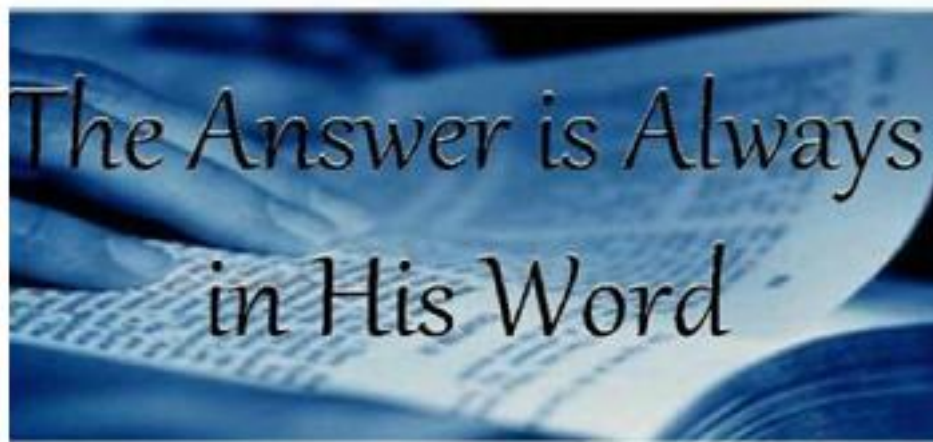


Sundry Sermons I

Jim Coetzee



Sundry Sermons

By Jim Coetzee

This book is not to be sold. We are told in the second part of Matthew 10: 8 “*freely you received, freely give.*” The book contains a number of sermons that I gave over the past few months and is intended as a reference manual for like-minded Nazarene Jewish/Israelite believers.

Note: All Scriptures used are from the ‘NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE’, unless otherwise indicated. Set-apart Names corrected in quotes used, in accord with this Bible’s ‘Principles of Translation’.

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Acknowledgements

I thank the leader of my previous association the late Mr. H W Armstrong and Rabbi Moshe Koniuchowsky for the many scriptural truths that I learnt from them over many years. This book reflects my personal understanding, and might not be in accord with the interpretation of my teachers. When we read any man's interpretation of the Scriptures we need to do what the Bereans did as recorded in Acts 17: 10 – 11 *"examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so."* – Not, not so.

Thank you also to my wife Hannah, who helped me type, my son Derek and members and friends of the Nazarene Israelite Two House Congregation of Port Elizabeth, who assisted in proof reading.

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Chapter 1: "Behold my Servant whom I uphold."

In the book of Isaiah, YHVH refers to His servant in a number of chapters. It is very important for us, to understand who or what this servant is. Our Jewish brothers maintain that the servant that our Father YHVH is talking about in Isaiah is Israel. I fully agree that in many instances, this servant or son that our Father is talking about, is indeed the nation of Israel. However, as I have mentioned in a previous sermon, there is a duality principle throughout the Scriptures that we cannot deny. Reading specific verses where this servant of YHVH is mentioned will make it clear that He is talking about either Yahshua our Messiah or the nation of Israel. The topic of our sermon this week is but one such instance. It is a quote from Isaiah 42: 1, saying: ***"Behold, My Servant whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations."*** This is clearly talking about Messiah, but it is also a prophecy about the nation of Israel, to be fulfilled in the near future.

In Isaiah 41: 8 YHVH is definitely talking about the nation of Israel, as it says: ***"But you, Israel, My servant Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My friend."*** Also in Isaiah 43: 21 YHVH is talking about His peculiar flesh-born nation Israel, saying: ***"The people whom I formed for Myself, Will declare My praise."*** This is another prophecy about Israel, which has yet to come to fulfillment.

However, who is the servant that YHVH is talking about in Isaiah 53? We only need to read to verse 9 to fully realize the identity of this servant of Elohim.

Starting in Isaiah 53: 1 we read: ***'Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of YHVH been revealed?***

{Our Father YHVH knew that many would not believe. We read in John 12: 37 & 38: ***'But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him. (38) That the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, "YHVH, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF YHVH BEEN REVEALED?"'*** We, who have been called to be first fruits by YHVH at this time, see that Isaiah 53 verse 1 is talking about Yahshua our Messiah. But others¹ do not understand yet. Most of our Jewish brothers will only understand this at Messiah's return, as we see in Zechariah 12: 10, when they will ***'look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son.'*** Sincere Jews who are alive at that time will understand that the servant spoken of here is Yahshua our Messiah. But, others not called by YHVH during this time or throughout the history of mankind, will only learn the truth after the second resurrection, when the Scriptures will be opened to their understanding, as we see in Revelation 20: 12.}

Continuing on in Isaiah 53: 2 & 3 we read: ***'For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. (3) He was despised and forsaken of men,***

¹ In Mark 4: 11 & 12 and Matt 13:11, 12 & 19 we see that YHVH is not calling everybody during this age. There will be two harvest periods - like in Israel today. First the first fruits during the First Resurrection and then the rest during the Second Resurrection. In James 1: 18, you will see that those of us called now are going to be the first fruits, who will, if we make it, become kings and priests ruling under Messiah during the millennium (as per Revelation 5:10). We who are called during this age are being judged at this time. Most of those who are resurrected during the second resurrection never really had a chance and will be given a chance to repent. The people who died without the knowledge that we have today, never had a chance - remember, there is no such thing as a second chance. But if you never heard the name of Yahshua in your life time, or never heard about (YHVH)'s plan of Salvation, how can you be considered to have had your chance?

{We read in Mark 15: 17 – 20, how this prophecy came true, as follows: ***‘And they dressed Him up in purple, and after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on Him; (18) and they began to acclaim Him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” (19) And they kept beating His head with a staff, and spitting at Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him. (20) And after they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, and put His garments on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him.’***}

Proceeding on in Isaiah 53: 3, we read: ***‘A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;***

{We read in Matthew 26: 37 – 39: ***‘And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. (38) Then He said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.” (39) And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt.”’***}

Reading the final two lines of Isaiah 53: 3, ***‘And like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.’***

{We read about Peter explaining to the Israelites that they healed a lame man by the power of Yahshua, but also telling them they despised Him during His lifetime here on earth, in Acts 3: 13 – 16, as follows: ***“The Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, The Elohim of our fathers, has glorified His servant Yahshua, the one whom you delivered up, and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him. (14) But you disowned the Set-apart and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, (15) but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom Elohim raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses. (16) And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Yahshua which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.”’***}

In Isaiah 53: 4 we read: ***‘Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried:’***

{Looking at Matthew 8: 16 we see a fulfillment of this: ***‘And when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill.’***}

Reading on in the second part of verse 4 we see: ***‘Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of Elohim, and afflicted.’***

{We find this fulfilled in John 19: 7, as follows: ***‘The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of Elohim.”’***}

Isaiah 53: 5 states: ***‘But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.’***

{Rav Kepha in 1 Peter 2: 21 – 24 recorded the following for us about Yahshua: ***‘For you have been called for this purpose, since Messiah also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, (22) WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; (23) and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; (24) and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.’***}

In verse 6 of Isaiah 53, we read: ***‘All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But YHVH has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.’***

{Matthew in chapter 18: 11 – 14 recorded the following: ***“For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost (talking specifically about us, the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel). (12) What do you think? If any man has***

a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying? (13) And if it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray. (14) Thus it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish.”}

Continuing in verse 7 of Isaiah 53, we read: ***‘He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers. So He did not open His mouth.’***

{We read fulfillment of this in Matthew 27: 12, as follows: ***‘And while He was being accused by the chief priests and the elders, He made no answer.’}***

In verse 8 of Isaiah 53, we read: ***‘By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living, For the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due?’***

{Matthew record the fulfillment of this in Chapter 26: 65 & 66: ***‘Then the high priest tore his robes, saying, “He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; (66) what do you think?” They answered and said: “He is deserving of death!”’}***

Finally we read in Isaiah 53: 9 ***‘His grave was assigned with wicked men. Yet He was with the rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.’***

{Matthew also records the fulfillment of this in Matthew 27: 57 – 60: ***‘And when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Yahshua. (58) This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Yahshua. Then Pilate ordered it to be given over to him. (59) And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, (60) and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.’}***

From this it is abundantly clear that this servant is non-other than Yahshua our Messiah.

The fact the Jewish Rabbi’s hold that Genesis 1: 2 is talking about ‘the Spirit of Moshiach’ where it reads: ***‘And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of Elohim was moving over the surface of the waters.’*** Tells us that they believe that Messiah is Elohim, because they, like us believe that:

- YHVH is ONE as per Deuteronomy 6: 4.
- There is no other besides Him as per Deuteronomy 4: 35.
- On that day YHVH shall be One and His name One as per Zechariah 14: 9.

Furthermore they hold that if you understand the secret of the first word in the Scriptures, namely ‘Bereishit’, you will know why the Jerusalem translation (a 2100 year old translation of Hebrew into Aramaic) of Genesis 1: 1 reads: ***‘With wisdom G-d created the heavens and the earth.’*** They also maintain that what is being understood in the Jerusalem translation is not a discovery by itself, but that it is based on the information contained in the book of Proverbs 8: 12 and 22 ***“I wisdom ... YHVH acquired me (wisdom) at the beginning of His way, the first (‘reishit’) of His works of old.”*** This is saying that Elohim creates with wisdom.

