

WWW.RESTORATIONTIMES.ORG

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2023

RESTORATION TIMES



YOU RULE OVER THE
SURGING SEA; WHEN ITS
WAVES MOUNT UP,
YOU STILL THEM.
PSALM 89:9

RESTORATION TIMES

VOL. 13 | No. 1 | January-February 2023

3



7

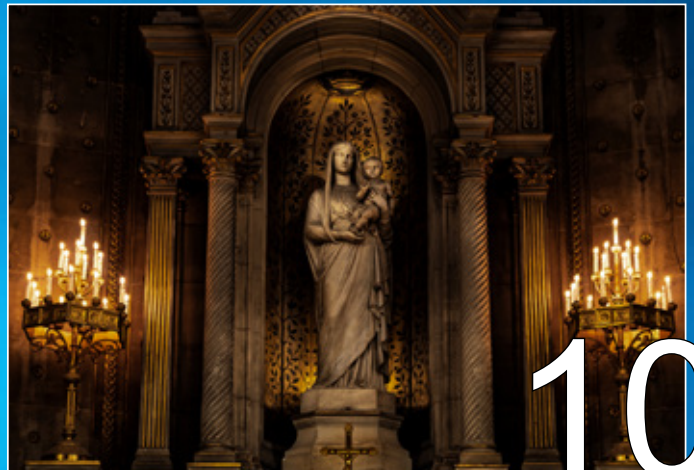


A R T I C L E S

8



10



3 | Biblical Calendar Basics

by Randy Folliard

10 | Fables of the Church

by Randy Folliard

7 | Does Grace Erase Obedience?

by Alan Mansager

16 | QA

8 | Straight to the Heart of Valentine's Day

by the late Donald R. Mansager

19 | Letters

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.
© 2023 Yahweh's Restoration Ministry



COVER:

Mediterranean coast, Israel. Apollonia National Park along the seashore of Herzliya. Crusader fortress is found near the shore. iStock

EDITOR Alan Mansager

COPY EDITOR Debra Wir

GRAPHICS / LAYOUT Ryan Mansager

CONTRIBUTING WRITER Randy Folliard

DIGITAL PUBLISHING Lucas Cecil



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

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

Biblical Calendar Basics

by Randy Folliard

If you have discovered the importance of the weekly Sabbath, don't stop there. More is required of those who desire the True Worship that leads to the Kingdom.

How does our Father Yahweh track time in His Word? Does He do it through today's Gregorian calendar or perhaps the modern Jewish calendar? Neither one. Yahweh's calendar supersedes both.

As believers, it's crucial that we understand the calendar that our Creator established in the beginning. If not, how will we observe at the commanded time His special days of worship? In this article we will review the basics of our Father's calendar, including how to determine the day, month, and year. Let's begin with the day.

Evening and Morning

The first chapter of Genesis offers the primary insight as to how our Father defines the day. "And Elohim called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day," verse 5. This is day one in the creation of the heavens and earth.

In this passage we see two definitions for the word day. The first definition is found in the phrase, "And Elohim called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." Yahweh here draws a distinction between the day and night. From this example, we find that the word day refers to the daylight portion.

The second definition for day is found in the phrase, "And the evening and

morning." We find our Father in Heaven here describing a 24-hour day. Based on the text, which came first, the evening or the morning? It says that the evening began the day. What is the meaning of the word evening?

This word comes from the Hebrew *ereb*. **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance** defines this word as, "dusk." **The Brown Driver & Briggs Hebrew Lexicon** definition is "Evening, night, sunset." The primitive root of *ereb* is *arab* and literally means, "...to grow dusky at sundown," **Strong's**.

Defining the Day

Through the Hebrew we find that the day begins at sunset, when the sun dips below the horizon. For example, the biblical Sabbath is from Friday sunset through Saturday sunset. So we find two definitions for the word day; one referring to the daylight hours only and the other referring to the 24-hour period, beginning at sunset.

The word "day" is from the Hebrew word *yom*. It appears 2,304 times in the Masoretic text. Strong's defines *yom* as, "from an unused root meaning to be hot; a day (as the warm hours), whether literal (from sunrise to sunset, or from one sunset to the next), or figurative (a space of time defined by an associated term)."

Here's what **Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words** says about

yom, "Yom has several meanings. The word represents the period of 'daylight' as contrasted with nighttime: 'While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease,' Genesis 8:22.

"The word denotes a period of 24 hours: 'And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day...' Genesis 39:10. *Yom* can also signify a period of time of unspecified duration: 'And G-d blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which G-d created and made,' Genesis 2:3. In this verse, 'day' refers to the entire period of G-d's resting from creating this universe."

From these references, we see that *yom* refers:

- to the daylight portion of a day,
- to a 24 hour day, from sunset to sunset, and
- to a figurative space of time.

The first two definitions can be found in Genesis 1:5.

Sunset to Sunset

Passages in Scripture show that the day ends and the next day starts at evening or sunset. The first few cases are in the first chapter of Genesis: "And Elohim called the firmament heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day....And the evening and the morning were the third day....And the evening and the morning

were the fourth day....And the evening and the morning were the fifth day....And the evening and the morning were the sixth day," vv. 8, 13, 19, 23, 31.

In each instance of Genesis 1 the day begins with the evening followed by the morning, which extends and includes the entire day. Interestingly, creation itself follows this same pattern. At the beginning of creation there was darkness followed by light. So we find that the day begins with the same creation pattern.

In Leviticus 11:31-32 Yahweh provides His laws pertaining to diet and hygiene. In this excerpt we find additional evidence for the day beginning at sunset: "These are unclean to you among all that creep: whosoever doth touch them, when they be dead, shall be unclean until the even [Heb. *ereb*]. And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, it must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed."

Yahweh says that if we touch an unclean animal that we're unclean until even or sunset. Now why would we be unclean until even? Because sunset begins a new day. We find confirmation here that days begin and end at sunset, not midnight or sunrise.

We also see evidence for the day beginning at sunset with the Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur. "Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto Yahweh...It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath," Leviticus 23:27, 32.

Yahweh states that Yom Kippur is on the 10th day of the seventh month. On a side note, Yom Kippur literally means, "day of covering." It was on this day that Yahweh covered the sins of His people.

Notice when this day was observed. It was kept from the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening. In other words, it is to be observed from the end of the 9th day at evening through the end of the tenth day at evening, showing again that the day begins and ends at

evening or sunset.

Now what would happen if we ignored the timing of the Day of Atonement? The Bible states that the person who does not afflict his soul on the day that our Father appointed will be destroyed or cut off, verses 28-29. Based on this, it's absolutely imperative that we keep Yom Kippur on the day that Yahweh has specified. This is why it's critical that we have the proper calendar showing when these times begin.

We find another instance from Judges 14:17-18, "And she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him: and she told the riddle to the children of her people. And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down, What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion? And he said unto them,



If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle."

Samson is making a wager with the Philistines. He tells them that if they could solve his riddle in seven days that he would give them thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing.

Notice when they gave Samson the answer to his riddle. The men of the city answered him "on the seventh day before the sun went down." These Philistines knew that they had only until sunset on that seventh day to answer the riddle, and as we find here they waited up until the very last moment.

So far we've seen verification from creation for the day's beginning at sunset, from Yahweh's commandments, from the Day of Atonement, and from Samson's riddle.

But there is one more. Nehemiah 13:19 offers irrefutable evidence for the day beginning at evening, "And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day."

To prevent the people of Judah from breaking the Sabbath, Nehemiah commanded that the gates of the city be closed as it began to be dark. Nehemiah even threatened force against those who stayed outside the walls waiting for the Sabbath to end.

Remembering that the context here is the beginning of the Sabbath, the key phrase is "...began to be dark." *The New International Version* reads, "When evening shadows fell on the gates..." *The Revised Standard Version* reads, "When it began to be dark at the gates..." *The New Jerusalem Bible* reads, "So when the gates were getting dark ..."

We find the same message from all the above versions – it was getting or becoming dark before the Sabbath. We see here undeniable proof confirming that the day, specifically the Sabbath, begins at sunset, as the sky begins to grow dark. Let's now move on to the month.

