
Search the scriptures

Number 73

Newsletter (Web version)

Jan. – Feb., 2004

“SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES, FOR ...THEY ARE THEY WHICH TESTIFY OF ME,” JOHN 5:39

Letter from the Editor

This edition of the newsletter begins our 11th year of publication. Starting out with a mere 35 or so on the mailing list, there are now over 600 individuals and families, and it grows a little every month. We appreciate all of you who have helped with your support, your prayers, comments and questions, and your suggestions.

Our initial reason for beginning another newsletter was two-fold: (1) because we were coming into contact with Believers who, like Apollos in Acts 18:24-26, had a less than perfect knowledge of the way of Salvation. We, like Aquila and Priscilla, wanted to help them to correct some of the misinformation carried over from past religious associations; and (2), to help those just coming into the faith, to develop a good foundation to build on. New converts responding to Yahweh’s calling sometimes believe that all they have to do is change their day of worship and the Name they call their Creator. But there is much, much more to conversion than that. This way encompasses a whole new lifestyle – a whole new way of living, thinking, acting.

According to letters we receive from readers, there has been quite a bit of success in this area. There is a deep hunger out there for Spiritual food, and it is my good pleasure to help fill that void. There are two Scriptures that seem at first glance to contradict each other.

(Dan 12:4 KJV) *"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."*

(Hosea 4:6 KJV) *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy Elohim, I will also forget thy children."*

On the one hand, He says knowledge will increase in the end-time, and on the other hand, He says His people are being destroyed for lack of knowledge. What is the answer? Is this a contradiction? Hardly. The meaning is clear – there is plenty of the wrong kind of knowledge. In fact, we are being overrun with “knowledge overload” about things, about gadgets, about perverted sex, about ways to keep our minds occupied with mundane useless things, while the important things in life – how to live at peace with our neighbors, how to attain eternal salvation, how to properly worship and serve our Mighty Creator and His Son, are almost totally neglected. And sadly, the religious teaching that is available to most people is MIS-information, being passed off as Christian gospel by well-meaning people. Here are some of the more common fallacies that are believed by millions of Christians, and too many of us who should know better. We will explore the truth of these from Scripture as we go along in this newsletter.

“The Trinity” (A pagan doctrine); ***“Born Again,”*** and ***“Are You Saved?”*** (false concepts of these two subjects); ***“The hem of His garment”*** (What was that hem, and what does it mean to us today?); ***“Final Judgment”*** (almost no one understands this subject); ***“Baptism with the Holy Spirit and with Fire,”*** (another badly misunderstood subject, especially by those who believe in speaking in “tongues.”); ***“...and on His thigh a name written...”*** Thigh? Could this be a mistranslation? ***“Holy and reverend is HIS name...”*** Should we mere men appropriate this Name to ourselves? ***“This month shall be unto you the beginning of months...”*** What month is He speaking of? Does Scripture show us His Calendar?

There are many other similar doctrines or practices that have sprung from equally misunderstood Scriptures, and we should strive to learn the truth of these fallacies so we can eliminate the errors and embrace the Truth.

Of special importance at this time is that last item – the calendar. Yahweh’s calendar, not our “Roman Catholic” everyday calendar that the world goes by, but the one the Creator put in the sky for all men everywhere for all time. Is it hard to figure out? No. And why is it so important? The answer to that is because Yahweh’s annual Set-apart Holy Days are based on it, so it behooves us to get it right. Sadly, some have not. Different Assemblies use various ways of determining when this “beginning of months” is. But only one way is correct. Otherwise, we come before Yahweh at the wrong times of the year. More on that later, too.

I hope you had a profitable pagan year 2004, and wish for you an even better 2005. Shalom until next time. ~

Weekly Meeting Schedule:

Until further notice, we will meet at the following locations at 10:30 AM. After services, we will eat lunch, visit and fellowship. **Please note:** Each person or family will be responsible for bringing his or her own lunch instead of the pitch-in meals we have been accustomed to in the past. Drinks will continue to be provided.

First Sabbath of each Month: Senior Activity Center in Harrison, AR. On Hwy. 62-65, near intersection with Hwy. 7 South, and across from Edwards Grocery. There is a railroad caboose just east of the building. Call me at 1-479-754-2553, Elder Clayton Shaeffer at 1-870-448-5542, or Michael McCollum at 1-870-446-2586 for info.

Second Sabbath, Community Building in downtown Hartman, AR, across from the Post Office. Hartman is on Hwy. 64 between Ozark and Clarksville. Call me, 1-479-754-2553, for more information.

Third Sabbath meeting, home of Mike and Lucy Mastropaolo, 5519 Meadowview Rd., Witcherville, AR. Directions, Mike at 479-928-5005; me at 470-754-2553

Fourth (and Fifth) Sabbaths of each month, Cohn-Arendt Community Room (ground floor, to the right) of the Fort Smith Public Library, 3201 Rogers Ave., Fort Smith, AR. Call Jim Biggs at 479-474-3348, or me at 479-754-2553 for more information.

Hendersonville, NC Assembly’s weekly Sabbath meetings are at the Mountain Inn, upstairs in the room near the elevator. Take Exit 53 off I-26, about 4 miles south of Hendersonville. Time is 1:00 pm, with meal afterward. Call Elder Woodrow Pryor at 1-864-457-2912 for more information.

Expected New Moons in 2005:

(Visible shortly after sundown on the dates listed):

Jan. 11, Feb. 9, Mar. 11, Apr. 9, May 9, Jun. 7, Jul. 7, Aug. 5 (possibly 6), Sep. 4, Oct. 4, Nov. 2 or 3, Dec. 2.