From studying the Scriptures in 1 Corinthians 1: 24, we came to know the following: ***‘but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Messiah the power of Elohim and the wisdom of Elohim.’*** In addition 1 Corinthians 2: 7 & 8 tell us that the religious rulers of Yahshua’s age did not know that He was/is the wisdom

of Elohim, as follows: ***'but we speak Elohim's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which Elohim predestined before the ages to our glory; (8) the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Master of glory.'*** So we see that there was a reason why the religious leaders of that time (and even today) did not truly understand, who Yahshua was. If they did, they would not have crucified Him and we would even now be in our sin. Our Father YHVH blinded the minds of those Jewish leaders, so that He may have mercy on all, as we read in Romans 11: 32: ***'For Elohim has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all.'*** How then might you ask do we understand these truths? The answer is given in verses 9 & 10 of 1 Corinthians 2: ***'but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND which HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT ELOHIM HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."*** (10) ***For to us Elohim revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even depths of Elohim.'***

We find in the Psalms that wisdom has an additional association with 'reishit' in Genesis 1: 1, as we read in Psalm 111: 10: ***'The fear of Elohim is the beginning of wisdom.'*** If we have the proper fear of Elohim, He will give us understanding. However, my fellow believer, we need to handle this 'newly found' knowledge with proper fear and respect and have to be cautious with whom we share the same, as we read in Matthew 7: 6: ***"Do not give what is Set-apart to dogs, and do not throw your pearls (Elohim's truth) before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces."***

We read in Isaiah 45: 15: ***'Truly, Thou art an Elohim who hides Himself, O Elohim of Israel, Savior!'*** The underlined section in this verse, transliterated in the Hebrew reads: ***'elohey yisrael moshiya.'*** Do we fully realize what this is saying? It says that Elohim's identity is not known to all. He hides the fact that He is our Savior (or Messiah) from both houses of Israel. In Proverbs 25: 2 & 3 we read: ***'It is the esteem of Elohim to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.'*** We need to search out truth about Elohim, as we read in Deuteronomy 4: 29: ***"But from there you will seek YHVH your Elohim, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul."*** Scriptures claim that all existence rest on the 'word of Elohim', as we read in the first part of Psalm 33: 6: ***'By the word of YHVH the heavens were made.'*** Substitute the 'word' with 'wisdom' and we are back in Genesis 1: 1, which also calls to mind John 1: 1 - 3, where it is written: ***'In the beginning was the word, and the word was with Elohim, and the word was Elohim. (2) He was in the beginning with Elohim. (3) All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.'***

Yes, Yahshua is the Messiah, but what does that mean? In 1 John 4: 2 we read: ***"By this you know the Spirit of Elohim: every spirit that confesses that Yahshua Messiah has come in the flesh is from Elohim."*** Do you believe that Messiah came in the flesh? This is indeed a mystery, as we have seen quoted in paragraph 13 above, the answer of which is given in 1 Timothy 3: 16, as follows: ***'And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: Elohim who was revealed in the flesh (as we are told in John 1: 14), Was vindicated (justified) in the Spirit, Beheld by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.'*** We also read in Isaiah 7: 14 ***'Therefore YHVH Himself will give you a sign; Behold a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.'*** - meaning Elohim with us. Yes, brethren, Yahshua is Messiah, but He is also YHVH in the flesh. Do you now understand what it means to confess that Yahshua Messiah has come in the flesh? If you do then you will have no problem partaking of the Passover in the future, because then you will truly 'understand the Master's body', as we read in 1 Corinthians 11: 29 (KJV): ***'For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Master's body.'*** Yes it is YHVH who purchased us with His own blood, as we see confirmed in Acts 20: 28: ***"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Set-apart Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the ecclesia of Elohim which He purchased with His own blood."***

There are nevertheless some who do not fully understand this mystery. They claim that we (those) who believe in the Oneness of Elohim, and not that YHVH are two separate beings, are the anti-Messiah. They

usually quote the second part of 1 John 2: 22 to substantiate this claim, as follows: ***'This is the anti-Messiah, the one who denies the Father and the Son.'*** My fellow believer, we are definitely not the anti-Messiah, as we do not deny the Son of YHVH and as is recorded in the very next verse (1 John 2: 23): ***'Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.*** To try and prove their doctrine that YHVH are two separate beings, these believers often quote Genesis 19: 24, where it reads: ***'Then YHVH rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from YHVH out of heaven.'*** My answer to them is found in Deuteronomy 4: 39, as follows: ***"Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that YHVH, He is Elohim in heaven above and on earth below; there is no other."***

From the evidence given above, no one can deny that Yahshua is the Messiah, but also YHVH in the flesh. Do you fully realize what this means? It means that we who believe this, are exceedingly blessed, as we read in Luke 10: 21 to 24, as follows: ***'At that very time He rejoiced greatly in the Set-apart Spirit, and said, "I praise Thee, O Father, Master of Heaven and Earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and intelligent and didst reveal them to babes, Yes, Father, for thus it was well-pleasing in Thy sight. (22) All things have been handed over to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." (23) And turning to the disciples, He said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see. (24) for I say to you, that many prophets and kings wished to see the things which you see, and did not see them, and to hear the things which you hear, and did not hear them."***

Praise Yah!

Chapter 2: Coming out of Babylon.

I knew a man who taught me about 80% of the Scriptural truths that I know today. This man was an American who has been maligned by many people since his death, which occurred some 20 years ago. Some have even claimed that he will definitely not be in the kingdom of Elohim, because of the way he allegedly lived during his life time here on earth. My question to such people is: Do you have two or three eye witnesses to what you accuse this man of doing? If not, then stop spreading falsehoods about your neighbor and brother in the faith. A second question that needs answering is: Are you and I going to make it into the kingdom of Elohim?

I tell you fellow believers in Yahshua, unless we repent and return to Torah and unless we rectify our judgmental attitudes, not one of us will make it into the kingdom of Elohim. We are admonished about this very thing in James 4: 12, as follows: ***‘There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?’*** People have been deceived by the god of this world, namely Satan, to believe that he will throw those who do not make it into the kingdom of Elohim, into the lake of fire. However, from the Scriptures in Matthew 3: 11 & 12, we see in John the immerser’s words, that Yahshua will throw the chaff (unrepentant sinners, who are amongst true believers today, but who, because of hypocrisy, appear like genuine believers) into the lake of fire: ***“As for me, I immerse you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will immerse you with the Set-apart Spirit and fire. (12) And His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather his wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”***

The teacher that I mentioned at the beginning did not teach me about Tzitzit, nor about head-coverings for both men and woman. He did not teach circumcision for adult believers, nor did he teach me about the Oneness of Elohim or the Set-apart Names of YHVH and Yahshua. However, he taught me about the Sabbath day, the Feast Days of Elohim and Kosher foods. He started me in my walk with YHVH and I will remain ever thankful to him for that. He also taught me that if we do not grow spiritually from year to year, we are either standing still or backsliding. Ever since this man’s death we left the group that he started, because they have gone back (sliding) to Sunday worship. Most of their members do not worry about eating kosher foods any longer, and a large percentage of them, have gone back to the churches where they came from, before joining his group. However, we know that the gates of Hades (or the grave) shall not overpower the ecclesia of called out ones as promised in the second part of Matthew 16: 18, as follows: ***“and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.”*** In other words, not all Nazarene believers will have died out, by the time Yahshua returns one day. Since the virtual collapse of that group, we have continued on the same path, but have since come to believe in the Oneness of Elohim, using the Set-apart Names of YHVH and Yahshua and full Torah observance.

Despite that group’s return to the churches of the world, YHVH has continued calling people out of the false religious systems of the world. It seems that most of the modern day Two House Nazarene Israelite groups started around 1995, when the afore-mentioned group collapsed. They collapsed, because they did not want to accept the true Names of YHVH and Yahshua. I remember that they liked calling themselves the Church in Philadelphia. Is it not ironic that we read in Revelation 3; 7 & 8: ***“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is Set-apart, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.*** O yes, they preached Torah observance and believed in the Messiah (they called Him J*e*s*u*s*), but they definitely denied the Names of YHVH and Yahshua. It reminds me of the Scripture in Matthew 24: 14 which I quoted in a sermon a while back, as follows: ***“For many are called, but few are chosen.”*** If we are not interested to follow YHVH all the way, He will call someone else in our place.