Establishing the Month by the Moon

According to the *Dictionary of Word Origins*, our word month is derived from the Anglo Saxon *monath*, which means, "moon." When does Yahweh's month begin in His calendar? Unlike our calendar, Yahweh's months are established by the crescent new moon.

Perhaps the best passage confirming this biblical fact is Deuteronomy 16:1. It reads, "Observe the month of Abib...." Yahweh commands that we "observe" the month. But how? The word observe comes from the Hebrew *shamar*. *Strong's* defines this primitive root term as "to hedge about (as with thorns), i.e. guard; generally, to protect, attend to, etc."

Similarly, *Brown Driver and Briggs Hebrew Lexicon* provides this definition,

“To keep, to have charge of; to keep, to guard, to keep watch and ward, to protect, to save life; watch, a watchman (participle); to watch for, to wait for; to watch, to observe ... to keep (sabbath or covenant or commands)...”

Based on the Hebrew, the KJV translates *shamar* in the following ways: “beware, be circumspect, take heed (to self), keep, mark, look narrowly, observe ... lay wait (for), watch (-man).” We conclude that *shamar* refers to a kind of guard or watchman.

The word “month” comes from the Hebrew word *chodesh* and means “the new moon; by implication, a month,” **Strong’s**. The primitive root of *chodesh* is *chadash*, which means, “To be new; causatively, to rebuild.”

With this in mind, what is Yahweh commanding here? He instructs us to visibly watch for the new moon crescent that begins the new month.

Some believe that the new moon is the astronomical or dark moon. However, there are at least three problems with this belief: First, the Hebrew word for month, *chodesh*, comes from the word *chadash*, which means “to be new or to rebuild.” The astronomical new moon is neither new nor in the process of rebuilding; it is in fact invisible.

Second, while there’s technically one astronomical new moon per month, this dark moon can often remain invisible up to three days. In this case, which day of the dark moon would you choose to start the month – the first, second, or third?

Third, Yahweh commands that we “watch” for the new moon. This poses the most serious problem for the conjunction belief. How does a person watch for a dark and invisible moon? There’s only one phase of the moon that fits these mandates and it’s the first new moon crescent that’s visible to the eye. We are to begin the month by watching for the first crescent.

We can also find evidence for the practice historically. According to the **International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia**, the Hebrew or Jewish calendar had three stages of development: the preexilic, or biblical; the postexilic, or Talmudic; and the postTalmudic. The first rested on simple observation and confirmation, the second on observation coupled with calculation, and the third on calculation only.

In the first period the priests determined the beginning of each month by the appearance of the new moon (**International**

Standard Bible Encyclopaedia). It’s critical to note here that the original biblical calendar was based on observation only, while a calculated calendar was introduced much later for the Jews of the Diaspora.

As believers, it should be our desire to return to the original method that our Father Yahweh established.

New Moon in Practice

The **New Unger’s Bible Dictionary** provides the actual method that the Jews used to observe the new moon during the time of Yahshua the Messiah,

“As the festivals, according to the Mosaic law, were always to be celebrated on the same day of the month, it was necessary



Our Father’s
calendar is based
on two principles:
observation
and agriculture.
Calculation came
much later and
deviates from what
Yahweh inspired.

to fix the commencement of the month. This was determined by the appearance of the new moon; for the new moon was reckoned not by astronomical calculation, but by actual personal observation. On the thirtieth day of the month watchmen were placed on commanding heights around Jerusalem to watch the sky. As soon as each of them detected the moon he hastened to a house in the city kept for this purpose and was there examined by the president of the Sanhedrin. When the evidence of the appearance was deemed satisfactory, they formally announced it, uttering the words, ‘It is consecrated.’

“The information was immediately

sent throughout the land from the Mount of Olives by beacon fires on the tops of the hills. The religious observance of the day of the new moon may plainly be regarded as the consecration of a natural division of time.”

From these sources we find that the month was marked by the physical sighting of the new moon crescent and not by astronomical calculations. It’s important to understand that our Father’s calendar is based on two principles: observation and agriculture. Calculation came much later and deviates from what Yahweh inspired.

Biblical Evidence for New Moon

New moon observance has a long history in Scripture. In Exodus 12:2 we find Yahweh introducing the new moon to Israel while still under Egyptian bondage. “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you,” Exodus 12:2.

The word “month” in Hebrew is *chodesh*, a word found in Deuteronomy 16:1. Yahweh is literally stating, “This new moon shall be unto you the beginning of new moons: it shall be the first new moon of the year to you.” This passage is speaking about the Abib moon and Passover and how on a specific day Israel was to observe this memorial.

What would have happened if Moses had not relayed this law to the Israelites? It meant the difference between life and death for their firstborn. This fact alone shows that it is absolutely critical that we understand when these times begin. To properly observe our Father’s days of worship we must understand and observe His timeclock.

King David understood His calendar. First Samuel 20:5 reads, “And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to morrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even.” David observed the new moon by not only acknowledging its time, but also by having a special dinner and fellowship with the king. Understand that the new moon was and is a time set apart for fellowship and worship. It’s an important day in Yahweh’s Word.

Isaiah 66:23 confirms that this day will even be observed in the millennial Kingdom: “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before

me, saith Yahweh.” Note that all flesh will be required to observe the new moons as well as the Sabbaths. This passage is speaking about the Millennium, the 1,000-year reign of the returning Yahshua the Messiah.

It should be noted that while the new moon is a day of convocation, it’s not a holy day or a day of rest like the weekly Sabbath or Feast days. Nevertheless, we find that it’s an important time that our Father in heaven has established in His Word. Not only does the new moon crescent begin the month, but it also marks an exclusive time Yahweh set aside for fellowship.

The prophet Ezekiel provides another verification in chapter 46 of his prophecy: “Thus saith my Sovereign Yahweh; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened,” verse 1. Again the context is the millennial Kingdom.

We now have discovered that the new moon is a day of convocation, a day of worship, and a day that will be observed in the coming Kingdom. During the Millennium, with its rebuilt temple, pure worship will be restored worldwide and will include the Sabbath, new moon, and Feast days.

The question is, if these days were mandated in the Old Testament, were kept in the New Testament by Yahshua and His followers, and will be a requirement of everyone in the Kingdom, why are they mostly disregarded today?

Determining the Year

Up to this point we’ve examined the day and month, but we’re still missing one piece of the puzzle and that is the year. So when does Yahweh’s year begin?

For the answer, let’s consider once more Deuteronomy 16:1, “Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto Yahweh thy Elohim: for in the month of Abib Yahweh thy Elohim brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.” We’ve already reviewed this passage, but in this instance we will focus on the word “Abib.”

This word is of Hebrew origin and according to *Strong’s* means, “green, i.e. a young ear of grain.” The *Brown Driver and Briggs Hebrew Lexicon* defines this word as, “Fresh, young barley ears, barley; month of ear-forming, of greening of crop, of growing green Abib, the month of the Exodus and the

Passover (March or April).” Such sources verify that the word *Abib* describes a stage in agriculture, i.e., young ears of grain.

Within the context, the grain is barley. How do we know this? We find a clue in Exodus 9:31. It reads, “And the flax and the barley were smitten: for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was bolled.”

This passage is speaking about the destruction from the seventh plague of Egypt, the plague of hail. We find here a pinpoint to the beginning of the year; it says that the barley was in the “ear.” The word is from the Hebrew *abib*, meaning young or not fully developed.

We know that this seventh plague took place just days before Israel would be released from Egyptian slavery and before Yahweh would mark the beginning of the year. Remember that in Exodus 12:2 Yahweh confirmed to Moses and Aaron that the next new moon would mark the start of the biblical year.

We find here that prior to the observation of the new moon, Israel had confirmation of the *abib* barley. Therefore, based on the biblical evidence, to begin a new year we must confirm that the barley is in the *abib* stage prior to the visible new moon crescent.

