon, according to 1Timothy 4:14. "Presbytery" is a council of elders. Deacons can baptize but not lay on hands for the Holy Spirit. That requires an elder, as we see in the case of Deacon Philip and the Ethiopian, Acts 8:38; 8:14-17. There is only one proper baptism, which is into the Name of Yahshua the Messiah.

בִּיבְלִי
מַעֲבָדֵי
לֶשׁוֹן
מַצֵּה
ת —

Matztzah
Kho'desh

Composition: Mem, Pathach, Tzadi,
Dagesh Forte, Qamets, Heh

The Hebrew word **Matztzah** (H4682) is a feminine noun and means unleavened bread or cake. in contrast chametz (H2557) is leavened bread.

"Do not eat it with bread made with yeast, but for seven days eat **unleavened bread**, the bread of affliction, because you left Egypt in haste..." Deuteronomy 16:3

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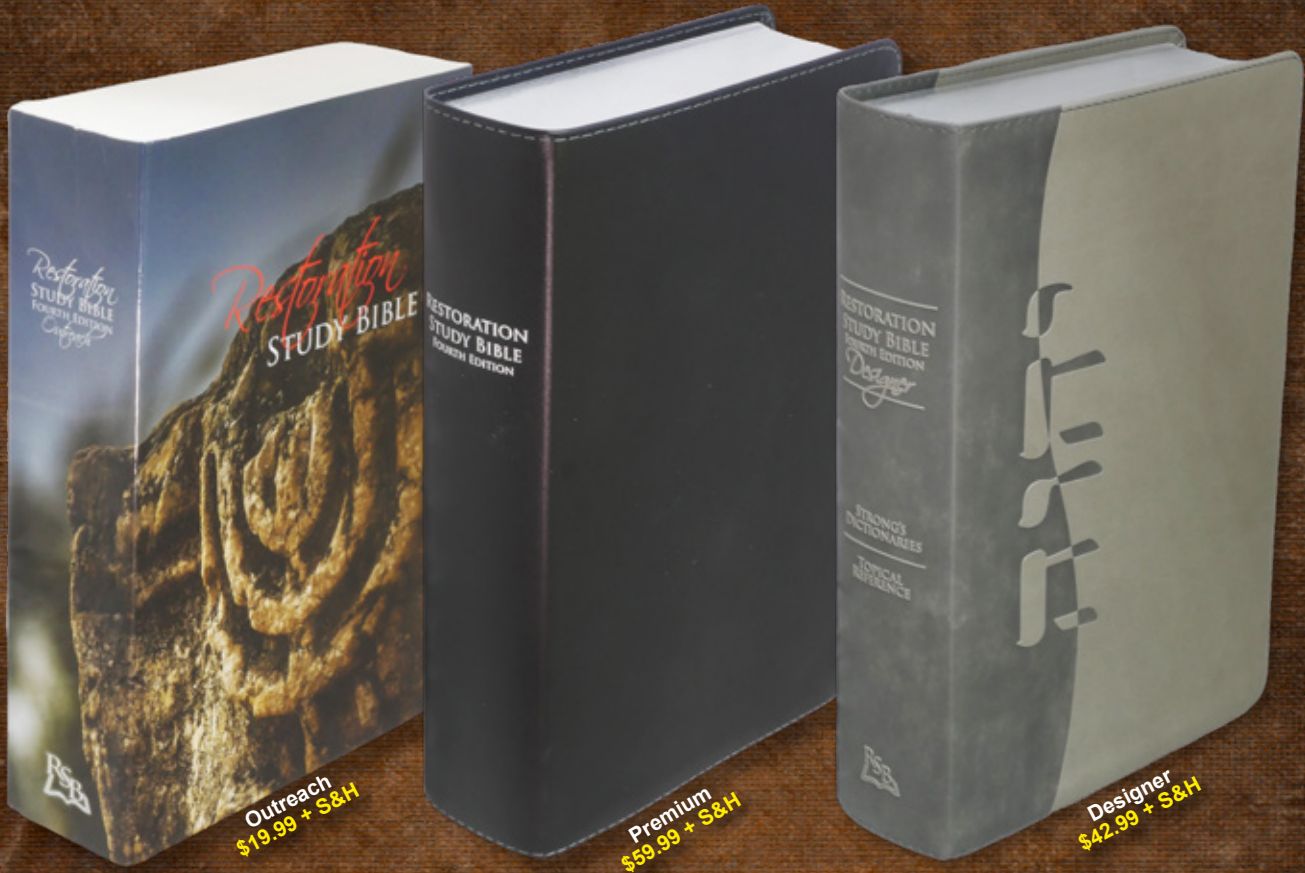
We recognize our outreach partners for their outstanding dedication to the Truth in their effort to fulfill the Great Commission. If you are interested in becoming an outreach partner to help us spread the Truth, visit: <http://www.yrm.org/outreach> or call us at (573) 896-1000 during normal office hours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