The end-time restoration and the returning back from Babylon have started in all earnest. Ephraim being called by Father YHVH is turning back slowly but surely. However, the message that we are preaching today, is not easily accepted by those who are coming out. They are not finding it easy to go against the things they held near and dear for so long. They enjoyed going to Sunday services, to sooth their consciences for another week; To hear the minister trying to explain a single verse without really saying anything. They still believe that most people who do not believe like they do are going straight to hell, and that all true Christians, are going straight to heaven. O yes, we are all going to hell, meaning the grave – as all men must die once. They do not believe that the Kingdom of YHVH is coming down to earth. Yes, heaven is coming down to us; we are not going there, forever. We might go there for a while to be trained by Elohim, as may be seen in Revelation 15: 2 and the first part of verse 3, as follows: ***‘And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had come off victorious from the beast and from his image and from the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of Elohim. (3) And they sang the song of Moses the bond-servant of Elohim and the song of the Lamb.’***

Yahshua will rule us from Jerusalem for a thousand years. This is followed by the second resurrection and the great white throne judgment, after which everything not Set-apart, will be burnt up in the lake of fire. Then the Set-apart city, the New Jerusalem, will come down from heaven from Elohim and He will come and tabernacle with humanity, for ever. YHVH is calling a small group of people out of this world and the religious systems of this world, to become first fruits during the millennium rule of Yahshua our Messiah. There are many today who are sitting on the fence. They attend Sabbath services in small groups, but also go to Church on Sunday. However, all this is about to come to an end. We read in Micah 5: 3 & 4 ***‘Therefore, He will give them up until the time When she who is in labor has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brethren Will return to the sons of Israel. (4) And He will arise and shepherd His flock In the strength of YHVH, In the majesty of the name of YHVH His Elohim. And they will remain, Because at that time He will be great To the ends of the earth.’*** We also read about this in Romans 8: 19 – 23, as follows: ***‘For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons (and daughters) of Elohim. (20) For creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope (21) that the creation itself also will be set free from slavery to corruption into freedom of the glory of the children of Elohim. (22) For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. (23) And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for the adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.’*** This is talking about the time when Yahshua will rule the world from Jerusalem. However, those who are presently still in two minds, will soon, because of the coming great tribulation, change their minds. We read about this in Deuteronomy 4: 30, as follows: ***“When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days, you will return to YHVH your Elohim and listen to His voice.”*** The great tribulation or Jacob’s trouble occurs before Yahshua’s return and many of those who are currently lukewarm will return to YHVH because of it.

Yahshua will stay up in heaven, until the restoration of all things, as we read in Acts 3: 19 to 21 ***“Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of YHVH; (20) and that He may send Yahshua the Messiah appointed for you, (21) Whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which Elohim spoke by the mouth of His Set-apart prophets from ancient time.”*** The first fruits must come out of the Babylon (confusion) of false religion, and true worship must be re-introduced. Sun-worship must be abolished by the ones that YHVH has called out to become first fruits in His eternal kingdom. We need to overcome those sins which so beset us, if we truly want to become a kingdom of priests under Yahshua, in the kingdom of Elohim. We read this in the book of Revelation, in chapter 3: 21, as follows: ***“He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”***

We need to realize that only Yahshua our Messiah is able to lead us out of the wilderness of false religion. In John 15: 5 He warned as follows: ***“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him,***

he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing." Yahshua is the only one who can help us, according to His words recorded in John 14: 23 & 24 ***"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him. (24) He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me."*** As the image of YHVH, Yahshua only said what His Father wanted Him to say. In a final message to us in the book of Revelation, Yahshua admonished us to overcome a number of times, one of which we already read in chapter 3: 21. As Nazarene Israelites, overcoming should be one of the most important tasks in our lives. The doctrine which so many Christians, including Desmond Tutu proclaim publicly, i.e. 'all I have to do is believe', is in fact the fruit of the spirit of disobedience, which is in the world. We show our Father that we love Him, by doing or keeping His commandments. In James 2: 24 we read accordingly: ***'You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.'***

The conditions prevailing in our world today are pictured in Isaiah 24: 5 & 6, as follows: ***'The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant. (6) Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and those who live in it are held guilty. Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned and few men are left.'*** A second witness of this is given in Daniel 9: 11, as follows: ***"Indeed all Israel has transgressed Thy law and turned aside, not obeying Thy voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of Elohim, for we have sinned against Him."*** We have recently learnt from Rabbi Koniuchowsky that the word translated as 'curse' here is the word 'Allah' in Hebrew. This is essentially saying that because the inhabitants of the earth have violated the law of Moses, the curse has been poured out upon them. The curse of Islamic terrorism started during the early 1990's and is continuing even today. According to a recent paper by Rabbi Daniel Rendelman, the September 11, 2001 attack on America was the planning and scheming of Muslim leaders to conquer our western culture. In the same paper Rav. Rendelman asks that we also consider the words in Revelation 9: 11, stating the following: ***'They have a king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon (meaning destruction) and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon.'*** Satan will continue to escalate the curse of Islam throughout the world, until the whole world will be engulfed in a war. This is the war of Gog and Magog spoken about in Ezekiel 38.

We have not only broken the covenant of YHVH, but have been taught lies by our fore fathers, as may be read in Jeremiah 16 verse 19: ***'O YHVH, my strength and my stronghold, And my refuge in the day of distress, To thee the nations will come From the ends of the earth and say, "Our fathers have inherited nothing but falsehood, Futility and things of no profit."*** After the nation of Israel split into two separate kingdoms because of the sins of King Solomon, the Kingdom of Judah kept fairly close to YHVH, but its sister nation the Kingdom of Israel started keeping different pagan feast days, immediately after the split. They became like gentiles and were taken into captivity in the year 721CE, because of their idolatrous ways. The Assyrians took them out of Samaria and settled another people in their place. Samaria was the Capital of the ten tribes of Israel. Eventually the ten tribes were taken northwest into Europe, where some settled. The rest moved on into England and further on to the USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand.

The seed of the Israelites were spread throughout the world and can be found amongst virtually every nation in the world. The children of Abraham have indeed become a multitude of nations. However, they lost their identity because they forgot the commandments of YHVH and started keeping pagan holidays such as the day of the sun, Xmas and Easter, like the pagan nations amongst whom they lived. They are no longer the people of YHVH and do not know His name - another sign of His true people, as may be seen in the first part of Isaiah 52: 6, ***"Therefore My people shall know My name."*** Even though some know that Yahshua (or Jesus as they know the Messiah) died for their sins, they do not know His real name. They do not know that they are Israelites who need to keep the Torah commands of YHVH. In addition they worship a three-headed Almighty called God. This deception is Satan's way to keep these Israelites from knowing their ultimate human potential - to become sons of Elohim. Unless we repent and return to the Torah of YHVH, we will receive of the end time plagues already unleashed upon Babylon (our world confused by all the false

religions). We read in Revelation 18: 3 - 5, as follows: ***“For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.”*** (4) ***‘And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues; (5) for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and Elohim has remembered her iniquities.”’***

We need to proclaim the message of Elijah at this time, as may be read in Malachi 3: 4 – 6 ***“Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel. (5) Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of YHVH*** (the great tribulation). ***(6) And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.”*** The message of Elijah has to do with telling the world that our El (Elohim) is YHVH (or Yah). We see that we are called to do the work of Elijah, which involves restoring the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers. This means that fathers and children will have to reconcile their differences. But it also means that we need to teach our children about the faith of our fathers in the faith, namely, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and to return to Torah as we are admonished in verse 3 (of Malachi 4). This is the only way to get out of the Babylon of false religion being practiced in the world today and not partake of her plagues or the curse of Islam which has already been unleashed upon the world.

Chapter 3: Commitment.

Commitment is an attribute not easily found in modern day society. There are many couples today who live together without being married, because they are afraid to make a lasting commitment. When you are committed to someone, it means that you share your life with that person alone. It requires dedication and loyalty to remain committed to a single person for the rest of your life. However, this is the promise we make when we get married. It means that we will never cheat and that we share our existence with him/her only. In the workplace it means that you do your best at all times and that you don't share company information with outsiders. However, today there is a lack of commitment in almost every area of human life. There is a lack of commitment in schools, the workplace, in government as well as in religion. I am sure you have all heard people saying about their employer and yes even about their partner: 'If he wants loyalty, he should get a dog.' This means that they are in the relationship only to see what they can get out of it. In the work situation, it means that they are prepared to do only the minimum required of them, and only when they are being watched. It also means that they are prepared to share the trade secrets of their employer with others, if they stand to benefit from it financially. What it boils down to is that they cannot be trusted. It immediately calls to mind the saying: Who needs enemies if you have friends like that?

Nevertheless, the area that we will be talking about today has to do in the main, with religion. But because of the importance of what our belief system plays in our lives, it will also affect all of the other areas. When we were first called into the Nazarene Israelite faith, we were like young people in love. We studied as if there was not enough time in the day. We wanted to know everything there is to know about our newly found faith. However, with time the excitement wore off and we became less zealous. We started studying less and had more time to do other things again. It is almost like a young man when he meets a new girlfriend. Initially he spends many hours trying to please her, but with time he gets used to her and spends less time with her. This is when he loses his 'first love' or the initial enthusiasm that he had for his girlfriend. We see in the message to the ecclesia in Ephesus in Revelation 2: 1 – 5 that this has happened to this group, as follows: (1) ***"To the angel of the ecclesia in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:*** (2) ***'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot endure evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false;*** (3) ***and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary.*** (4) ***But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.*** (5) ***Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds that you did at first; or else I am coming to you, and will remove your lampstand out of its place – unless you repent."*** We need to repent and return to YHVH and serve Him again the way we used to do when we were first called. Even if we have the ability to test apostles to see if they are false, at this time, we need to repent and return to YHVH like a young man in love with his bride – zealous to find out more about YHVH and His plan of salvation for us and all mankind. My fellow believers the time is few and we need to spend much more time studying and praying, if we want to retain our position as first fruits unto YHVH.