In addition to the Scriptures, we also find an array of evidence from scholarship that the *abib* barley began the first biblical year:


- “...Abib is not properly a name of a month, but part of a descriptive phrase, ‘the month of young ears of grain.’ This may indicate the Israelitish way of determining the new year (Ex 12:2), the year beginning with the new moon nearest or next preceding this stage of the growth of the barley,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, PC Study Bible*, V3.0, Abib.
- “The months began with the new moon, but the first month was fixed (after the Exodus and by the necessities of the Passover) by the ripening of the earliest grain, namely, barley,” *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible*, V3.0, “Abib.”
- “The original name of the first Hebrew month., mentioned in connection with the Feast of Unleavened Bread or the Passover (Mar./Apr.); after the Exile it was called Nisan (Neh. 2:1; Esth. 3:7). Its designation ‘month of the ear’... ‘month of young ears of barley’... may point to the new moon nearest to, or proceeding, the growth of barley,” *The Erdman’s Bible Dictionary*, p. 6, Abib. grain
- “...properly, a head or ear of grain

(Lev. ii, 14, “green ears;” Exod. xiii,31, “ear”); hence the month of newly-ripe grain (Exod. xiii.4; xxiii, 15; xxxiv, 18; Deut. xvi, 1), the first of the Jewish ecclesiastical year, afterward (Neh. ii, 1) called Nisan,” *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, p. 15, Abib.

- “Abib, or Aviv, is the old name or epithet of the month that falls in March or April. It means, ‘new ears of grain,’ and refers to the fact that this month begins when immature ears of grain have begun to grow on the stalks. Elsewhere in the Torah it is known as the first month. In the books of the postexilic period, when the Jews adopted the Babylonian month names still in use today, it is known as Nisan,” *The JPS Torah Commentary*, p. 152, note on Deuteronomy 16:1.

A question that often arises is where do we go to find the *abib* barley? The Bible does not offer a definitive answer. However, based on the need to ensure that the start of the year is consistent across the globe and the fact that Israel observed the *abib* in Israel, it’s reasonable to deduce that Israel is where it should be confirmed today.

In summation, from biblical and historical records we find that the day ends and begins at sunset, the month begins with the new moon crescent, and the year begins with the *abib* barley in the land of Israel, while the week and its Sabbath was already set at creation. This is important because Yahweh’s days of worship are predicated on our Father’s timeclock, the calendar that He established at creation.

As believers it’s also incumbent that we have a ready answer to all those who might ask, including why we observe the biblical calendar, 1Peter 3:15. 

Holy Days in 2023

Passover Memorial - April 4
(evening)

Feast of Unleavened Bread - April
6-12

Pentecost - May 28

Feast of Trumpets - Sept. 17

Day of Atonement - Sept. 26

Feast of Tabernacles - Oct. 1-7

Last Great Day - Oct. 8

DOES GRACE ERASE OBEDIENCE?

Most are never told that they can lose Yahweh's grace through further sin.

by Alan Mansager

Suppose I said to you, "Good news! Someone has paid your fine." You'd reply in bewilderment, "Why? I don't owe any fine!" Just telling you that your fine was paid without explaining that you were fined because you broke the law would be the height of negligence.

Yet many millions of churchgoers are told from pulpits across the land that grace frees them from their sin without explaining what sin is and how they committed it. They do not realize the gravity of their action. Neither are they told that they can lose Yahweh's grace through further sin, Hebrews 6.

Hebrews 10:29 reads, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden underfoot the Son of Elohim, and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

The one verse that is central in the sinner's need for grace is 1John 3:4: "Sin is the transgression of the law." Lawbreaking is the elephant in the room ignored in today's teaching of grace. Without it, grace has no context. If the believer doesn't understand that he or she has broken the law and deserves a penalty, then grace becomes pointless, being tethered to nothing.

With no connection to obedience, grace is turned into lawlessness, Jude 1:4. Grace covers sins that have already been committed. Paul wrote in Romans 3:24-25, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Messiah Yahshua... to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of Elohim."

Yahshua came to magnify the law by obeying it (Matt. 5:27-37). By His death He paid the ultimate penalty for sin that no animal sacrifice or any other person could ever pay. Without His sacrifice we would die in our sins.

If no law exists then there is no sin and no grace needed. If our Savior abolished the law, then there was no need of His sacrifice for our sin. Neither is there a need for grace. Romans 5:13 reads plainly, "... but sin is not imputed when there is no law." With no law in effect how can He have paid the price for our sins when sins don't exist? No law, no sin, no grace.

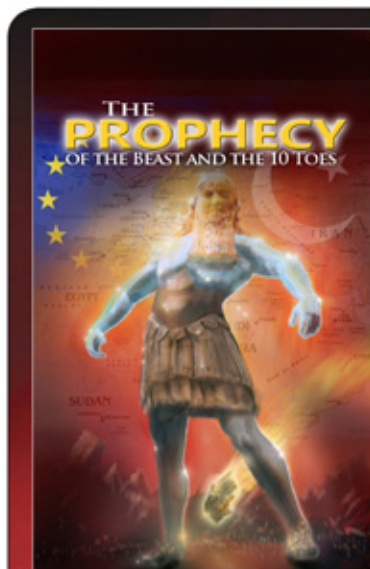
Without Yahweh's law to define it, "sin" is open to anyone's interpretation. And so you can find major denominations differing over the definition of sin. One says it's dancing and drinking; another that eating meat on Friday is sin; while another says it means card playing and

consuming coffee. Still another teaches that sin means not having achieved your full potential.

When we sin we are convicted by the law as transgressors, James 2:9. Paul writes, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of Elohim" (Rom. 3:23). If sin is alive and well on planet earth, how can the law not be in effect?

The reason the Sabbath is just another day to most churchgoers, and the Name Yahweh is just "another one of His names," and worldly holidays are just as good as the Holy Days – is that the law has been forgotten. Yahweh's will, laid out clearly in Scripture, is not taught. Man has been busily making his own worship.

Today the culture tells the minister what to preach. And in a culture where self rules, the trend is away from self-reproach and instead is firmly focused on self-esteem.



Who Is the Beast?

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

Straight to the Heart of VALENTINES DAY

by the late **Donald R. Mansager**



Every February 14 we see in stores and in greeting cards an infant chubby cherub armed with a bow and drawn arrow, aiming for the heart of his “valentine.”

On this day cupids are everywhere with bows and arrows, heart shapes, paper lace, birds, and flowers. All these are associated with St. Valentine’s Day. But just where did these symbols and celebration of the 14th of February come from? Most of all, should we be celebrating this seemingly innocent day on which so many remember sweethearts and lovers?

A Priest with a Heart

The origin of this day is unclear, as there is more than one explanation. As with most modern holidays, Valentine’s Day is imbedded in the Roman Church. The most accepted legend is that a Roman priest named Valentine had a special feeling for young people.

When the Roman Empire needed

soldiers, Emperor Claudius II decreed that no one could marry or become engaged. Claudius believed that marriage made men want to stay at home instead of out fighting battles.

The kindly priest Valentine defied the emperor’s decree and secretly performed weddings for a number of young couples. He was arrested, imprisoned, and put to death.

Another legend holds that Valentine was aiding persecuted Christians and was imprisoned. A jailer and his family were so impressed by his sincerity that they became Christians themselves. Valentine was fond of the jailer’s blind daughter and by a miracle restored her sight. On the morning of his execution he sent her a farewell message signed, “From Your Valentine.”

February 14 Fertility Festival

Valentine was beheaded supposedly on February 14. Not so coincidentally, this is also the eve of a notable and more ancient

Roman festival, the Lupercalia (*Lupus* is Latin for wolf). On this evening Roman youths drew names of girls who would be their partners during this ceremony.

To the Romans, Lupercalia was serious business. Mark Antony was master of the Lupercali College of Priests. He chose the Lupercalia festival in 44 BCE as the time for offering the crown to Julius Caesar.

On February 15 the Luperci priests gathered at the cave of Lupercal, where according to legend, Romulus and Remus – founders of Rome – were nursed by a mother wolf.

Following a sacrifice, two youths of noble birth were brought forward. After a ceremony, they ran through the Roman streets, lashing about with goatskin thongs. The streets would be crowded with young women because a lash of the sacred thong was believed to increase their fertility.

The goatskin thongs were called *februa* and the lashing the *februatio*, both stemming from a Latin word meaning to

purify. From it comes the name for the month February.