In each case, the **next day** will be New Moon Day. *(Of special note: About twice in every seven-year cycle, we have a “leap year,” in which there are 13 months. This year is one of them. The New Year will begin with the Abib New Moon on the evening of April 9).*

Passover Day, April 23 (Abib 14); First High Day of Unleavened Bread, April 24 (Abib 15); Last High Day of UB, April 30. Wave Sheaf Day April 24 (begins 7-week count to Shavuot); Feast of

Trumpets, Oct. 5; Day of Atonement, Oct 14; Succot (Feast of Tabernacles) Oct. 19-25; Last Great Day, Oct. 26.

For the meanings of these days and how to keep them, write for my booklet, “**Yahweh’s Holy Days vs. Man’s Holidays**” It explains Yahweh’s Plan of Salvation which is based on the agricultural harvest seasons in the land of Israel, and shows that all the holidays and festivals celebrated by the world and Christians in general, have pagan roots and are not in any way based on Scripture. ~

Resources

Set-Apart Scriptures, with pagan titles removed and the Names (in Hebrew) inserted where they belong. Write to Bill & Wanda Wright, PO Box 21105, Wickenburg, AZ 85358. \$20 postpaid, soft back only. If you are indigent and cannot pay, tell them and they will send it anyway. (**Please notice:** They had to withdraw this offer for awhile, but are now ready to resume. So if you wrote before and got no response, please write again.)

Free doctrinal audio tapes by Lester Conrad.
Write him at PO Box 1151, Bourbon, MO 65441.

Web sites for young believers who have access to the internet. There is a Youth Forum and a Youth Chat room. The sites are:

<http://elijah.com/youth/forum/index.html>

On this site young people can post a message, ask a question, an answer or whatever. All new posts can also be sent to you by email.

<http://elijah.com/youth/chat.html>

It is easy to log in. You can then type messages for those logged in to see. Try it at 8 to 9 PM Eastern time.

<http://scripturalhelps.org/purity.htm>

(The Blessings of Purity) [**Note The URL change**]

<http://scripturalhelps.org> [**note The URL change**]

(Some good family information – Scriptural helps)

Pagan religious customs found in Christianity and other religions. Order the book, “*Fossilized Customs, NEW expanded 5th edition,*” and “*End of Days – In the Twinkling of an Eye,*” from Lew White, Institute for Scripture Research USA, 2303 Watterson Trail, Louisville, KY 40299. One “Fossilized Customs” for \$9.95, 4 for \$20, 10 or more, \$3. each. One “Twinkling” for \$7.95, 5 for \$20, 10 or more, \$3 each plus 10% S&H.

He also distributes many other items, including “**The Scriptures.**” Soft cover \$23; Hardback \$33; cases of 10 are \$180 and \$230 respectively, plus 10% shipping and packing domestic. (For foreign add 40%). Voice or Fax orders: 502-261-9833; or print out and mail the order form at: www.fossilizedcustoms.com/orderform.htm

“**The Scriptures,**” The Holy Name Bible published in South Africa, is also available from **EliYah.com, Rt. 1, Box 423, Ava, MO 65608** Single copy \$20 plus postage, case of 10 for \$180 plus postage (soft covers)
<http://www.eliyah.com/thescritures/>

Check out These sites: www.restoringthetruth.com Has some good articles plus links to other sites and lists some Assembly meetings, with more being added.

Another new one is www.praiseyahweh.net.

T-Shirts with The Names of Yahweh and Yahshua, plus your choice of ten different slogans. Write to **Robert R. McDonald, 15324 McCown Rd. Newark, OH 43055** for an order form and price list.

Spiritual Warfare Instruction Available from Mike Abbaduska at **Assembly of Yah, 2695 N. 2409th Rd., Marseilles, IL 61341**. Four video tapes and two manuals.

More articles and booklets are available from *Search the Scriptures Ministry*, PO Box 32, Clarksville, AR 72830, or from our web site, www.search-the-scriptures.org. Write for a copy of "Available Literature" or send your questions or comments.

Announcements

Correction: In the last issue, Nov. Dec. 2004, article "A Short History of the Sacred Name Movement," second column first paragraph on page 7, should read "My late father in law, Lidyo B. Basa and Elder M. Villiagias, who performed the ceremony were noteworthy promoters of the Names Yahweh and Yahshua along with Samuel Gamino and others. They were truly remarkable men!"

And at the end of the article should be "In memory of Gerald C. Bond, 1914 – 1977." Ralph E. Hughey. (Sorry for the omissions. Ed.) ~

Wedding:

Aaron Mastropaolo and Desirae Souverville were united in marriage at the General Darby Community Center in Fort Smith, AR, on the evening of November 24, 2004. Reception followed at Adelaide Hall, also in Fort Smith. Aaron is the son of Michael and the late Diane Mastropaolo, and Desirae is the daughter of Rick Brown and Francoise Souverville. They will reside at 1504 North Greenwood Ave., Fort Smith, AR 72901. Congratulations to you both!

Calendar Errors and 2005 Holy Days

Several of our Assemblies have either chosen the wrong moon to begin their year, or are waffling with uncertainty, waiting on "Abib barley." This is nothing new, certainly. It is a dilemma that has been confusing and dividing the Assemblies ever since only a few years after Yahshua's resurrection and ascension into the heavens.

I am going to give you here the results of several years of searching and studying, without the details. However, so that you can study it out for yourself (as you should), I am offering two definitive studies by what I believe to be true Biblical calendar experts and researchers.

One, by Herb Solinsky, is "*Exodus 9:31-32 and Abib*," and the other, by Wayne L. Atchison, is "*The Observed Calendar of the Second Temple Era – Presenting the Preponderance of Evidence*."