Very soon now we will enter a time when the word of YHVH will not be readily available to us any longer. And even if we travel the world looking for it, it will not be found. We read an Amos 8: 11 – 12, where we are forewarned of such a time, as follows: (11) ***"Behold days are coming," declares YHVH Elohim, "When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of YHVH.*** (12) ***And people will stagger from sea to sea, And from the north even to the east; They will go to and fro to seek the word of YHVH, But they will not find it."*** My fellow believers there is no time like the present to seek YHVH our Elohim. We read about this in Isaiah 55: 6, as follows: ***'Seek YHVH while He may be found: Call upon Him while He is near.'*** The only way that we may find YHVH is by attending Sabbath services, by studying the Scriptures and through regular prayer. We also find Him through meditation and fellowshiping with likeminded believers.

As children we showed our parents that we loved them by being obedient to their teachings and instructions. We similarly show our Father YHVH that we love Him, by obeying His teachings (Torah). We will only be able to do this if we are deeply committed to Him, in order for us to put Him first in our lives. If we keep very close to YHVH, we read in Malachi 3: 16 – 18 that He will give us understanding to discern between the righteous and the wicked, as follows: (16) ***‘Then those who feared YHVH spoke to one another, and YHVH gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear YHVH and who esteem His name.*** (17) ***“And they will be Mine,” says YHVH of hosts, “on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.*** (18) ***So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves YHVH and who does not serve Him.”*** We will be able to tell the difference between the righteous and the unrighteous, all those claiming to serve YHVH and all the different beliefs and doctrines causing confusion today. If we are deeply committed to YHVH and His word, we will not be part of the confusion.

Fellow believers, if we make the word of YHVH, the Scriptures, our foundation, then we need not be part of the confusion that is happening in our Nazarene Israelite community. In our Master’s prayer recorded for us in John 17, Yahshua said that the word of YHVH is truth in verse 17, as follows: ***“Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.”*** The word of YHVH is found in the pages of the Scriptures. We need to develop a deep commitment and to see YHVH and Yahshua as the final authority in everything that we do and say. If we are fully committed to YHVH and His word, we will stand when others fall. If we make our foundation the word of YHVH, we will not be shaken: we will not be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, as we read in Ephesians 4: 14: ***‘As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.’***

Let’s at this point consider examples of believers who had a deep commitment for YHVH: Turning to the book of Daniel, we read in Chapter 3 the account of Daniel’s three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They were thrown into a fiery furnace because they refused to fall down and worship a false image. They were deeply committed to YHVH and were not prepared to compromise in any way. YHVH came first in their lives and His word (or Torah) was their foundation. They knew that the word of YHVH forbid that they bow down to idols as is recorded in Exodus 20: 4 & 5. In addition to their commitment to YHVH they had faith that He could save them from any situation, if He chooses to do so. Notice that YHVH did not save them from the fire; He saved them in the fire. They knew that even if they died in the fire, they will one day be resurrected, just as we do (as per 1 Corinthians 15: 12 -19). Another example of a believer, who had a deep commitment for YHVH, is that of our Father Abraham. We read the account where YHVH gave him a son by his wife Sarah. Next we read that YHVH tells him to go and offer Isaac his son, as a burnt offering. Abraham did not argue, but saddled his donkey and took Isaac his son with him. He then proceeded to chop wood and laid hold of Isaac, and bound him and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. It was when Abraham took a knife and was about to kill his son, that the angel of YHVH stopped him. Abraham did not withhold this ‘only’ son of his from YHVH. In Hebrews 11: 17 – 19 we read: ***‘By faith Abraham when he was tested, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; (18) it was he to whom it was said, “IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED.” (19) He considered that Elohim is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type.’***

Abraham knew that even if Isaac died, YHVH will resurrect him, as He promised Abraham that through Isaac his descendants will be named. Abraham was totally committed to YHVH and obeyed Him fully, as we read about YHVH telling Isaac in Genesis 26: 4 & 5, as follows: ***“And I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed: because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My Charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.”*** These believers trusted YHVH with their lives and were deeply committed to Him as their Creator and Savior. The question to each one of us: Are we similarly committed to YHVH our Elohim?

In the book of Acts in chapter 14: 19 – 23 we read where Rav Shaul was stoned, thrown out of the city and left for dead. How will we respond to a similar situation? After he recovered, he went back to the city and preached the good news again. Rav Shaul remembered Yahshua's commission to him in Acts 9: 1 - 9, to proclaim the good news before the gentiles and kings, and even to the children of Israel. Rav Shaul knew that this will result in a lot of suffering for him, but he was totally committed to Yahshua's commission to him. He knew that even if people took his life away, Yahshua could restore it to him again. Nothing could deter Rav Shaul from following his Master. He also knew that the salvation of people depended on his commitment, as may be read in 1 Corinthians 9: 15 – 19 & 23: ***'But I have used none of these things. And I am not writing these things that it may be done so in my case; for it would be better for me to die than have any man make my boast an empty one. (16) For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. (17) For if I do this voluntary, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me.(18) What then is my reward? That, when I preach the gospel, I may offer the gospel without charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. (19) For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. (23) And I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow partaker of it.'***

Do we have the kind of commitment and faith that these believers displayed? If we face beatings and threats on our lives, will we continue doing the work that YHVH has given us to do? We read in Revelation 3 that the Laodicean ecclesia was not totally committed any more. They became spiritually lazy and were self-assured of their righteousness. In verses 14 – 18 of Revelation 3, we read: ***"And to the angel of the ecclesia in Laodicea write: The Amein, the faithful and true witness, The Beginning of the creation of Elohim says this: (15) I know your deeds, that you are neither cold or hot; I would that you were cold or hot. (16) So because you are luke-warm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. (17) Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. (18) I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eyesalve to anoint your eyes, that you may see."***

To have a Laodicean attitude means that even if you were once zealous to do the work of Elohim, you have grown weary of well doing. You have become luke-warm in the way in which you pray and study. You are not as committed as you used to be and even though you know what the right thing to do is, you invariably compromise your high moral standards. You have become comfortable with the little that we know and believe that you are OK. It is at this point, where we need to realize that we are on shaky ground and pay attention to the warning given in 1 Corinthians 10: 12, as follows: ***"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."*** We saw in Revelation 3 that our Father YHVH is not interested in halfhearted attempts to please Him. Let us therefore make sure that we do not lose the crown of righteousness which Rav Shaul tells us about in 2 Timothy 4: 8, as follows: ***'In the future there is laid for me the crown of righteousness, which YHVH, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.'***

Ask yourself. Am I prepared to lose my place in the kingdom of Elohim, because of an indiscretion or a lack of commitment? If we fail to heed the call, YHVH warned that He will spit us out. It is vital for our salvation, that we repent and return to YHVH, as it is impossible to renew again to repentance, those who have fallen away, as is recorded in Hebrews 6: 4 – 12: ***'For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Set-apart Spirit, (5) and have tasted the good word of Elohim and the powers of the age to come, (6) and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of Elohim, and put Him to open shame. (7)For ground that drinks the rain which often falls upon it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from Elohim; (8)but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned. (9) But beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are***

speaking in this way. (10) For Elohim is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. (11) And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, (12) that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.'

Let us resolve to return to YHVH and His Torah and never be found lacking in commitment again. Let us pay attention to the words recorded in Revelation 3: 19 - 21, saying: ***"Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent. (20) Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me. (21) He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down My Father on His throne. (22) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the ecclesia."***

Chapter 4: Hatred and anger.

Hatred is a very destructive emotion which resulted in death and destruction throughout mankind's history. We know that hatred caused World War 2 and will eventually result in World War 3. We read a prophecy about the coming trouble in Ezekiel 21. We have often heard people say that World War 2 will look like a Sunday school picnic compared to the next world war. In verse 14 of Ezekiel 21 we read: ***"You therefore, son of man, prophesy, and clap your hands together; and let the sword be doubled the third time, the sword for the slain. It is the sword for the great one slain, which surrounds them."*** What is this talking about? It is talking about World War 3, and it is saying the armaments to be used during this coming war will be double as much as that used during the last world war.

Hate is defined as: To dislike greatly or intensely; to have a great aversion to; to detest. Hate is not always wrong, since it depends on who or what we hate. Hating sin enough to stop sinning is certainly not wrong. If we hate the sin and not the sinner, that is also fine. So long as we do not hate our fellow man. The reason why that is wrong is that it may lead to sin. Our Father YHWH created us in his image and by hating a fellow human being we are in effect hating Him. We are all different and when our Father calls us, He intends using our different character traits and/or talents to do our part in His work. It is very difficult for mathematically minded people to get along with artistic people. Yet both types of people are required to administer the world. We need both Engineers and Architects to build our infrastructure. We also need Artists and Interior Designers to beautify buildings and our homes.