Long after Rome had become a walled city and the seat of a powerful empire, the Lupercalia lived on. When Roman armies invaded what are now France and Britain in the first century BCE, they took with them many pagan customs. Included was the Lupercalia.

Pagan-Christian Merger

By the fourth century Christianity became the dominant religion in Rome and the Lupercalia was declared unlawful. Throughout the empire the church endeavored to stamp out pagan practices brought in by the heathen.

“Unable to abolish some of the pagan festivals that the people loved, they accepted these and gave them Christian names” (*The Story of Valentine Symbols*, by Edna Earth).

Earth explains, “So it was with the Lupercalia, which survived late into the fifth century. St. Valentine’s name was given to a festival that had celebrated springtime and fertility in human beings and other animals. And, do what the church might, the ancient meaning never quite left it. Memories of the Lupercalia as a celebration of mating were handed down, attaching themselves to the saint’s name.”

It was the eve of the Lupercalia, when Romans habitually preserved the memory of an ancient rural deity, Faunus. It is not difficult to imagine that the public beheading of Valentine the Christian was a pagan’s victory – here was a priest who upheld the Bible beheaded at this heathen celebration!

Frank Staff writes in his book, *The Valentine and Its Origins*, “In later years when the early Christian fathers were busy obliterating pagan superstitions and dates by substituting those of the Christian belief, names of many of the martyred Saints were used to replace the old festivals.

“In this way St. Valentine, having suffered on the eve of the Lupercalia, the

14th of February, was now to perpetuate forever the memory of this festival of the return of the Spring when a young man’s fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love and when the birds begin mating.

“Centuries later it was usual on St. Valentine’s Day for young men to draw by lots the names of young women, a custom that lingered in some of the more remote villages of the British Isles right up to Victorian times.

“Some accounts written during the Victorian era of St. Valentine’s Day maintain that the putting of the names of young women into a box to be drawn for the men was part of the ceremony of the



The Lupercalian Festival in Rome (ca. 1578–1610) by Adam Elsheimer, illustrating the Luperici dressed as dogs and goats, with Cupid and personifications of fertility.

Lupercalia, and has been repeated so often as to be believed true. But it has been authoritatively stated that this has yet to be proved.”

Not all historians agree with Staff, and see a direct connection between drawing names for Valentine’s Day and the Lupercalia.

Strong evidence also exists that the custom of sending valentines and other rituals on February 14 has erotic origins and it likely was a licentious festival. Lupercalia was a spring festival involving peculiar fertility rites and especially involved the young people. The little cherub called cupid, from the Latin *cupido* or “desire,” is actually the Greek deity of love known as Eros. Alexandrian poets made him popular in Rome (*Funk and*

Wagnalls Encyclopedia, p. 2542)

Valentine’s Day customs in the United States trace to early settlers from Germany and Britain.

Bottom Line: The Dollar Sign

Valentine’s Day is immortalized by manufacturers of greeting cards and candy, florists and clothiers—merchants who see the chance to induce customers through yet one more holiday to part with their money. “If you don’t give a gift at Valentine’s Day you don’t love others” is the subtle message.


The big problem with involvement in worldly holidays and special days of man is their rank pagan origins that have nothing to do with scriptural worship. Even more, these days have replaced the true, biblical observances commanded by our Creator.

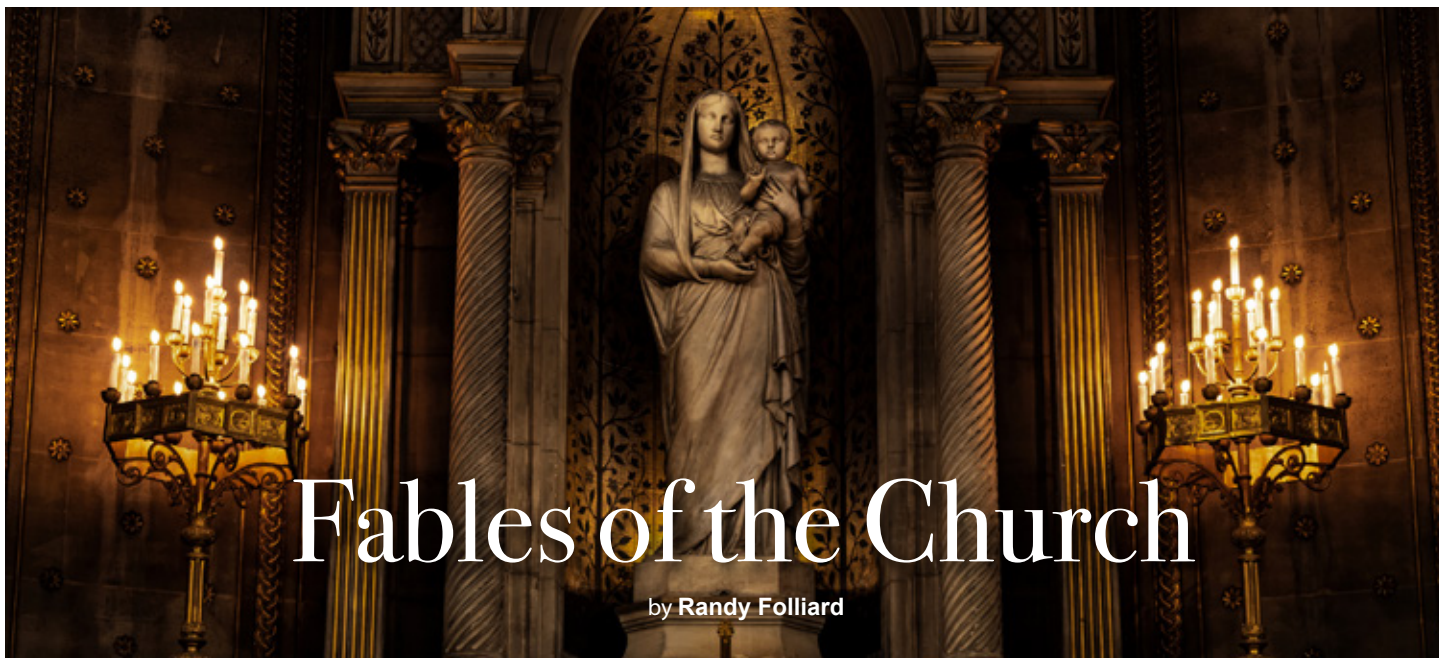
Paganism has always sought to replace Yahweh’s True Worship. The major condemnation that Yahweh repeatedly leveled against Israel was their desire to participate in the heathenism of those around them and worship other deities in place of Yahweh.

We believers must never place anything before Yahweh and His way of life. We must give up the ways of a deceived world that has

no love of Yahweh. “Wherefore come out from among them, and be separate, says Yahweh, and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you,” 2Corinthians 6:17.

It is amazing how much our world is steeped in heathen, truth-supplanting tradition. The days of Lupercalia are with us even in subtle ways. As one writer observed, “Today we still refer to one who fancies himself with the ladies as something of a ‘wolf,’ and when a pretty girl walks down the street young men give a ‘wolf whistle,’ which shows that the spirit of the Lupercalia is still with us.”

Yahweh’s true Spirit is here as well, and available to those who have a real desire to live honestly and purely for Him. A position of rulership in His coming Kingdom awaits those who do. 



Fables of the Church

by Randy Folliard

Surprising as it is, some of the most popular church teachings are absent from the Bible. Instead, they are based on man's ideas handed down through years of tradition. We call these traditions fables of the church.

The Apostle Paul in 1Thessalonians 5:21 stated, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." This admonition from Paul is a command to us and includes those doctrines we believe in. The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines "doctrine" as "a principle or position or the body of principles in a branch of knowledge or system of belief." Simply put, a doctrine is a belief we hold based on our religious convictions or understanding.

This ministry is dedicated to the return of sound and biblical truth. For those new to this ministry, we encourage you to consider the evidence given here and the many related publications provided through YRM.

This article will focus on five of the most common fables in the church.

- Fable one is the belief that the saints are raptured to heaven before the tribulation.
- Fable two is the belief that the saints are taken to heaven immediately after death.
- Fable three is the belief that the wicked are taken to hell.
- Fable four is the belief that the wicked will burn and suffer forever.
- Fable five is that humans have

immortal souls.