The first one is 10 pages long and the other is 16 pages, so you see that I could not reproduce them in this newsletter. I am sending copies of each, with a cover letter, to the Assemblies and group leaders who may have made what I believe is the wrong choice to begin their year. If you would like copies, please request them.

In short, here is the conclusion: In Genesis 1:14, Yahweh set the sun and moon in the sky and ordained that they should be “for **signs** and for **seasons**,...”

(Gen 1:14 KJV) "And Elohim said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for **signs**, and for **seasons**, and for days, and years:"

Let’s analyze these two words from Strong’s Hebrew dictionary. First, “signs”: H226. 'owth, oth; prob. from H225 (in the sense of appearing); a signal (lit. or fig.), as a flag, beacon, monument, omen, prodigy, evidence, etc.:--mark, miracle, (en-) sign, token.

So we see that “**signs**” are beacons, omens (looking to the future), evidence. I believe this refers to the 2 equinoxes and the 2 solstices that determine the beginning of the four seasons of the year – Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter.

Now, “**seasons**”: H4150. mow'ed, mo-ade'; or mo'ed mo-ade'; or (fem.) mow'adah (H2 Chron. 8 : 13), mo-aw-daw'; from H3259; prop. an **appointment**, i.e. a **fixed time or season; spec. a festival**; conventionally a year; by implication, an assembly (as convened for a definite purpose); technically the congregation; by extension, the place of meeting; also a signal (as appointed beforehand):--appointed (sign, time), (place of, solemn) assembly, congregation, (set, solemn) feast, (appointed, due) season, solemn (-ity), synagogue, (set) time (appointed)

We can see without further comment that a “**sign**” is something fixed in the sky by Yahweh. A “**mo’ed**” or **season** here is referring to the annual festivals that come once a year. So what we have in these two words, is that Yahweh ordained the sun and moon to regulate the timing of the annual Set-apart High Sabbath Days that we read about in Exodus 12, Leviticus 23, and other places.

The seasons referred to are the four annual seasons known to us as Spring (vernal) equinox, begun by the sun crossing the equator on its northward journey; Summer, when the sun reaches its farthest northern point, known as the summer solstice; Fall (autumnal), when the sun crosses the equator again on its southern trek; and Winter, when the sun reaches its farthest southern point, known as the winter solstice. After this, the whole process is started again – Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter.

Yahweh’s Holy Days are harvest festivals – first in the Spring, then the latter harvests in the Fall. So our first priority in establishing a Holy Day calendar, is to get the seasons right. Therefore, the month that Yahweh referred to in Exodus 12 is the first moon (from which we get the word “month”) **after** the vernal equinox – that is, after Spring has begun.

Some make a big deal out of “Abib barley,” that is, green ears of barley for a wave sheaf offering. This is important of course, BUT by following the seasons, there will **always** be Abib barley at the right time. **First**, get the season right, **then** look for the green ears. Some say that the “seasons” are man-made, somewhat like the international date line. This is not so. The seasons are determined by the signals in the sky, set there by Yahweh Himself on the fourth day of creation, and no man can have any effect whatsoever on them, except to observe and obey.

Those who have chosen the moon closest to, but **before** the equinox this year, will have 8 or 9 days of winter before Spring arrives. Worse yet, most of their “Fall” Holy Days will occur in summer, i.e. Trumpets, Atonement, and the first 4 days of the Feast of Tabernacles. This is not right! They must be “in season.”

Some say that the zodiac positions must be in a certain sign. These are star positions, of which Yahweh only added in Genesis 1:16, almost as an afterthought, “...he made the stars also.” They were not assigned any specific “duty” regarding setting of the seasons or the Holy Days, as were the sun and moon.

Also consider that, for the Wave Sheaf offering, it is not necessary to cut the very first sheaf that ripens – only that one be cut and offered before the new grain is eaten. In fact, harvesting can proceed after the Firstfruits sheaf is cut. It is only the premature **eating** that is forbidden.

(Lev 23:10-14 NRSV) "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you **and you reap its harvest**, you shall bring the sheaf of the **first fruits of your harvest to the priest**. {11} He shall raise the sheaf before YHWH, that you may find acceptance; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall raise it. {12} On the day when you raise the sheaf, you shall offer a lamb a year old, without blemish, as a burnt offering to YHWH. {13} And the grain offering with it shall be two-tenths of an ephah of choice flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to YHWH; and the drink offering with it shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin. {14} **You shall eat no bread or parched grain or fresh ears until that very day, until you have brought the offering of your Elohim: it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your settlements.**"

I plead with the affected Elders and those responsible for setting the Holy Days in your Assembly, to diligently study the material that I am sending. If, after you study it, you still decide to keep the earlier month, then so be it. But at least you will have had an opportunity to see the calendar issue from another perspective, which I believe to be the correct one. Thanks. *Elder Frank Brown.* ~

Christian Misconceptions

Here are seven or eight subjects that have been generally misunderstood by almost all Christians. Let's examine the scriptures associated with these and see if we can shed some light on them:

1) The Trinity – the concept that the Deity we worship is divided into three equal parts, Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Each of these is an individual living being, yet the three comprise only one "God." They make the Holy Spirit a living being, and refer to it as "He." This comes from the polytheistic practice of the pagans to have a multiplicity of "gods" in their pantheon, and is an adaptation of that belief into Christianity by the Roman Catholic Church. There are only two scriptures that can be used to support this error, and both were manufactured by the Catholics.

Let's look first at Matthew 28:19, the so-called "Great Commission." *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in **the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:**"*

According to Catholic sources this was added around the 2nd century CE. The original verse 19 read as follows: (Mat 28:19) *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them **in My Name.**"*

This is verified by the actions of the Apostles after His ascension to the heavens. All baptismal accounts that are recorded from Acts 2 on are in Yahshua's Name only. Is it logical to think that the Apostles, under the inspiration of the Set Apart Spirit, would go out and deliberately disobey His instructions? Of course not!