There is an old adage stating that: birds of a feather flock together. We know that to be very true, since we only like to associate with people like ourselves. If you have ever been to an office social you will know what I mean. South Africa, like the United States of America is made up of many racial groups and cultures. However, in the USA it is not as evident as it is in South Africa, since they decided to have only one official language. Here in South Africa, we have eleven official languages. News on TV may be heard in many different languages. When we have office socials here in South Africa, you will see many little homogenous groups talking and drinking together. Those that stray from one group to another are usually seen as deserters by their peers. Not even the recent Rugby victory, where South Africa won the world cup, could get these different groups to fully unite. Yes, they were united, but in their own racial/language groups. The rugby bosses and politicians are already planning to ensure that the next Springbok team will be more representative of all the South African racial groups. As a country with a diverse civilization, I believe that that will be a mistake. The team should consist of the best players in the country, despite the ethnic group, to which they belong. I believe that the biggest mistake in our beloved country is that we have too many different languages. Why can't we have only one language like Namibia, another African country, where despite the many racial and cultural groups, they decided to use English as their official language? I believe that will be a factor that could unite us as a nation. Now people are known as Zulus, Xhosas, Afrikaners, Englishmen and many other groups. The business language of the world and indeed in large parts of South Africa is English. However, the problem in South Africa is that large parts of the different groups are not able to speak English properly or at all.

Most universities only present courses in English. Lecturers find it very difficult to mark student's papers, which are not fluent in English. It is not always easy for them to understand what a student is trying to say, since there are many cultural differences as well. With all these obvious differences, most people tend to prefer only those who are like themselves. It is for this reason that we have become an, us and them society. The people who talk like us; who have more or less the same cultural outlook and social standing as us, we regard as us, all the others are them. English speakers like us get along much better with people from the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the United States of America, than with fellow South Africans. At least we reason that we know what they are saying most of the time.

The reason why I over-emphasize the many differences that we have in South Africa, is that these differences are and were in the past the cause of many atrocities and murders in South Africa. Like our Father YHVH said to Cain after he murdered his brother Abel in Genesis 4: 7 ***“If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.”*** The problem with Cain was that he became jealous of his brother, because YHVH had regard for his brother’s offering and not for his. We know that Abel offered up a firstling of his flock to YHVH, whereas, Cain offered the fruit of his crops, but that it was not first fruits. From the Scripture quoted here, we understand that Cain must have been aware that, that was sinful. Jealousy is one of the emotions that lead to hatred and hatred combined with anger leads to murder. Like Cain and Abel, racial groups are often very jealous of one another and that leads to hatred and discrimination.

Jealousy is defined as: uneasiness from fear of being supplanted or replaced by a rival. Jealousy is present in homes, amongst siblings as much as it is amongst ethnic groups and nations. Human beings always want what other people have. We always want to have the best cars, homes; the most beautiful wives; the cleverest children, etc., etc. It is the same with nations and even language groups. This is one reason that we are warned, in James 4: 1 & 2, as follows: ***‘What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? (2) You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. And you are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.’*** We hate our brother for his talents and blessings and want what he has, so we take it from him by force.

During World War 2, Germany went to war because they became so jealous of the Jews in Germany, that they wanted to wipe them out as a race. The Germans knew that the Jews (in fact Israel, which includes the Jews) were the chosen race of YHVH our Elohim. Germans considered themselves as the ‘Master Race’ and were envious of the Jews and the rest is history. Japan went to war for raw materials and oil that belonged to their neighbors. Jews are even today one of the most hated nations in the world, because people are jealous of them being the chosen race of YHVH. The truth however, is that all Israel is the chosen people of YHVH, but because they have lost their identity, they are not even aware of it any longer. There were a number of times in history where our Jewish brothers were almost exterminated. That is one of the reasons why we as Nazarene Israel also keep the Jewish Feasts of Chanukah and Purim (the Feast of Esther). Think about it: If our Jewish brothers were destroyed during either the time of the Maccabees or the time of Esther, we might not have had our Jewish Messiah, to die for our sins.

We need to master or control our anger. We should also not walk around with hatred in our hearts. If we hate other races or ethnic groups and we are angered by such groups, we might not be able to control our anger any longer. Uncontrolled anger combined with hatred is a dangerous combination. It could result in road rage, which we have seen many times have resulted in murder, on South African roads. Uncontrolled anger destroys relationships and causes undue stress on those affected by it. How is it possible to manage our emotions, like anger, and road rage?

Be warned, if uncontrolled, these emotions can damage your reputation, your relationship with other people and your health. Anger like shock produces an adrenaline rush, which gives your body a fight-or flight response. This response is our bodies’ response to help us line up our resources to fight or escape immediate danger. A person in shock may for example get super strength when he or she sees their partner being trapped under a heavy object: I am sure we have all heard of people who lifted cars to free a trapped loved one. The same strength could also result from anger combined with hatred; it could give such an individual super strength whereby he or she could kill another person, without fully realizing it. That is why anger combined with hatred, is counterproductive in our society. Ask yourself the question: Would you like to be imprisoned for the rest of your life, for something that you did not intend to do? Physical force could be very useful in certain situations, but is very bad in other situations.

As I mentioned already, anger stimulates the secretion of adrenaline and in severe cases even cortisone into our blood streams. These hormones will mobilize our bodies to become super powerful; to breath better or to run faster over the short term, but becomes very destructive if the excitement is constant. These hormones increase the heart rate and blood pressure and may damage the linings of arteries. It also quickens the development of arteriosclerosis, which is in effect the buildup of plaque in the arteries that may lead to heart attacks or strokes. These hormones cause platelets circulating in the blood stream to become sticky, resulting in it to cling to damaged areas on the artery lining where they cluster together, thus stimulating the growth of plaque in the arteries. In addition they stimulate fat cells to empty into the bloodstream to give an instant energy burst. But when the fat is not destroyed, it is converted into cholesterol, suppressing the immune system, thus making us more susceptible to infection and illness. In addition, anger also has harmful psychological effects which affect our physical health. People who are under stress are usually those who are more likely to be angry; and people who are of a hostile nature (hot heads) are also more likely to smoke, drink (alcoholic beverages) and eat too much.

What is the answer to this problem? Have you ever talked to yourself, or do you think that only mental patients talk to themselves? We know and believe that YHVH our Elohim is One! Yet in Genesis 1: 26 we see that He is talking to Himself, as follows: ***'Then Elohim said: "let Us make man in Our Image, according to Our Likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*** If you thought to yourself, that sounds like YHVH talking to another being, you are wrong, because in verse 27 we see: ***'And Elohim created man in His own image, in the image of Elohim He created him; male and female He created them.'*** Yahshua himself is quoting a man who reasoned with himself in Luke 16: 1- 4, as follows: ***'Now He was also saying to the disciples, "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and this steward was reported to him as squandering his possessions. (2) And he called him and said to him, 'what is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.'*** (3) ***And the steward said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg. (4) I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the stewardship, they will receive me into their homes."*** This steward was planning a strategy by himself to protect his future source of income, in case his boss fired him from his job. So talking to yourself is something that we must have learnt from our Creator and it can therefore not be seen as madness or being wrong. Talking to yourself is one of the ways to resolve problems with anger: Reason logically with yourself, even knowing that anger does not normally respond well to logic. However, it will stop you from reacting without intention. Ask yourself whether the issue at hand is more important to me than being in the Kingdom of Elohim? Also remind yourself that you are only damaging yourself. Ask yourself, if getting angry will achieve the desired results? The key is to talk yourself out of the situation that causes you to become angry. Before you fly off the handle next time – say to yourself: stop! Breathe deeply and then start reasoning with yourself. Regularly meditate on this approach, as you never know when the next occasion will present itself for you to lose your cool.

Also reduce taking stimulants such as sweets, nicotine, caffeine, alcohol and other substances that stimulate your nervous system. Work on relationships by talking to people. Tell your partner, fellow worker or friend about the things that he or she does that upsets you. Look for ways to develop a spirit of trust and co-operation. Try and see things in a different perspective. Try implementing the golden rule – 'do unto others as you would like them to do unto you'. Become a listener and allow your partner or someone else to speak. When you are annoyed by a slow queue in the bank or supermarket, pick up a magazine or brochure and find something of interest to read – however, do not read trash.

Concentrate less on reasons for why other people are different to you. Try and avoid people who have totally different outlooks on life. Be careful of those who cause trouble. If your friend is a hothead, then his or her attitude might rub off on you. Avoid such people as far as is possible. We read in Proverbs 22: 24 & 25: ***'Do not associate with a man given in anger; or go with a hot-tempered man, (25) Lest you learn his***

ways, And find a snare for yourself.' This same advice applies to our brethren as we read in Romans 16: 17 & 18, as follows: ***'Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. (18) For such men are slaves, not to our Master Messiah but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.'***

Finally we must change for the better if we want to enter the kingdom of Elohim. In 1 Corinthians 6: 9 - 11 we read: ***'Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of Elohim? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of Elohim. And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Master Yahshua Messiah, and in the Spirit of Elohim.'***

Chapter 5: How easily are we deceived?