We begin with the belief that the saints are raptured to heaven. For starters, the rapture is a belief that the saints will be secretly carried away to heaven before the tribulation. There is some debate within the church as to when this will happen. Some believe this will occur before the seven-year tribulation begins and others believe it will occur in the middle of the seven-year tribulation.

Caught Up with Messiah

The truth is, the Bible never promises that we'll be raptured to heaven. Here are a few passages that proponents of the secret rapture will use to support this belief. The passage most commonly used is 1Thessalonians 4:16-17: "For the Master himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of Elohim: and the dead in Messiah shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Master in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Master."

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

eagerly and (3) to snatch out or to snatch away." Does Paul's statement along with the meaning of *harpazo* support a secret rapture? The answer is, no. What then is Paul describing here?

Number one, it's important to note that *harpazo* simply implies that Yahshua will raise the elect at His Coming. There's nothing here declaring where they are going. And number two, it should be very clear that this coming is anything but secret. Paul says here that Yahshua's coming will be announced by a shout of an archangel and the trumpet of Elohim. Why would there be shouting and a blast of a trumpet if this is describing a "secret rapture"?

The other issue here is that Yahshua's going to resurrect the dead first, followed by the living. If the rapture is to remove and protect the saints from tribulation, why worry about the dead? Solomon in Ecclesiastes 9:5 said, "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing." If the dead are unaware of what is happening, why resurrect them from the grave to protect them from the tribulation that they are unaware of?

If Paul is not describing the rapture, what is he describing? He is referring to the Second Coming of Yahshua the Messiah and to the resurrection of the saints. What is the difference between this and the rapture? It is believed that the rapture occurs before the tribulation, while the Bible confirms that Yahshua's coming will happen immediately after the tribulation.

Yahshua in the Olivet Prophecy declares, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other,” Matthew 24:29-31.

Also, the rapture states that those snatched away will be taken to heaven, while the Bible testifies that the saints will dwell on earth. Revelation 5:10 says, “And hast made us unto our Elohim kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.” Based on the evidence, there is nothing in this passage confirming a secret snatching away to heaven.

One Is Taken, One Is Left

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

Yahshua says here that one is taken and one is left. According to the rapture, those taken are snatched away to heaven. Do the Scriptures support this interpretation? Backing up to verse 36 we find a very different meaning.

“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be,” Matthew 24:36-29.

The Messiah compares His coming to the flood of Noah. Just as the people were eating, drinking, and doing everything but following Yahweh, we will see the same pattern before Yahshua’s coming, as we are already seeing in our day. People today have no fear or concern for their Creator

and because of that we are witnessing rapid growth in immorality and sin generally.

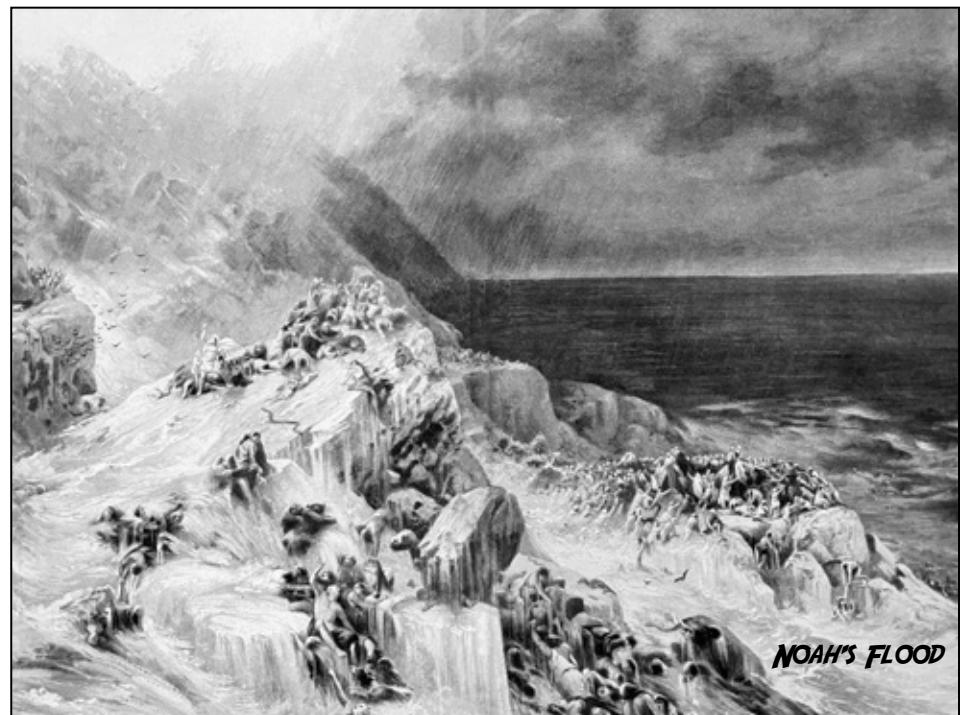
What happened to those who were taken in the days of Noah? They died in the flood. This will be the same fate for those who rebel against Yahweh at our Savior’s coming. We see here that Yahshua’s not referring to a secret rapture, but to the demise of those who defy Yahweh’s Word, which is the majority of the world today, as it was during the time of Noah.

Heaven Bound?

The second fable is the belief that the saints are taken to heaven. For many this may be shocking to hear, but nowhere does the Bible say we go to heaven when we die. In fact, Yahshua the Messiah says the very opposite in John 3:13. He says, “And no man has ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of

connection is: You have not believed earthly things, much less will you believe those which are heavenly; for not only are they in their own nature more difficult to understand, but there is none to testify of them save only that One who came down out of heaven. The sentence may be paraphrased thus: No one has gone up to heaven and by dwelling there gained a knowledge of the heavenly things: One only has dwelt there and is able to communicate that knowledge – He, viz., who has come down from heaven. ‘Presence in heaven’ is considered to be the ground and qualification for communicating trustworthy information regarding ‘heavenly things.’”

While we certainly believe that Yahshua has special knowledge or insight that mankind does not have, the commentary adds to and distorts the meaning of this passage. It does not say here that the



man which is in heaven.”

We know that our Savior’s referring to himself here when He says, “except He who descended from heaven.” Only Yahshua has gone to heaven. The phrase “no man” comes from the Greek *oudeis*, which Strong’s defines as “not even one (man, woman or thing), i.e., none, nobody, nothing.”

What is amazing is that this statement will be twisted by nearly all theologians. An example of twisting is what it says in the *Expositor’s Greek Testament*: “The

Messiah has special knowledge because he came down from heaven; it says simply “...no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven.”

David’s Sepulchre Is Still Here

We find a second witness to John 3:13 in Acts 2:29, 34: “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day... For David is not ascended into the heavens.”

If anyone were worthy of going to

heaven it would have been King David. It's written that this man had a heart after Yahweh's own and because of this, we know that Yahweh deeply loved him. He had a relationship with His Heavenly Father that few ever had. David will rule over the people of Israel in the Millennium. Ezekiel 37:24 prophesies, "And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them."

Knowing this, you would think that if anyone were heaven bound, it would have been David, but according to Peter, David did not ascend into heaven. In fact, Peter verifies that his tomb is with us even today. In addition to what Yahshua says in John 3:13, we find additional evidence here showing that no person has gone to heaven.

As we find in Scripture, a person who dies goes to the grave where he or she waits for the resurrection. The only indication of anything going up to Yahweh when a person dies is found in Ecclesiastes 12:7, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto Elohim who gave it." The word "spirit" is from the Hebrew *ruach* and refers to the breath of life, but not to our consciousness.

Psalms 146:4 says, "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." When a person dies the breath returns to Yahweh, the physical body returns to the earth, and waits in the grave in a totally unconscious state.

The Meaning of 'Hell'

The third fable is the belief that the wicked are sent to an ever-burning hell where they suffer forever. In this fable it is crucial that we understand the meaning of the Hebrew and Greek words. The word "hell" is translated from the Greek *gehenna*. **Strong's** defines this word as "... of Hebrew origin [OT:1516 and OT:2011]; valley of (the son of) Hinnom; ge-henna (or Ge-Hinnom), a valley of Jerusalem, used (figuratively) as a name for the place (or state) of everlasting punishment."