The other attempt to scripturally justify a trinity is found in First John 5:7-8. *"For there are three that bear record [in heaven, **the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.** {8} And there are three that bear witness in earth,] the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."*

Almost all other versions point out that the parts between the brackets in boldface type, are bogus. Here is what Bullinger's Companion Bible says: The texts read, "the Spirit, and the water", &c. omitting all the words from "in heaven" to "in earth" (v.8) inclusive. The words are not found in

any Gr. MS before the sixteenth century. They were first seen in the margin of some Latin copies. Thence they have crept into the text.

(Write for “The Trinity – Fact or Fiction?” for more complete information)

2) **“Born again,”** and **“Are you saved?”** We will study these two together, since they are closely related. They are popular in Christian circles, and both are misapplied. The Greek word for both “begotten” and “born” is “gennao” according to Strong’s Greek Dictionary: **1080. gennao, ghen-nah'-o; from a var. of G1085; to procreate (prop. of the father, but by extens. of the mother); fig. to regenerate:--bear, beget, be born, bring forth, conceive, be delivered of, gender, make, spring.**

You have to know the context in which the word is used to determine if it means to be conceived (begotten), or to actually be born as we know it. Christians believe that we are “born again” at the moment we repent and are baptized. No, we are “begotten” at that time, and won’t be born again, until we are changed to spirit at Yahshua’s return (1 Cor. 15).

(1 Cor 15:50-53 KJV) "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of YHWH; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. {51} Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, {52} In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. {53} For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality."

At that instant, we are born again – with a Spirit body, never to die again. WE put on immortality at that moment. We do not now have an immortal soul. That is also a pagan myth. We seek for immortality (Rom. 2:7).

We quite often hear the question, either put to us, or someone nearby, by a well-meaning person, “Brother (or Sister), are you saved?” They mean, of course, have you repented and accepted the Savior. They consider once you do that, you are in a “saved” condition. But Scripture shows that we are only in process of being saved. The actual act of being saved is, as in the case of being born again, when we are changed from this physical body to a spirit body at Yahshua’s appearing. In Matthew 10:22 and 24:13, Yahshua said “he that endureth to the end shall be saved.” Paul said in Romans 5:9-10, “much more then, being now justified by His blood, **we shall be saved** from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to YHWH by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we **shall be saved by his life.**”

So we are NOW begotten, and we SHALL BE saved when we receive that Spirit body at His return. And, yes, we can fall away. “Once saved, always saved” is another myth believed by some Christians, as they apply it to conversion rather than the new birth at the resurrection.

(Write for the booklets “Do You Have An Immortal Soul?” and “Truth About Judgment” for more complete information)

3) **“The hem of His garment”** What was that hem, and what does it mean to us today? You find these references in Matthew 9:20 and 14:36, and referred to His tassels or fringes. This is from Strong’s Greek Dictionary, #2899. kraspedon, kras’-ped-on; of uncert. Der.; a margin, i.e. (spec.) a fringe or tassel:--border, hem.

Yahshua was obedient to the command in Num.15:38-40 and Deut. 22:12, to wear tassels. The purpose was to remind the wearer of the 10 Commandments, and to keep them. Although He certainly needed no reminder, He was our example. We are to emulate Him. But how many people today actually do? We assume many of those things were “done away.” But were they?

(Write for a short article, “Me, Wear What?!”)

4) ***Final Judgment***” Almost no one, it seems, understands this very important Biblical subject. Most believe that at the moment of death our conscious “soul” leaves the body and goes either to heaven if we have been “good,” or is plunged into the fiery abyss known as “hell” if we have been bad. Since it is obvious that most have fallen far short of “the glory of Yahweh,” many worry needlessly about loved ones who have died in an “unsaved” condition and may now be suffering the torment of the damned, and will continue in that state for all eternity. This is not true.

The Truth is, that only a remnant of humanity is now being called. And of those, “many are called but few are chosen.” Why? Because, some to whom the Truth is shown, fail to respond. They reject it. They suffer from a lack of conviction. But what about the vast majority of mankind who has lived and died, and the billions now living, who have never heard the Name of the Creator – who worship idols, or nothing at all? What about these poor deceived Tsunami victims, for example, whose lives have been turned upside down? We have seen them on television praying to their stone and wood idols. But no answer comes. Are they doomed to Hell, because of their ignorance? Are they lost for all eternity? No, not necessarily. Most people, world-wide, have been blinded for now. They simply do not and cannot understand Yahweh’s plan for them, because they are ignorant of the fact that there is a Mighty Creator-Sustainer named Yahweh, that He exists and has a wonderful plan for them. This is a long subject that I have covered in the booklet already mentioned, *“Truth About Judgment,”* so let me here just quote a few things that Yahshua said in His ministry:

(Mat 10:14-15 KJV) *“And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. {15} Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.”*

(Mat 11:23-24 KJV) *“And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. {24} But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.”*

We are now being judged, day by day (1 Peter 4:17). From the time of our conversion until our death, or until Yahshua returns and changes us to Spirit, we are being judged. But the day is coming when ALL who have ever lived and were not in the first resurrection, will be judged. They will be resurrected to physical life and given a period of time to be taught Yahweh’s Torah, and about Yahshua’s sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sins. Then they will have an opportunity to accept and repent, or to reject and be destroyed by fire. This will be at the end of the 1,000-year period.

Yahshua spoke of both time periods – the first in Mat. 24:31 to the end of the chapter, and the second in Mat. 25:31 to the end of that chapter. It is also covered in Ezekiel 37, Malachi 4, and Revelation 20 as well as other places.