We read in Matthew 7: 15 -16 and 19 - 24 ***“Beware of false prophets, who come in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. (16) You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? (19) Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. (20) So then, you will know them by their fruits. (21) Not everyone who says to Me ‘Lord, Lord’, will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. (22) Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Master, Master, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles? (23) And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’ (24) Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock.”*** And who is the rock? We read the answer in 1 Corinthians 10: 4 where talking about our forefathers, the ancient Israelites, it reads: ***‘and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Messiah.’***

Matthew 7: 24 tell us to believe in and follow in Messiah’s footsteps. He is the rock of our salvation. We also read in John 15: 4 that unless we stay in Messiah we cannot bear fruit of ourselves, as follows: ***“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me.”*** We know from 1 Corinthians 1: 24, that Yahshua (the image of Elohim) is the power (and wisdom) of Elohim. In fact this is what He told His disciples before giving them the great commission, in Matthew 28: 18 - 20 ***‘And Yahshua came up and spoke to them saying, “All authority (power in the KJV) has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (19) Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, immersing them in the name (singular) of the Father and the Son and the Set-apart Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*** He was essentially saying that we should follow in His footsteps and teach those who follow us (new believers) what He taught us.

How then will we recognize false teachers? When someone comes to teach us we need to ask the following questions:

- Does he come in the name of YHVH? And;
- Does he keep Torah?

Speaking to all of us, but specifically to teachers of Torah, Rav Shaul in 2 Timothy 4: 1 – 5, says ***“I solemnly charge you in the presence of Elohim and of Messiah Yahshua, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: (2) preach the word; be ready in season and out of season (during the Feast Days of YHVH and other times); reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. (3) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; (4) and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths. (5) But you be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”***

In John 5: 39 & 40, 43 – 47 Yahshua said: ***“You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; (40) and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life. (43) I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another shall come in his own name you will receive him. (44) How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only Elohim?*** (The last two verses are saying that we accept the teachings of ‘clever’ ministers and teachers who teach their own doctrine, such as different ‘Feast Days’ based on their own calculations; that the Sabbath start at a different time; and that Yahshua did

² *“Lord, Lord,” could mean the false name ‘Lord’ used by Churchianity to refer to our Master, but in this case Yahshua was actually saying that we should not put His Name or Title (Master) to our lips if we do not keep His commandments known as Torah. After all He is the embodiment of Torah*

not partake of the Passover, but do not accept what Yahshua taught when He was on earth.) (45) ***Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope.*** (46) ***For if you believed Moses you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me.*** (47) ***But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?***” The last two verses were specifically addressed to the Jews of Yahshua’s day, but He is also saying to us that, we are even today required to believe in the Torah of Moses, and cannot change it as we like. Some like to joke with us and our Jewish brothers about believing in Moses, but are advised to refrain from such practices, as YHVH in his own words said to Moses in Exodus 19: 9 ***“Behold, I shall come to you in a thick cloud, in order that the people (Israel) may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe in you forever.”***

We can twist and turn as much as we want, but the Scriptures tell us that the Jews have the Oracles of YHVH. They preserved the Hebrew language, the Torah, including the Sabbath and annual Feast Days of YHVH for us – as well as the timing of these Set-apart Days. Yes, some of them did not believe, but their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of Elohim (as is recorded in Romans 3: 3 & 4). We see that YHVH is pleased with the Feast Days that they keep in Nahum 1: 15, as follows: ***‘Behold on the mountains the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace! “Celebrate your feasts, O Judah; Pay your vows. For never again will the wicked one pass through you; He is cut off completely.”’*** It is also very important that we make sure that we keep the Feast Days of YHVH at the correct times, as there is also a warning about this in Malachi 2:1 – 8 as follows: ***“And now, O Priests, this commandment is for you. If ye will not hear, and if ye will not take it to heart, to give esteem to My Name, said YHVH of hosts, “I shall send a curse upon you, and I shall curse your blessings, And indeed, I have cursed them, because you do not take it to heart. See, I shall rebuke your seed, and scatter dung before your faces, the dung of your festivals. And you shall be taken away with it. And you shall know that I have sent this covenant to you as being My covenant with Levi, said YHVH of Hosts. My covenant with him was life and peace, and I gave them to him, to fear. And he feared Me, and stood in awe of My Name. The Torah of truth was in his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found on his lips. He walked with Me in peace and straightness, and turned many away from crookedness. For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and they seek the Torah from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the covenant of Levi, said YHVH of Hosts. But you, you have turned from the way, you have caused many to stumble in the Torah. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi said YHVH of Hosts.”***

We need to make sure that we do not twist the Scriptures to suit our own agenda, as we read in 2 Timothy 2: 15 ***‘Be diligent (use your time to study) to present yourself approved to Elohim as workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.’*** In 2 Peter 2: 1 – 3 we read: ***‘But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.’*** (the word denying here is translated from the word ‘arneomai’ in Greek which also means ‘contradicting’ – this is in fact what these false teachers do to the words of Yahshua our Messiah: Paraphrased, in Matthew 23: 2 & 3 Yahshua said that the Pharisees (Orthodox Rabbis today) have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds. Some insist that Yahshua did not say that in the original Hebrew version of Matthew, but this has been refuted by a number of scholars³.) (2) ***And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned;*** (3) ***and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.’*** A second witness to people who contradict Yahshua is found in Jude 4, as follows: ***‘For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our Elohim into licentiousness (permissiveness) and deny (contradict) our only Master and Elohim, Yahshua Messiah.’***

³ In a copyright article written by Tim Hegg entitled: *Why Nehemia Gordon is Wrong About Matthew 23: 3 – A Response to Nehemia Gordon’s Article in Petah Tikvah (vol.23.1,Jan – Mar 2005)*

In 2 Thessalonians 2: 3 talking about the coming day of YHVH, we read: ***‘Let no man in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction.’*** Don’t let people lie to you about what is sin. Sin is the transgression of the law or lawlessness, as may be seen in 1 John 3: 4. As I said in a previous sermon, Yahshua being the mirror image of YHVH was a perfect example of how we should live, according to the will of YHVH. In Revelation 22: 13 & 14 Yahshua said: ***“Behold, I am coming quickly, and my reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”***(14) ***‘Blessed are those who wash their robes (keep the commandments of YHVH), that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter the gates into the city (the New Jerusalem).’***

Churchianity teaches heresies such as:

- “just believe and you will be saved.” – yet in James 2: 24 we read: ***‘You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.’*** O, yes we are saved by grace, but we prove our love to our Father, by keeping His commandments.
- ‘the commandments were nailed to the cross.’ – yet in Colossians 2: 14 we read: ***‘having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.’*** No, it was not the law that was nailed to the cross, but our certificate of debt, that was nailed to the cross.
- ‘YHVH knows what I mean when I call him by names like G-d.’ In Exodus 23: 13 we read: ***“Now concerning everything which I have said to you, be on your guard; and do not mention the name of other gods, nor let them be heard from your mouth.”*** Also see Isaiah 65: 11 and 52: 6.

In Romans 8: 2 we read: ***‘For the law of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yahshua has set you free from the law of sin and death.’*** Yes, Yahshua set us free from the penalty of sin, which is eternal death, but He definitely did not abolish the Torah. The Torah can never be abolished, as Rav Shaul in the first part of Romans 7: 14, states: ***‘For we know that the Law is spiritual.’*** Being made free from sin, we have become servants of righteousness, as we read in Romans 6: 18, ***‘and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.’*** How do we know that we are servants of righteousness? We read in 1 John 5: 2 & 3 ***‘By this we know that we love the children of Elohim, when we love Elohim and observe His commandments. For this is the love of Elohim, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.’*** Yes, my fellow believer, we establish the law through faith, as we read in Romans 3: 31 ***‘Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law.’*** In Galatians 4: 3 we read: ***‘So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world.*** This does not say ‘in bondage under the law’ or does it? When we read in the second part of Galatians 4: 9 ***‘turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?’*** It follows therefore that this does not mean the Torah, but the lifestyle that we followed before coming into the truth.

The Laws of Elohim and the penalty that we earn by breaking the Law, i.e. sin and death are two different things. We read accordingly in Galatians 3: 13 ***“Messiah redeemed us from the curse (penalty) of the Law having become a curse for us – for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.’”*** We have been made free from the penalty of the Law. Yes, the Torah of YHVH is for us and is to be used to bring us to life through Yahshua our Messiah. If we now read Colossians 2: 20 – 22 we understand it much better: ***‘If you have died with Messiah to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, (21) “Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!” (22) (which all refer to things destined to perish with the using) – in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?*** If we are immersed in Messiah Yahshua’s name, we have died with Him to the elementary principles of the world. In addition we see in verse 22 that verse 21 is not talking about the Torah, which tells us not to touch the unclean. Verse 21 is talking about manmade laws of some groups; who insist that we should only eat fish, instead of meat on Fridays and laws which forbid priests to marry.