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"I just recently purchased a Restoration Study Bible and I just love it." - KC

"What congregation would you suggest I attend? I am in Finland and we have mostly Lutheran and Pentecostal churches around. Both of these teach the law is pretty much done away with and have many worldly practices (Lutherans in Finland even marry gay couples) so I feel really alone." – NK

Most denominational religion is following the secular world down the drain as they work to appease and accommodate sin. What you witness is what happens when the law is thrown out. As for finding a fellowship in Finland, YRM has no organized presence there, at the best just scattered followers in your country that we don't know about. You need to find a group that keeps the Sabbath, Feast days and calls on the true Name Yahweh and the saving Name Yahshua. In lieu of that, we invite you to follow us live online each Sabbath (1:30 Central).

Although you are 8 hours ahead of us, you can always download the Sabbath message later. We pray for you Niko. Don't get discouraged but keep the faith and proclaim the Truth there whenever you can, 2Timothy 4:2. - ED

"I am a former WWCG member where I learned a lot about the Sabbath, Feast days, biblical dietary laws, keeping the Commandments, etc. I left in 1995 when the organization changed all of their core teachings. I have since attended with a few of the splintered groups...I learned about the biblical calendar and the fact that all these groups were keeping the wrong dates due to going by the rabbinical "Hebrew" calendar. When I went to an elder with questions, I was told I couldn't attend if I didn't believe everything the group taught. I have been fellowshiping with a group of people who do go by the biblical calendar but I recently came to the conviction that the titles "God" and "Lord" are not Yahweh's true names and that most Bible translators replaced the true name with these titles (also "Jesus" for Yahshua). Exodus 3:15 states very clearly "YHWH (Yahweh) is my name forever, and this is My remembrance to all generations."

When I went looking for more information about only using Yahweh's sacred Name, I found your website. When I read your About page, it gave me a different perspective of what happened during those early years when HWA separated and began his own ministry (church organization).

"Do you believe in the GAP theory which is the belief that the creation narrative in Genesis 1 is talking about a re-creation and that the earth, sun, moon, and stars were created billions of years ago. The reason it needed re-creation was because Satan destroyed the "universe," including the sun, moon, stars, and that Yahweh had to re-create it all over again or in other words, restore it all again?"

"HWA taught this in his book "Mystery of Ages" and said it was a missing dimension in knowledge and that it was revealed to him (as the modern-day apostle). When I went searching for more information, there were articles about how the GAP theory began to be taught in the middle 19th century and it was not a new teaching as HWA claimed in his book.

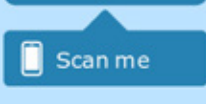
"I came to the conviction that we must read the Scripture for what it says and not try to read any preconceived ideas or theories into it. Therefore I believe that creation took place in the six-day creation week with the Sabbath following just as the Bible states (its even in the 4th Commandment).

"I would very much like to find people to fellowship with who are of like mind and who are on fire for just what the Bible teaches and obey Yahweh's Word (rather than believing in the traditions of men)." - Constance

We do not hold to the Gap theory. The Hebrew of Genesis 1:1-2 doesn't support it. We welcome you to join with us as we reach the world with the truth of His Name and Word. - ED

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