(Write for the booklets, *“The Truth About Judgment,”* and *“The Truth About the Resurrections”* for more detail)

5) “Baptism with the Holy Spirit and with Fire” John the Immerser (Baptiser) spoke of these in the Gospel accounts written by Matthew and Luke. Let’s look at Luke’s account:

(Luke 3:16 KJV) *“John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:”*

These verses and this doctrine is grossly misunderstood by most Christians, especially those of the pentecostal “tongues” persuasion. Many of them believe and teach that we have to be baptized

in the spirit, as well as in water, and with fire. Somehow they equate the fire with the Day of Pentecost when the “tongues AS OF fire” sat on the disciples’ heads, and if we don’t speak in “tongues” at baptism, then we don’t have the Holy Spirit!

But notice the very next verse, continuing the thought from verse 16 and still speaking of Yahshua:

{ 17 } *Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner (barn or granary); **but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.***"

Does this sound like something desirable? Not to me! What John is speaking of is, first, the saints who have repented and endured to the end, will actually become Spirit beings – BUT the unrighteous, those who refuse to repent, will be destroyed by fire in the lake of fire at the final judgment. Again, see Malachi 4, Rev. 20, Mat. 24 and 25, and be sure to study the same two booklets offered in the last section, “*Truth About Judgment*” and “*Truth About the Resurrections.*” This subject and the previous one (No. 4) are closely related.

And, do you know why we have Yahweh’s Holy Days, and why they are so important for us today? It is because they depict Yahweh’s plan of salvation, all the way from the beginning to the end. When we keep His Holy Days, as He has commanded throughout both the Old and New Testaments, we are rehearsing His Plan. It keeps us mindful of His great plan for ALL mankind.

(In addition to “*Truth About Judgment*” and “*Truth About the Resurrections,*” also request “*Yahweh’s Holy Days vs. Man’s Holidays*” for more detail)

6) “Reverend” Psalm 111:9 says “*He sent redemption unto His people: he hath commanded his covenant forever: **holy and reverend is His Name.***”

Should mere men use this title? “Holy” means “Sacred,” Quodesh or Kadosh in Hebrew. “Reverend” means “awesome, frightful, dreadful.” Why would men want to appropriate one of Yahweh’s titles or attributes to themselves? It is just one of the traditions that sprang up somewhere back in the dark ages, and has been thoughtlessly carried forward to this day. We should get rid of all such as this when we learn Yahweh’s awesome Truth. We would not think of referring to ourselves as “holy,” so why accept “Reverend”?

7) “The Rapture” Another serious error that millions of Christians are depending on. Books like “*Left Behind,*” which depicts the “unsaved” being left on earth to suffer tribulation, while seeing the “righteous” rising into the sky, being wafted off to heaven, has misled untold numbers of people who think this belief comes out of the Bible. This belief, and some of the others covered above, stems from the mistaken belief that we have a “soul” living in us, that goes to heaven or hell at death. There are variations to exactly how different denominations apply this falsehood, but most seem to think that the “rapture” could happen at any moment. People driving down the street are suddenly raptured away, leaving their car to careen crazily down the street without a driver. Panic-stricken bystanders see all these “saints” rising, and they are “left behind!” As they rise, they somehow change from physical to spiritual, and arrive at the Golden Gate with a spirit body.

Where does such nonsense come from? Out of the minds of the authors, who take a Scripture or two that they misunderstand and build a whole speculative doctrine on it. So let’s look at the so-called support Scriptures for a “rapture” doctrine:

(John 14:2-3 KJV) *"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. {3} And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."*

(1 Th 4:16-17 NRSV) *"For the Master himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of YHWH's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in the Messiah will rise first. {17} Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Master in the air; and so we will be with the Master forever."*

Notice in John 14, very carefully what Yahshua says: "and if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again**, and receive you unto myself; that **where I am, there ye may be also.**" Now, when He comes again, where will He be? Here on earth, of course. Then He says, "...that where I am, there ye may be also." So He is correctly saying that we will be with Him here on earth. This is confirmed in Zech. 14:4, where He is said to stand in that day on the mount of Olives in Jerusalem. His Kingdom is to be here on earth, not in heaven. After the 1,000 years are expired and all things are ready, Yahweh Himself will descend with the new Heavenly Jerusalem, and make His home here, too (1 Cor. 15:24-28 and Rev. chapters 21 and 22).

In the passage in 1 Thes. 4, Paul does not mean that we will be forever with Yahshua in the air, but that we will settle down with Him in the environs of Jerusalem as the passages in Zechariah and Revelation do show.

The Kingdom is everywhere in Scripture shown to be here on earth, and not up in heaven. Also, the saints are not exempt from the great tribulation that is to come. Mat. 24:21-22 explains that these days will be shortened for the elect's sake. If they were up in heaven, there would be no need to protect them, or shorten the days for their sakes. We are told over and over again in scripture to be ready for that great and dreadful day of Yahweh which is to come upon the whole earth. That will begin at Yahshua's return.

Read all of Matthew 24 and 25, Mark 13 and Luke 21. It will be a terrible time for those who are not ready – for those who are sitting around awaiting a rapture to transport them to heaven, away from all the "action." Terrible also for all those others who have not known Yahweh or His Son, Yahshua – for the teeming millions who still worship stone and wood idols, images of their own making, and pray to those "gods" using prayer wheels and rosary beads, incantations, pin wheels, etc. etc.