The Greek *gehenna* refers to the Valley of Hinnom, a trash dump where fires burned continuously. Strong's says that it is a place of everlasting punishment. This idea derives more from Greek mythology and tradition than from Scripture. As we will see in the Bible, this phrase is more of a euphemism for complete destruction from Yahweh.

In church theology this concept is called annihilationism, which is explained in **The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology**, "In Christian theology, annihilationism designates the views of those who hold that the finally impenitent wicked will cease to exist after (or soon after) the last judgment. Annihilation is a term designating theories which contend that human beings may pass or be put out of existence altogether."

In addition to **Strong's**, the **Thayer's Greek Lexicon** provides this definition for *gehenna*. "Hell is the place of the future punishment called 'Gehenna' or 'Gehenna of fire.' This was originally the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where the filth and dead animals of the city were cast out and burned; a fit symbol of the wicked and their future destruction."

Like **Strong's**, **Thayer's**

Greek Lexicon defines *gehenna* as a place of future torment. It also states that *gehenna* refers to the Valley of Hinnom, located south of Jerusalem, where Israel disposed of their trash. It was also at this place where wayward Israel burned their children to the pagan deity Molech. It was partially from this location that Christianity received the notion of an ever-burning hellfire, along with later traditions and sources such as Dante's *Inferno*, in Dante Alighieri's 14th-century epic poem, **Divine Comedy**.

Sheol and Hades

In addition to the Greek *gehenna*, there are two other words to consider: *sheol* and *hades*.

Sheol appears 66 times in the Old Testament and is rendered in the KJV as grave, hell, and pit. **Strong's** defines it as "hades or the world of the dead (as if a subterranean retreat), including its accessories and inmates."

Hades is found 11 times in the New Testament of the KJV and is rendered "hell," except for 1 Corinthians 15:55 where it's rendered "grave." **Strong's** defines it as "...the place (state) of departed souls."

According to **Strong's**, both *sheol* and *hades* refer to the world of the dead or to a place of departed souls. The fact is, both of these definitions are grounded more in Greek mythology than in Scripture. The word *sheol* occurs 66 times in the Old Testament – 31 times as "grave," 31 times as "hell," and 3 times as "pit."

We also see that *sheol* was a place for both the righteous and wicked. The fact that both the righteous and wicked went to *sheol* proves that this could not be a place of punishment or torment. Why torment the righteous?

We know that originally both *sheol* and *hades* shared the same meaning, a fact confirmed by authors Alan F. Johnson and Robert E. Webber. "In the intertestamental period there were significant developments in eschatological themes. The first relates to the development of a compartmental view of *sheol*. When the righteous and the wicked die, they go to different places. This is to be contrasted with the Old Testament view that *sheol* is the place where both the righteous and wicked go.

"Under the growing influence of Greek concepts of a distinct body and soul, some Jews taught that after death 'the immortal and perishable soul, once detached from

Law Keeping in the New Testament?

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



the ties of the flesh and thus freed from bondage flies happily upwards' [quote from Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish Wars*, II, VII.2].

"On the other hand the wicked go to *sheol*, which is now identified with the Greek *hades*. This region of damnation is also called *gehenna*, a place of eternal fire (originally the old rubbish heap and a place of child sacrifice south of Mount Zion in Jerusalem). It was known as the Valley of Hinnom," *What Christians Believe—A Biblical and Historical Summary*, pp. 423-424.

Unquenchable Fire

The Valley of Hinnom brings us to our final myth, i.e., the concept of an ever-burning hellfire. Beginning in Jeremiah 7:20, we find that ever-burning and unquenchable fire does not always indicate perpetual fire. "Therefore thus saith my Sovereign Yahweh; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched."

What is Jeremiah describing? This is a reference to Judah's looming destruction by the Babylonians. Notice it says that Jerusalem would burn and that her fire would not be quenched. We know today that Judah and Jerusalem are no longer burning.

This incident shows that unquenchable fire does not always indicate fire that is perpetual or constant. In this case, the fires would not be quenched until Yahweh's judgment would be fulfilled on the nation of Judah. But as we know from the biblical record, after Judah spent 70 years in Babylonian exile, they returned to their land that was previously destroyed by fire.

We see a similar example in Jeremiah 17:27. "But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched."

As we saw in the seventh chapter of Jeremiah, we see here Yahweh's judgment upon Judah and a mention of fire that

would not be quenched. In this instance, the judgment was the result of the willful and deliberate breaking of the Sabbath. As in the previous incident, unquenchable fire does not always indicate perpetual fire, as Judah was restored to her land.

We see a third case of fire not being quenched in Ezekiel 20:47-48. It reads, "And say to the forest of the south, Hear the word of Yahweh; Thus saith my Sovereign Yahweh; Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein. And all flesh shall see that I Yahweh have kindled it: it shall not be quenched."

Ezekiel prophesied the same message



as we saw in Jeremiah. The only difference between these prophecies is that Jeremiah prophesied within Judah before the captivity and Ezekiel prophesied within Babylon. But the message between them was the same – repent or suffer from unquenchable fire.

Because Judah refused to repent, Ezekiel prophesied here that Yahweh's wrath would be poured out upon the land of Judah. He says that the land would be devoured by fire and that it would not be quenched. Again, while we know the Babylonians burned the cities of Judah, we also know that Yahweh eventually brought Judah back and restored them to the land.

This passage provides a third witness that unquenchable does not always mean forever. In fact, based on the evidence in the Old Testament, there is not a single passage indicating that this phrase ever refers to fire that is perpetual or forever. It simply means

that the fire will not be quenched until it has consumed everything.

Pope Supports Annihilationism

On this point, it appears that Pope Francis may agree. In 2018, Pope Francis gave an interview where he seemed to support this concept of annihilation.

Here's an excerpt from a *Newsweek* article dated March 29, 2018: "Catholic Pope Francis made a startling revelation Thursday by stating that hell did not exist, in an interview with a leading liberal Italian newspaper... Seemingly going against centuries of core Christian belief, Pope Francis said the souls of sinners simply vanished after death and were not subject to an eternity of punishment. 'They are not punished, those who repent obtain the forgiveness of G-d and enter the rank of souls who contemplate him, but those who do not repent and cannot therefore be forgiven disappear,' Pope Francis said, as translated by Catholic blog Rorate Caeli. 'There is no hell, there is the disappearance of sinful souls,' he added. Shortly after the article was published, the Vatican issued a statement that claimed the article was 'not a faithful transcript' and that the meeting between Pope Francis and Scalfari was a private meeting and not a formal interview.'" (*Does Hell Exist? Pope Francis Says No in New Interview that Could Change Catholic Church.*)

Even though the Church claims that the Pope's comments were not "a faithful transcript" from the report given, the Pope reportedly stated, "There is no hell, there is the disappearance of sinful souls."

While we may never know the truth, the possibility of the Pope not believing in an ever-burning hellfire is quite the revelation. In fact, the Pope along with most ministers, knows many of the truths we do, including Yahweh's Name and the importance of the Sabbath. Many choose to simply ignore them, knowing that the majority will never accept it.

Many will use the words of Yahshua the Messiah as evidence for an ever-burning hellfire. In ninth chapter of Mark, Yahshua

Messiah's Teachings on Hellfire

Many will use the words of Yahshua the Messiah as evidence for an ever-burning hellfire. In ninth chapter of Mark, Yahshua

made this statement: “And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of Yahweh with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,” vv. 43-48.

Yahshua describes hell as a place where the fire is not quenched and the worm does not die. As we saw from the Old Testament, the phrase “...shall not be quenched” does not mean forever. Remember that Judah suffered the fate of unquenchable fire from the Babylonians. But as we know, this fire was not forever. This phrase simply refers to Yahweh’s destruction or annihilation.

The same is also true for the worm not dying. As a side note, this language likely comes from Isaiah 66:23, where it is written “And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.”

As in the case of unquenchable fire, the worm not dying refers to Yahweh’s complete destruction. In other words, the worm will not die until the wicked are consumed.