We need to keep the commandments of YHVH and believe that Yahshua made us free from the penalty of breaking the commandments, by dying in our place on His execution tree. We read accordingly in Revelation 12: 17 ***'And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of Elohim and hold to the testimony of Yahshua.'*** We see a second witness to this in Revelation 14: 12, as follows: ***'Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of Elohim and their faith in Yahshua.'*** We further read in Romans 2: 13 and 23 ***'For not the hearers of the Law are just before Elohim, but the doers of the Law will be justified.'*** (23) ***'You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor Elohim?'*** Are those who teach people to keep false⁴ or pagan⁵ festivals, not dishonoring YHVH our Elohim?

Finally we read in Romans 7: 12 ***'So then, the Law is Set-apart, and the commandment is Set-apart and righteous and good.'*** Let us therefore strive to fulfill the requirements of the law, as is recorded in Romans 8: 4 ***'in order that the requirements of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.'*** Let us also with renewed zeal learn our doctrine, which should be in accordance with what Yahshua taught and with the Scriptures, so that we may not be easily deceived, as we read in Ephesians 4: 14 ***'As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.'***

⁴ Feast Days at the incorrect times as mentioned before in Malachi 2: 1-8.

⁵ Such as: Xmas and Easter.

Chapter 6: We are responsible to teach our children.

In Deuteronomy 6: 4 - 7 we read: ***“Hear, O Israel! YHVH is our Elohim, YHVH is one! (5) And you shall love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (6) And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; (7) and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”*** Parents and grandparents are responsible to teach their children about YHVH and His teachings (Torah). It is a responsibility that we need to take very seriously and many fail to do so. Children are a gift from YHVH, and we are responsible to rear them, in an Elohim fearing manner. As parents we are only allowed influence over our children, until they are old enough to get married and cleave to their marital partners. YHVH tells us in many Scriptures that we are responsible to teach our children, as we have also seen in the Scriptures quoted above.

We are responsible to ensure that our children learn to make a living and how to live. By teaching our children the Torah teachings of YHVH, we teach them how to live in accordance with His will. Our children learn to make a living from schools and universities, with some career guidance by us their parents. The point is that even if we turn our children over to government schools and universities, we remain responsible to ensure that they are taught correct values. We need to check what they are taught in schools and to counter any falsehood and teachings against Torah on a regular basis. We can never abrogate our responsibility and open the door of the minds of our children to be corrupted and be taught the way of the nations (heathen). In fact we are commanded not to learn the way of the nations in Jeremiah 10: 1 – 4: ***‘Hear the word which YHVH speaks to you, O house of Israel. (2) Thus says YHVH, “Do not learn the way of the nations, And do not be terrified by the signs of the heavens Although the nations are terrified by them; (3) For the customs of the peoples are delusion; Because it is wood cut from the forest, The work of the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool. (4) They decorate it with silver and gold; They fasten it with nails and hammers So that it will not stumble.”’*** We are entering one of those seasons of the year when this very thing is about to take place. Our shopping malls will soon be transformed into a so-called ‘wonder land’ made up to entice people to overspend their budgets, on gifts for everyone else, but the one whose birthday they claim to keep. This is also the time of the year during which more human beings are killed in road accidents, due to drunkenness, than any other time of the year. In addition, the confusion of keeping this pagan festival and singing false carols in celebration of the so-called birthday of Yahshua is perpetuating the lie that people tell their children every year.

Did you know that as part of ‘religious instruction’ called life skills, the facts about most religions as well as radical environmentalism, including tree worship are being taught in government schools these days? They are being taught about all the different religions practiced throughout the world. The reason for this is that they may make up their own minds about which religion they want to follow when they leave your home one day. Whereas, South African schools used to be based on Christian principles, which we know contain a number of falsehoods, that we are able to refute fairly easily, our children are now being led into total spiritual darkness. These schools have a very powerful influence on the beliefs and attitudes of our children. This is perhaps why many children and even parents believe in and exalt Gaia: The belief that Gaia or the mother of us all is the earth and the sun is our father. The grandfather is the Creator who gave life to all things (very true). Our brothers are the beasts and the trees and our sisters are the birds. We are the children of the earth and should not harm it in any way, nor offend the sun by not greeting it every morning. This as you can see, even though it contains one truth, is pagan to the core. The point is: we remain responsible for the education that our children receive.

Our children are taught the prayers and doctrines of most of the religions of the world, in public schools – so don’t be surprised when they choose to become Muslims, Hindus or even worse one day. Parents and grandparents need to do everything in their power to counteract the false information being taught our children. Who is behind all of this anyway? The Department of Education for one: They are completely against Christianity and Judaism. We, therefore being of a Nazarene Jewish faith, that is in essence no

different from our Jewish brothers, but for the fact that we also believe in Yahshua, will not go down well with the people in authority today. Another major culprit is the United Nations. No other organization is doing more to promote radical environmentalism and both anti-Semitism and anti-Christianity than they are. However, we know that ultimately Satan is responsible for all the deception that is going on in the world.

What these people do not understand is that by doing what they are doing, they are cursing Israel (both houses) and we know that by doing so, they are cursing themselves and our country. This is perhaps the reason why we are seeing the ever increasing deterioration of our beloved country. In addition, because of our national sins, YHVH has decreed that we will wax worse and worse. We read about that in 2 Timothy 3: 13, as follows: ***'But evil men and imposters will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.'*** This is telling us that there are even people in our community of Nazarene Israelites, who are trying to mislead us: to keep the Feast Days of YHVH at different times – essentially implying that we are not keeping the true Feast Days of YHVH any longer, but that of a man; and to keep the Sabbath at different times – which also does not make it the true Sabbath any longer. In verse 14 and 15 of 2 Timothy 3, we are admonished, as follows: ***'You however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them; (15) and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Messiah Yahshua.'***

We also read about the type of people who are in leading positions, because of the sins of our day in Daniel 4: 17: ***"This sentence is by the decree of the angelic watchers, And the decision is a command of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, And bestows it on whom He wishes, And sets over it the lowliest of men."*** That means that we cannot look forward to any improvement in the near future. We need to continually check what our children are being taught and make corrections where necessary. We also need to make sure that we teach them why we believe the things we do, if we want to make sure that they are not deceived.

We need to remember that a better day is coming. We need to tell our children about the soon coming kingdom of Elohim, when everyone alive will obey the Torah of YHVH. There will not be people deceived by Satan any longer, as he will be under lock and key in the abyss for a thousand years, as may be read in Revelation 20: 1 – 3, as follows: ***'And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. (2) And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, (3) and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.'*** That does not leave us with much room for improvement for the present time and immediate future. The best course of action at this time is, if at all possible, to remove your children from the influences of public schools, by teaching them yourself.

The Ten Commandments, now scorned and generally ignored, will be eagerly sought after, during the millennium rule of our Master Yahshua Messiah. There will no longer be false worship and teachers being harassed for teaching Scriptural truths. There will also not be people who are fired from their jobs because they teach against homosexual practices from the Scriptures. We do not know when that day will come, but we do know that YHVH is faithful to His word and that He will soon send Yahshua back to earth to set up the kingdom of Elohim. Those who died in Messiah will be resurrected (or changed if still living), as Spirit-beings to rule with Him. This might sound like wishful thinking to some, but that is what the Scriptures tell me. Yahshua said of little children, in Mark 10: 13 & 14 ***'And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. (14) But when Yahshua saw this, He was indignant (not pleased) and said to them, "permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of Elohim belongs to such as these."*** Those who mistreat our children by teaching lies will have to truly repent of such actions, or be condemned to become ashes under the feet of the righteous during in the great white throne judgment.

Chapter 7: Integrity.

Note: Many years ago we attended the Feast of Tabernacles with another group in the Western Cape. I recall hearing one of the best sermons that I heard in many years. The sermon made a great impact on me and I thought it a vital element in our preparation for the coming kingdom of Elohim. Herewith, my version of the sermon to the best that I am able to recall.

What is the most valuable thing that you possess? Is it your house, your car or any other physical thing? To people who are concerned with physical things, these might be their most valuable possessions, but we who profess to follow Yahshua should think carefully. We cannot take these possessions with us when we die – so it will have no value in the kingdom of Elohim. We need to ask ourselves, what is YHVH looking for in potential first fruits? We read in the second part of verse 2 of Isaiah 66 YHVH saying: ***“But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite (repentant) of spirit, and who trembles at My word.”*** In 1 Kings 9: 4 YHVH spoke to Solomon saying: ***“And as for you, if you will walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you and will keep My statutes and My ordinances, then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, just as I promised to your father David, saying, You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.”*** This tells us that King David walked before YHVH in integrity of heart.

We see here that one of the things that YHVH requires of a king is integrity. Integrity is one of the facets of our character which nobody can take away from us. People may be able to steal your car and repossess your house, but not so with integrity. Integrity means that when you make a commitment, such as giving someone your word – you stick to it, no matter what. It means - let your yes be yes, and your no be no. YHVH wants to see if we will keep to the commitments that we make. Marriage is one such commitment whereby we are tested during this life time. YHVH does not want us to take advantage of other people.