How can you avoid all this heartache and misery? How can you keep from being deceived? Take the title of this newsletter seriously – "*search the Scriptures,*" then obey. Repent, accept Yahshua's sacrifice to pay for your past sins, and begin to keep the Torah (Law), primarily the Ten Commandments. We are told that we must endure to the end, then we shall be saved. Yahshua said "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned,*" Mark 16:16. So, to all I say, endure! It won't be for long. Then, we reap our eternal reward that Yahweh has prepared for us:

(1 Cor 2:9 KJV) *"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which Yahweh hath prepared for them that love him."*~

Where's Your Fence?

By Norman A. Brumm, III

We may be unaware of it but there are two subjects with which we deal every day—traditions and fences. An area in which we might commonly hear these terms is when we speak of "The Jews." "The Jews" definitely have their traditions and, with a little bit of study into their traditions, the term "fences" will show up. The popular concept regarding their first century traditions, is that the Jews added innumerable traditions and that Yahshua told us to discard traditions when it

comes to worshipping in spirit and in truth. We will examine this development of tradition and fences and see how it all applies to us today.

Keep

In many places in the Torah, YHWH directs Moses to command the Israelites to “keep” this and to “keep” that. In Deuteronomy 5:12 the Israelites were told to, “**Keep** the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as [YHWH] thy El hath commanded thee.” In Leviticus 18:5 they were told, “Ye shall therefore **keep** my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am YHWH.” In fact they were told and strongly encouraged to **keep** YHWH’s “commandments,” “statutes,” “ordinances” or “judgments,” at least 43 times in the Torah!

The history of ancient Israel adequately reveals the nature of the human race. Even when the Creator is specifically working with a nation, they tend to be very shortsighted. (The church has been no exception to this!) Israel rose and fell. They approached righteousness and then fell far, far away from it.

We see the ups and downs during the time of the Judges. We see it with the kings beginning with King Saul. The ups and downs continued through King David and through the split kingdoms of Israel and Judah after Solomon’s death. Their downs were more wicked and lasted longer than their ups were righteous. Eventually, YHWH sent them all into captivity because they wouldn’t **keep** His word.

*Also Judah **kept** not the commandments of YHWH their El, but walked in the statutes of Israel which **they** made (II Kings 17:19).*

*Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith YHWH, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not **kept** my law... (Jer 16:11).*

*Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither **kept** my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my Sabbaths: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness (Ezek 20:21).*

After the Babylonian captivity, Judah returned to the land of Israel. Under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah, they knew that they would have to **keep** YHWH’s law again (see Neh. 1:5-9). How were they to properly **keep** His law? How did they end up with all the traditions 400 years later? And how should we properly **keep** his law today?

To Guard

The Hebrew word for “keep”, in this sense, is *shamar* (Strong’s #8104). Its basic meaning is “to keep, to guard, to observe, to give heed” (Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon). It has a strong emphasis on watching, guarding and protecting. Other meanings are to retain, to treasure up and to keep within bounds. Gesenius also mentions “to keep safe, to preserve.” Strong’s adds, “...to hedge about (as with thorns).”

Some physical things that are “kept” include the Garden of Eden, flocks, and a house (Gen. 2:15; 30:31; Eccl. 12:3; 1 Sam 17:20). These things were watched, guarded and kept safe. When we have something valuable to protect, we naturally take extra precautions for its care. Depending on its value, we might go to such extremes as putting it in a safe, hiding it in a building, surrounding it with high tech alarms and “hedging about” it with various types of “thorns.”

We are told, in no uncertain terms, to *shamar*, to guard, protect and keep safe our Creator’s commandments, statutes and laws. “*Therefore thou shalt love YHWH thy El, and **keep** his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, alway*” (Deut 11:1. See also Lev

18:4,5,26; 19:19,37; 20:8,22; 22:9,31; 25:18; 26:3; Deut 4:2,6,40; 5:1,29; 6:2,17; 7:11,12; 8:1,2,6,11; 10:13; 11:8,22,32; 12:1,28,32; 13:4,18; 15:5; 17:19; 19:9; 26:16-18; 27:1; 28:1,9,13,15,45,58; 29:9; 30:10,16; 31:12; 32:46).

Israel might have at times kept or *shamar*'ed His law, but they were commanded to do it "always" (NKJV). This particular "always" of Deuteronomy 11:1 is not the same as everlasting, forevermore or perpetual. This word is rendered from two Hebrew words: *kol* and *yowm* ("kaal hayaamiyn" Strong's #'s: 3605 and 3117). The first means, "all, the whole of, any, each, every, anything." The second means, "day, time, year." They were commanded to *shamar* His law always, in other words, each and every day, time and year. This sounds like hard work! But that is what was and is necessary to be His people.

***Shamar* His Law**

How does one apply this safeguarding and hedging about with thorns to YHWH's law? How valuable is it to us? To what extremes should we go to protect it?

From Ezra and Nehemiah down to Yahshua's time, numerous leaders, rabbis and sages saw the need to implement a national understanding of these questions so that captivity would never happen again. In time, many traditions were instituted and added to the Jewish way of life. Before we get too hasty and condemn those traditions, we need to first understand the purpose and use of a tradition.

One area of YHWH's commandments that was not *kept* was the Sabbath. The primary Jewish understanding is that the Sabbath starts at sunset after the sixth day and ends at sunset after the seventh day. But how do they *shamar* the Sabbath start and end? To guard, protect and keep safe the Sabbath time they simply start the Sabbath 18 to 20 minutes before sunset with a setting-apart ceremony called *kiddush* (Deut 5:12 commands us to sanctify the Sabbath). They end the Sabbath when it is dark enough to see three stars in the sky (which would be 20-40 minutes after sunset, depending on where you live) with another setting-apart ceremony called *havdalah*. In this way they have guarded, protected and kept safe the actual Sabbath by extending the boundaries of when it begins and ends. They have erected a fence around the Sabbath law. Not only do they observe the Sabbath as holy but they also *shamar* it, both of which are commands of YHWH.