Have you ever considered how a loving Heavenly Father could allow His creation to burn and suffer forever? Based on what the Bible says about Yahweh’s character, such an action is contradictory to who He is. To believe that He would force someone to suffer forever with no rest, escape, or chance of parole is beyond reason and defies His moral character.

Many will also use Matthew 13:50 as evidence for an ever-burning hellfire: “And

shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” The belief here is that Yahshua’s description of the “wailing and the gnashing of teeth” is proof of an ever-burning hellfire. But this can also explain the suffering the wicked will experience when they are cast into the lake of fire.

While gehenna is not a place of everlasting torment, it is a place of suffering where the wicked will be consumed by burning. When this happens, there will be wailing and the gnashing of teeth.

One of the most cited passages to support the popular notion of hell is Matthew 25:41: “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”



Yahshua here warns of everlasting fire and everlasting punishment. But as we have seen from the Old Testament, this concept of fire not being quenched refers to the total destruction of the wicked. Again, Judah suffered the punishment of unquenchable fire, but today it is no longer burning. Based on this one inescapable fact, the notion of an everlasting fire does not mean forever or perpetual.

Something we have not yet discussed is the Hebrew word *olam*. While this word can mean forever, it can also be used for time in general. According to the Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, *olam* can refer to a “simple duration.” So *olam* does not always mean forever in the sense of never-ending, but can also refer to any duration, as we find for those who will suffer in gehenna.

At this point some may be wondering, what

about what Yahshua says here about everlasting punishment? It’s important to realize that there’s a difference between punishment and punishing. Punishment refers to a state that is continuous, while punishing refers to an action. Yahshua’s confirming here that the state of judgment will be forever, but is not continuous judging.

One final passage provides indisputable evidence that eternal fire does not mean forever or perpetual. In Jude 7 we find the following statement: “Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”


For those who believe that eternal fire is an ever-burning hellfire, where do we find that Sodom and Gomorrah are still burning? The answer is we don’t.

During our 2016 trip to Israel, we visited a site that many believe is the ancient city of Gomorrah. It is located near the Dead Sea and is viewable from the top of Masada. Shockingly, even now this location is covered in ash with small balls of sulfur scattered throughout. We have

several sulfur ball specimens at YRM from the land of Israel with the odor of sulfur still in them.

Since these two cities are no longer burning, we can confirm that eternal fire does not mean forever in the literal sense. It refers to Yahweh’s destruction and annihilation, as we find in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

As believers, we are told to study and prove all things. This is an obligation that we have as individuals. It is not enough to simply listen to a minister, but we must take an active role in our salvation. Contrary to what many think, what we believe does matter to our Heavenly Father. It matters when and how we worship. It matters what foods we eat. It matters what beliefs we hold.

So may we as believers study to show ourselves approved, and apply what we learn! 



Q In support of the Name Yahweh you claim that names do not change from language to language. Have you never heard of the Spanish Pedro for Peter? Maria for Mary? Juan for John?

A Each language generally has its own word or counterpart to express the thought or meaning of another word in another language. Thus, one word in a given language may be understood in another by another word. That is, the meaning is brought over into another language, which is known as “translating.” In the examples you give of name counterparts, note how similar those name pairs are.

Proper nouns do not change from one language to another. Specific names of particular people and places remain the same in every tongue. This is easily proved by listening to a foreign news broadcast. Names of persons do not change but are understood and clearly recognized. We can identify Putin, Trudeau, Xi, and other leaders when mentioned in another language. The ethnic accent may slightly interfere, but even so, names are still recognizable, and in print are the same.

Not only do proper nouns—names of people—remain the same but the same is also true with city names brought from one language to another. We can listen to a foreign news broadcast and the names of cities like Washington, London, Basra, Cairo, and Rome come through in any language. Again, there may be an accent, but the name comes through recognizable.

A person born in England may be named Charles by his mother. Were he

born in Germany, his German mother would give him the equivalent, Karl. In Spain it would be Carlos. This is why we can often recognize a Scottish name equivalent, or a name which is German, French, Irish, Polish, Dutch, etc.

Individual names of specific people, however, do not change from language to language, but keep their ethnic identity. If names did change from one language to another, imagine the con-



fusion this would create. Assume a Briton named John Black is vacationing in continental Europe. When he lands in Berlin, does his name change to Johann Schwartz? When he travels to France, is his name changed to Juan Noir? In Spain is he known as Juan Negro?

As a matter of fact, wherever John Black travels, his name remains the same. He signs his charge card bills the same in every country. The caption under his picture in any newspaper

still reads John Black whether it be in France, Spain or Austria.

When John Black is paged in the airport he responds only to John Black no matter where he travels. He pays no attention to the page of Johann Schwartz in Germany, or Joannes Melas in Greece, or Juan Negro in Spain, because these are not his name. He may pay attention if a stranger approached and called him, “British visitor!” But John Black would never sign his name “British Visitor.” That title would apply to any number of people. (Just as Paul says, there are “gods many and lords many” — mere titles, not names.)

Now, should John Black so desire, he can go to the courthouse and legally change his name. From then on he has a different name and identity and legal documents would reflect that change. But only John himself can make that change.

Yahweh has never changed His name. He says He doesn’t change, Malachi 3:6. Imagine worshipping a Mighty One who is constantly changing His name and His laws! The covenant made with Abraham and his descendants is still with Yahweh, the Name He has revealed to His people. He specifically tells us many times in the Bible to call upon His Name. To call Him by some title or some other name is not binding. He has told us in no uncertain terms that Yahweh is His memorial Name unto ALL generations: “...this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations,” Exodus 3:15. Who are we mere humans to change what the King of the Universe has ordained?

ELECTRIC LINES RELOCATION FUND

YRM is growing and we have reached a point where future growth demands we enlarge our facility. As those who come for weekly Sabbaths and Feasts know, we are experiencing a shrinking meeting hall.

To expand our worship area the first step is to relocate the buried electric lines that serve the building. The existing lines are encroaching on the road easement and they must be moved to make room for expansion and to meet building code. We wish we could skip this step, but it is necessary and we need your help.

The estimate to relocate the lines is \$15,000. We appreciate anything you can give toward this fund. We currently need \$6,142 to complete this project. May Yahweh bless you richly!

Q There are events tied to the first day of the year. For those things, do you have a list pulled from Scripture? I understand day one of the new year is based on observation of a stage of barley and the new moon... If I don't see the crescent moon until Tuesday night, does that make MY Sabbath the following Tuesday? I'm still having a disconnect between a calendar being relative to your location vs Yahweh's calendar.

A Yahweh's calendar is the one relative to your location. The first month of the year biblically is Abib. Deuteronomy 16:1 reads, "Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto Yahweh thy Elohim: for in the month of Abib Yahweh thy Elohim brought thee forth out of Egypt by night." This passage literally means, watch for the new moon of young ears of grain," RSB note. The word observe is derived from the Hebrew *shamar* and means "to watch or look narrowly for." The confirmed new moon starts each month, including Abib, the first month. The weekly Sabbath was set at creation. It is not determined by the new moon. But the Feast days pivot on the starting month Abib and then progress with each month thereafter. Yahweh gives the formula for setting each Feast in Leviticus 23. For further information, see the calendar article on page 3 of this magazine.

Q The Millennial chapter of Micah 4:5 reads in the KJV, "For all people will walk every one in the name of his Elohim, and we will

walk in the name of Yahweh our Elohim for ever and ever." Does this mean that the use of other names and titles will be acceptable in the Millennium, along with the Name Yahweh?

A The KJV makes it seem that way by its first use of the term "will." But other translations render the passage in a clearer way.

The **Amplified** version reads, "For all the peoples [now] walk every one in the name of his god, but we will walk..." The **Jerusalem Bible** renders it, "For all the peoples go forward, each in the name of its gods: but we go forward in the name of Yahweh..." The **NIV** reads, "... all the nations may walk in the name of their gods..." The saints will know, worship, and submit to Yahweh. The same way many of the heathen and others walked before the Millennium they will walk during the Millennium. The difference is they will be taught the correct Name and walk in obedience by saints who will live and reign during the thousand-year rule of Yahshua on earth.