Is this "fence" a bad thing or is it good? The command in scripture is clear, we are to safeguard and keep—*shamar*—the Sabbath (Ex 31:13-17; Lev 19:3,30; 26:2; Deut 5:12). But how should we do it? Are we to begin the Sabbath right at sunset immediately after rushing around, busily chasing our worldly affairs up until that moment? I would suggest that that approach would not be safeguarding and protecting it. Are we to begin "sabbathing" 5 minutes, 18-20 minutes, or even an hour or more before sunset? Scripture doesn't tell us—nor should it. It is left up to us to set up our own fence or tradition that will allow us to guard, protect and keep the Sabbath safe.

Must I also *keep* it differently than my neighbor or am I allowed to borrow his traditions as long as it helps me perform that commandment? Today, many families are borrowing some of the Sabbath traditions of the Jews and adapting them to their family situation. These same families have received much grief from associates for taking on some "Jewish traditions."

Another example that might help us understand some of the traditions of the ultra-orthodox Jews is that of not driving a car or taking an elevator. How does hiking up ten floors of stairs, rather than taking an elevator, help one *keep* the Sabbath?

"And on the seventh day Elohim ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made" (Gen 2:2). One view, which has good merit, has it that the root meaning of the word "rested" is to cease from one's labors. It is often translated "cease" and can easily be translated that way in most other cases. Webster's Dictionary defines "rest" as

“repose [to lay at rest], sleep, a state of motionlessness or inactivity, to get rest from lying down.” Other definitions include “freedom from work, to cease from action or motion.” This is usually thought of in the sense of sitting down and having a coffee break. It may be unfortunate that this Hebrew word is often rendered “rest”, as that really does not convey an accurate picture of the word.

So what was it that Elohim did on the seventh day? Did He rest by reposing, sleeping, or kicking back, sighing a big sigh of, “Whew! I’m done!,” grab a beer and watch a football game? The scripture doesn’t say that He “rested”—it says that He stopped creating. The same word is used to command us to “rest” or more properly “cease” from our creating or from our labors (Ex 23:12; 34:21). Since we are creative creatures, we are to not create on the Sabbath. We are told to cease from our daily work because, by and large, our work is a process of creation. As an example of what not to create, in Exodus 35:3 the Israelites were told to not kindle a fire on the Sabbath. Isn’t doing such creating a fire? Then, if one is creating, one isn’t “sabbathing.”

Fires come in many sizes—from big ones to little ones to teeny weenie ones. To run an engine or press an elevator button means that you must create a spark or a fire. It may be short lived, but nonetheless, it was a fire that you created. Climbing up ten flights of stairs in no way violates any Sabbath command. By going to this degree of what we might call “nit-picking”, these ultra-orthodox Jews are guarding, protecting and keeping the Sabbath safe. They *shamar* the Sabbath.

One more example of a command that takes on much variety is that of Exodus 23:19, “*Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother’s milk*” (see also Ex 34:26; Deut 14:21). Now, what does that really mean? You and I may have our ideas, but how do we *shamar* this command?

How do Jews *shamar* this command? “Seethe” means “boil or cook”. Don’t boil or cook a young goat in its mother’s milk. Sounds pretty straightforward. But if I eat some goat meat and drink some goat milk, when that digests in my stomach, might that not be a type of boiling or cooking? Is this command, while specific, actually general in nature? Might this also apply to beef and cow milk? Or just to be safe should I avoid any beef, goat or lamb with any milk? If I avoid all meat, including poultry and fish with any kind of milk, that will definitely work!

We are told to never boil a young goat in its mother’s milk, but how do we guard, protect and keep this command safe? People who observe this command in their lives set up their hedge of thorns or fence in these various places. There is no law stating that one’s fence needs to be at a certain place. There are various teachings and some may come across fairly strong but there is no law telling us how far we should carry this. We are, however, commanded to *shamar* this.

But, Yahshua Said...

In criticizing certain Scribes and Pharisees about their traditions, Yahshua said that they were “*teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*” (Matt 15:9). How did it come about that certain *shamar*-type traditions were being presented as commandments of Yahweh?

As Judaism developed from the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, with their renewed zeal to never again go into captivity, on down to the time of Yahshua, where we see “commandments of men” in place, the nation of Judah had traveled a rough road. After the normal ups and downs of the nation, including the Maccabean era, two predominant schools of thought developed, each named after their leader/founder around 30 BCE. The School of Shammai (Beit Shammai) taught that in order for a Jew or non-Jew to be saved, one had to perform certain numerous commands based on their seemingly endless traditions. They taught that one actually earned one’s salvation. If someone didn’t do things the Shammai way of doing it, they would never be saved.

The School of Hillel (Beit Hillel) taught the opposite. While one should perform the commands of scripture, it was through faith by the grace of Yah that one was saved. Non-Jews were not held to the same standard of Torah that Jews were.

By the time of Yahshua's ministry, Beit Shammai was in power as the ruling political party by a large majority. Most all of Yahshua's attacks were against their mindset. The safeguards and fences that were originally erected to protect Yah's commandments had become the **law** of their teachings rather than just a fence. Mark explains some of these traditions in his gospel.

For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? (Mark 7:3-5)

In response to these Pharisees and Scribes, did Yahshua criticize them for the traditions, for the fences that were in place or for their way of *shamar*'ing or guarding, protecting or keeping safe the law?