Q In debating verses in the Bible, some who are at a loss for an explanation will say, "Well, to me this verse means..." How do I answer them?

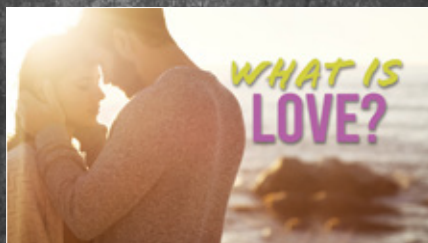
A Biblical interpretation is not subjective. Who would look at an operating manual for a complex device and say, "This is what it means to me." Instead, you would closely read the instructions to make sure you understood how the

mechanism worked according to the manufacturer. Yahweh did not inspire His words as mere suggestions open to a variety of equally valid opinions. His Word explains and supports His Truth, because His Word is truth, not a collection of recommendations. His teachings harmonize throughout. Yahshua said in John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." When it comes to problematic verses, the smart Bible student will go to the Hebrew and Greek source texts, then compare word-for-word translations to see how they render the ancient texts. Most difficulties arise when the words are translated into English. Interlinears are helpful as they include the ancient text along with the English translation.

Q Deuteronomy 22:5 says men and women should not be wearing the same clothes, so should women be wearing pants?

A The prohibition against wearing clothing of the opposite sex carries the charge of being an abomination, Deut. 22:5. An act with consequences that severe clearly has deep, spiritual impact on a serious level of degeneracy. The footnote in the **NIV** says, "Probably intended to prohibit such perversions as transvestism and homosexuality, especially under religious auspices." And it goes further. According to **The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge**, "This prohibition was no doubt intended to exclude the idolatrous customs of the heathen, as well as to prevent the evil which would be produced by the introduction of such

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



Watch on YRM Mobile, Facebook Live, yrm.org/live, or Youtube.
[yrm.org/live archives](https://yrm.org/live/archives)

customs. "Nothing was more common among idolaters than for men in the worship of several of their gods, to put on the garments worn by women: particularly in the worship of Venus, to which that of Ashtaroth among the Canaanites bore a striking resemblance, the women were accustomed to appear in armor before her, and the men in women's apparel." This source continues, "But independent of this, the practice has produced the greatest confusion in society, and has been productive of the grossest crimes. Hence Clodius, who dressed like a woman that he might mingle with the Roman ladies in the feast of the Bona Dea ["Good Goddess"] was universally justly execrated."

Q Yahshua fulfilled the law. Romans 10:4 plainly says Yahshua brought an end to the law. So why do you keep the Sabbath, which was part of the law?

A After Yahshua's death and resurrection we find the apostles still observing the Sabbath, along with the annual Sabbaths. Yahshua plainly and clearly said in Matthew 5:17, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Clearly, fulfill means to carry out, achieve, accomplish, and NOT abolish. If even a small part of the law had been abolished then heaven and earth would no longer be in existence, according to Yahshua's plain statement. When you fulfill your obligation either in the workplace, the family or through some commitment, you don't abolish obligations. You own up to them and complete what is required.

Romans 10:4 reads, "For Messiah is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The key is the word "end," which does not mean termination but the goal. He is the purpose for why we observe the law. He kept it perfectly and we are to follow His example, which He set for us. See 1John 2:6, Romans 8:29, John 14:12, 1Peter 2:21-22. If His purpose was to keep His Father's laws just to eliminate them at His death, what's the point? Why would he teach Yahweh's statutes and judgments each day if those laws were going to be abolished at His death? A man with money once asked Him what he had to do to receive everlasting life, Matthew 19:16. Yahshua said, Keep the commandments. Why would this man be told to do what was soon to be abolished by Yahshua's death? It would not make sense for the man to do what others would soon not need to do if the law were eliminated at Yahshua's death.

בִּיבְלִי HEBREW WORD לֶשׁוֹן

זֶרַע

Zera
Zeh'-rah

Composition: Zayin, Seghol,
Resh, Pathach, Ayin.

The Hebrew word **Zera** (H2233)
is a masculine noun and means a
sowing, seed, offspring.

"And Elohim said, Let the earth
bring forth grass, the herb
yielding **seed**, and the fruit tree
yielding fruit after his kind, whose
seed is in itself, upon the earth:
and it was so."

Genesis 1:11

Outreach Program's Current Partners

We recognize our outreach partners for their outstanding dedication to the Truth in their efforts to fulfill the Great Commission. If you are interested in becoming an outreach partner to help us spread the Truth, visit: <http://www.ym.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!

David Nesta
James Williams
Steve Twillegar
Troy Warner, Jr.
Antonio Kimble
Judy Stern

Larry Godejohn
Robert Kountz
Linda Lowe
David Lynch



4th Edition



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

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

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

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

* Ribbons for place-holding

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



Feedback

From Mail | Emails | Social Media



Send us your comments
Visit: yrm.org/feedback



"I am from India. I am a staunch pro-Israel believer. I am in touch with Messianic Jewish organizations since 2012 through emails to and fro. I watch programs especially related to Israel on God TV. I found your app on Google Play store and it's on my phone since some months. My desire is to serve Yahweh's chosen people in Israel in whatever manner I can." – JM

"For over 20 years I've felt like a square peg trying to fit into a round hole while attending church. The more I researched the history of the church the more I realized there is a lot being done in the church that is not honoring to my savior. It almost felt like we were mocking Him in many ways. Christmas, Easter, Sunday worship, loving Him being more emotion than obedience. I know that way is wrong but is yourway right? I don't know. But it is worth looking into. It seems to me you must be a scholar in many areas to get to the truth." – JE

"Thank you for providing this information. I am new at this kind of biblical research and will gladly continue to use your site for my research. I will share the information with others as I learn more. Again thank you from a grateful researcher." – DK

Answering 1 Corinthians 10:27 and the Health Risks of Eating Pork

The passage in 1Corinthians 10:27 reads, "If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and you be disposed to go: whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake."

Here is another one of those verses that need to be read in their context for proper understanding. Going back to verse 18 we see that Paul is discussing the eating of sacrifices that have been offered by unbelievers on the altar.

Just as Israel ate of the altar in the sacrifices to Yahweh and became participants in the rite, so also those who knowingly ate of what was offered to pagan deities became participants in heathen worship. In verses 19-20 he explains that food is food except when that food becomes part of a sacrificial rite. In that case, we must not become participants in wrong worship by knowingly indulging in eating such food as part of the sacrificial ritual.

Pagans sacrificed animals to their deities as did Israel. What was not eaten in their religious rites was sometimes sold at the market where it could be purchased and taken home to eat. This is what Paul is addressing in verse 27.

Regarding those sacrifices, if you are a guest at the home of an unbeliever, it is not necessary to inquire as to the source of the food. But if you are told that it was used in a pagan rite, verse 28, then don't eat it for the sake of your guest and his

learning about forbidden food.

Note verse 31: "Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of Yahweh." If these passages are discussing eating food that Yahweh has declared unclean, then eating of the unclean food would be an affront to Yahweh who condemned such.

Nowhere are we given permission to eat food that is prohibited in the law of Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14.

In addition to the Bible, science is also confirming the benefits of the clean food laws. Many doctors are now telling their patients to refrain from foods that Yahweh forbade some 3,000 years ago. Some of these foods pose health risks.

For example, Dr. Rex Russell explains the harm of eating pork in his book, *What the Bible Says About Healthy Eating*. "One reason for [Yahweh's] rule forbidding pork is that the digestive system of a pig is completely different from that of a cow. It is similar to ours, in that the stomach is very acidic. Pigs are gluttonous, never knowing when to stop eating. Their stomach acids become diluted because of the volume of food, allowing all kinds of vermin to pass through this protective barrier. Parasites, bacteria, viruses, and toxins can pass into the pigs flesh because of overeating. These toxins and infectious agents can be passed on to humans when they eat a pig's flesh."

Simplify Your Hectic Life

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



YAHWEH'S
RESTORATION
Ministry

PO Box 463
Holts Summit, MO 65043
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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

The Sabbaths

For mental clarity, physical health, and spiritual renewal!

Read online: yrm.org/7cycle or request



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

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

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

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