*He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. **For laying aside the commandment of Yahweh, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of Yah, that ye may keep your own tradition** (vs. 6-9).*

Yahshua criticized them for laying aside and rejecting Yah's commandments and putting their traditions over and above His commandments. These traditions or commandments of men had become their law and they were violating Deuteronomy 12:32, "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." A tradition protecting a command is not adding to law unless one turns that tradition into a law. Remember, we are commanded to guard, protect and keep safe all of YHWH's laws.

But, Paul Said...

Paul also addressed this issue in his letter to the Colossians: *Wherefore if ye be dead with Messiah from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh (2:20-23).*

Yet, Paul told the Thessalonians, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (II Th 2:15; cf. 3:6). He, just like Yahshua, was against placing traditions of men over and above the commandments of Yah. It is wrong for us, 2,000 years removed, to categorically say that the New Testament is against traditions. When one understands the issues then at hand, one can see that Yahshua's life and that of Paul's and the other Apostles' were loaded with tradition.

A Fence of Today

Today we have our own fences whereby we safeguard certain commands. One example that comes to mind occurs every year during the Days of Unleavened Bread. Scripture tells us that we are to put out the leavened bread from our houses. The Hebrew is rather clear that we are to put

out fermented bread. Yet, what do we do in our modern-day tradition? We also put out any bread that contains only baking soda or baking powder. And we don't stop there. We also put out the leavening agents themselves. We put out yeast, baking soda and baking powder. Yet, it is the Feast of Unleavened Bread not the Feast of Non-leavening Agents!

“Oh, but wait a minute!” someone might say. “Exodus 12:15 says that we are to put out ‘leaven’ which is a ‘yeastcake’ (Strong’s #7603). This says to put out the leavening agent.”

A study into various Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias will show that this “leaven” was a piece of fermented dough left over from a previous baking. While it acted **as** an agent, it was nevertheless fermented bread.

The potential controversy of all this goes to prove the point that we all view things differently and set our fences as we see fit. There is nothing wrong with this, so long as we don't say that putting out baking powder is law, else we would be adding to the law. It is a good fence. We learn from it. In other words, we have some of our own fences and traditions that we regard rather highly. We may even be doing some as a result of having been told to by some other organization!

Shamar Shamar

One thing is clear—we are to highly value YHWH's law. We are to guard it, protect it and keep it safe—very safe. Of the fifty-some scriptures in Torah that tell us to *shamar* His commandments, two of them say it rather uniquely. Deuteronomy 6:17 says, “*Ye shall **diligently keep** the commandments of [YHWH] your El, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee*” (cf. 11:22). The Hebrew says, “*Shamar shamar the commandments of YHWH your El...*” (Actual tenses and forms of the words are different but the words are indeed there twice.) We are to keep safe and be sure we keep safe His commandments. Protect and be sure we protect them. Safeguard and be sure we safeguard them.

How valuable are they to us? How well do we know them? How diligent are we to do them, observe them and keep them? Do we set up our own fences and safeguards around His law or are we too busy judging others for doing it? Yes, we need to *keep* His law and set up whatever protections we deem necessary to safeguard them, but, as a word of caution, let's not be critical of how our neighbor *keep* the law. Let's also not be in a position where we are uncompromising about our fences. Fellowship is ruined so often because many hold out their fences as if they are the law. This happens in Judaism as well. Understanding the differences in our fences, or traditions, and what the law is, should help all of YHWH's people draw closer to Him and one another in the fellowship of true righteous love and unity. *Norman Arthur~*

(Mat 22:36-40 KJV) "Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law? {37}Yahshua said unto him, Thou shalt love YHWH thy El with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. {38} This is the first and great commandment. {39} And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt **love thy neighbour as** thyself. {40} On these two commandments hang **all the law and the prophets.**"

Hate?

Which is worse of these three kinds of hatred? 1) Mindless cowards who murder and maim innocent men, women and children in the name of their god; 2) “Respectable” but craven doctors (?) who violate their oath to do no harm, by killing live babies in their mothers' wombs, then discard the remains like so much trash; or 3) licentious perverts who not only practice sexual abominations, but delight in forcing their “life-style” off onto others, primarily your children.

Or is there room for a fourth? How about those of us who cave in to pressure from these groups, and not only tolerate their behavior, but actually join in support of it, by such means as passing “hate crimes laws,” urging tolerance (which means compromising with deadly sins), allowing them to come into the government schools and teach the children, etc?

Shamefully, all these things are now being done world-wide, and even here in the “good old USA.” People have been arrested and charged with hate crimes for reading the Bible on a public street. They had a bullhorn and were reading from Romans Chapter One. They were charged with three felonies and several misdemeanors, including inciting a riot and using a lethal weapon (the bull horn), simply for the “crime” of reading from the Scriptures. (this was in Philadelphia, the city of “brotherly love.”) None of the perverts were arrested.

Yes, some Scripture now is “hate literature” in certain places. But did you ever think it could happen here?

Baby-killing is a high-paying industry in the US now. It is touted by groups like “Planned Parenthood, Inc.” which owns a chain of abortion houses across the US. I just learned that Margaret Sanger, the founder of PP was once a featured speaker for the Ku Klux Klan. Also, that three times more black babies are aborted than whites. PP has done more evil to the black race than the KKK ever thought of. Far more babies have died in the American holocaust than did Jews in Hitler’s ovens.

Are we guilty, too? After all, we do allow it, don’t we? Would you stand up and speak out against these atrocities?

(2 Pet 2:6-11 NRSV) "and if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction and made them an example of what is coming to the unrighteous; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man greatly distressed by the licentiousness of the lawless (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by their lawless deeds that he saw and heard), then YHWH knows how to rescue the righteously from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment } --especially those who indulge their flesh in depraved lust, and who despise authority. Bold and willful, they are not afraid to slander the glorious ones, whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not bring against them a slanderous judgment from YHWH ~

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