We notice from verse 3 in Job chapter 2 that Job was also strong in his integrity: ***‘And YHVH said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on earth, a blameless and upright man fearing Elohim and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without cause.”’*** YHVH can work with us as long as we are honest with Him. Being honest when you are blameless is easy, but if you are guilty it is not that easy. Our integrity is really tested by Elohim when we are wrong.

In Psalm 25: 21 David wrote: ***‘Let integrity and uprightness preserve me.’*** In Psalm 26: 1-2 David makes the following statement: ***‘Vindicate me, O YHVH, for I have walked in my integrity; And I have trusted in YHVH without wavering. Examine me, O YHVH, and try me; Test my mind and my heart.’*** This is a very bold statement made by David. Ask yourself: Can I do that? The book of Proverbs has a lot to say about integrity: In Proverbs 11: 3 we read: ***‘The integrity of the upright will guide them, But the falseness of the treacherous will destroy them.’*** In Proverbs 19: 1 we read: ***‘Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity.’*** In Proverbs 2: 6 & 7 we read: ***‘For YHVH gives wisdom; From His mouth comes knowledge and understanding. He stores up wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity.’*** Wow, this is telling us that YHVH will be our shield, if we walk in integrity.

The opposite of integrity is dishonesty or deceit. It is very important to YHVH that there is no deceit (or guile) in us. We read accordingly in Psalm 32: 2: ***‘How blessed is the man to whom YHVH does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit!’*** We read in John 1: 46 & 47 ***‘And Nathanael said to him, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” Yahshua saw Natanael coming to Him and said to him, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!”*** If we want to be part of the first fruits, then we need to repent and change. Deception or guile cannot be part of our characters, if we want to be part of the 144, 000 first fruits, as is recorded in the second part of verse 4 and 5 of Revelation 14: ***‘These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased***

from among men as first fruits to Elohim and to the Lamb. And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.’ Guile or deception cannot be part of our characters if we want to make it into the Kingdom of Elohim. He can only work with us, if there is no deception in us.

The apostle Peter admonished those who want to be part of the royal priesthood of Elohim in 1 Peter 2: 1 – 5 as follows: ***‘Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.***’ In Matthew 23: 25 Yahshua said: ***“Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence.”*** Hypocrites as we know are people who say something, without actually doing it. They are pretenders who want to look good, whilst not always doing so. Actions are on the outside of the cup and motivations (how we think) are what are on the inside? If we clean up our wrong way of thinking, the whole cup will be clean any way. This is better explained in James 4: 17 as follows: ***‘Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.’***

Once YHVH reveals truth to us (and we know it is right) – He requires that we do it. YHVH is not concerned with us being 100% correct at all times – He will reveal more truth to us, if we do and obey what we already know and understand. We do however need to use wisdom when dealing with devious circumstances, as we read in Luke 16: 10 & 11 ***“He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. If therefore you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon, who will entrust the true riches to you?”*** Big test involves small issues, as we read in James 2: 10 as follows: ***‘For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.’*** It was only one piece of fruit that caused Adam and Eve to fail – did they fully realize the magnitude in the test? Was it simply a piece of fruit – or disobedience to YHVH our Elohim?

The tests that YHVH gives us, might at times seem very small, but we need to realize the impact of such tests on our lives. Do you cheat on your tax return; when no one is able to verify it, such as claiming more miles than what you actually traveled? Breaking the Sabbath by doing only a small thing that can wait until well after sunset is another example. Satan does not see our motivation, or the inside of the cup – he sees the outside of the cup, i.e. what looks good. We see in Job 1: 8 ***‘And YHVH said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing Elohim and turning away from evil.”’*** Like Job we are aware of those sins that we do when no one knows and sees us, i.e. the one mentioned above regarding our Sabbath observance. In Job 40: 4 (in the KJV) we see Job owning up as follows: ***‘Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.’*** In Job 42: 6 we see that Job repents – once he started focusing on the inside of the cup, as follows: ***‘Therefore I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes.’*** Let us also consider the inside of our cups and let us like Job repent in dust and ashes.

In Romans 12: 1 & 2 we read: ***‘I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of Elohim, to present your bodies a living and Set-apart sacrifice, acceptable to Elohim, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of Elohim is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.’*** This renewing of the mind refers to us cleaning up our minds – the way we think; where our deceitfulness lies. This is the area where we decide to cheat on our tax return form, or do something else which we consider as only ‘a small sin’. Careful Brethren, it was because of a seemingly small thing that Adam and Eve failed their test! In Romans 7: 6 we read: ***‘so that we serve in newness of Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.’*** The phrase ‘serve in newness of spirit’ essentially means that we need to focus on what is right in the eyes of YHVH.

We need to focus on cleaning the inside of the cup, as it says in the last part of Philippians 3: 8 and 9 ***‘and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Messiah and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Messiah, the***

righteousness which comes from Elohim on the basis of faith.' We need to repent but as watchmen, also warn our brethren, as we read in Ezekiel 3: 20 & 21 ***"Again, when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I place an obstacle before him, he shall die; since you have not warned him, he shall die in his sin, and his righteous deeds which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. However, if you have warned the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; and you have delivered yourself."***

We must change and not turn back as we read in Ezekiel 18: 24 ***"But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that a wicked man does, will he live? All his righteous deeds which he has done will not be remembered for his treachery which he has committed and his sin which he has committed; for them he will die."*** The inside integrity is important and has to remain correct, as we see in Ezekiel 33: 13 ***"When I say to a righteous he will surely live, and he so trusts in his righteousness that he commits iniquity, none of his righteous deeds will be remembered; but in that same iniquity of his which he has committed he will die."***

We have seen that integrity is one of the character traits that is far more important than all our earthly possessions. It is something which moth or rust cannot destroy and if we repent and maintain our integrity, it may very well be our assurance to a position in the Kingdom of Elohim.

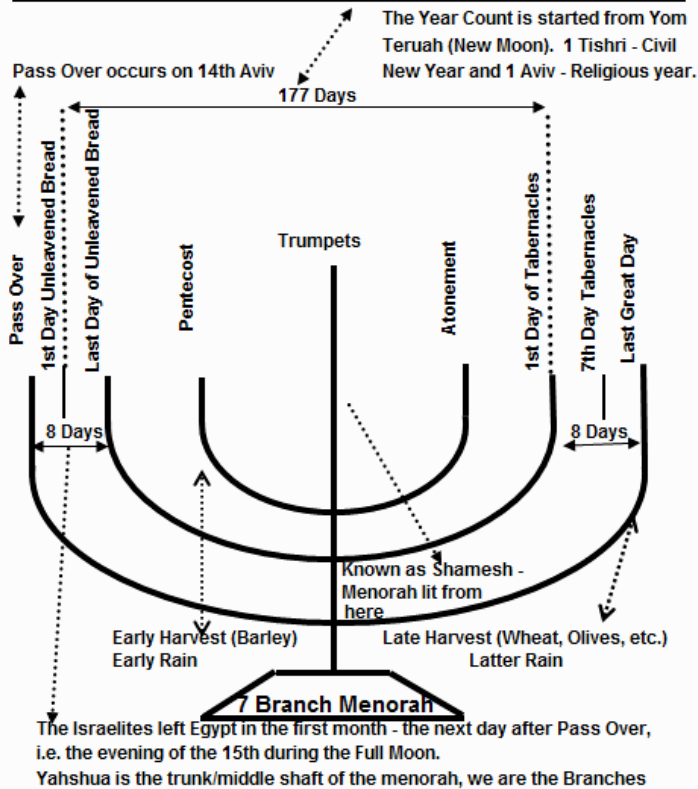
Chapter 8: Is there more than one day of Salvation?

Most of us are aware of the fact that YHVH is dealing with humanity over a 7000-year period. During the first 6000 years, YHVH is allowing humanity to experiment with different forms of government, culture, education and religion. YHVH is allowing us to learn that by living life free of His leadership only leads to failure. This sounds unfair, but the good news is that YHVH wants everyone that He has ever created to be in His family one day. As seen in 1Timothy 2: 4, He desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. However, it must also be understood that no one can come to Yahshua unless the Father who sent Him draws him - See John 6: 44. YHVH does not want to force us to be saved. He gave us free moral agency allowing us, once called, to come to HIM out of our own free will. However, to become sons and daughters of YHVH takes more than just joining the local church on the street corner. It also takes more than just "*accepting Jesus*" in some evangelical revival meeting filled with emotion. We need to fully surrender our lives to our heavenly Father by means of a personal relationship with Yahshua the Messiah. We need to follow in the footsteps of Yahshua and learn to keep the Torah Commandments to the best of our ability, with the help of the Set-apart Spirit. Yahshua Himself said in John 10: 1 - 2: ***"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. (2) But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep."***

How then would YHVH succeed to make for Himself a family of sons and daughters, with a perfect character like His own? YHVH our Elohim's plan of salvation for all mankind gives us the answer. Sinners, meaning all of mankind, would be redeemed at a price, of greater value than the value of the lives of all humankind put together. The price was as high as the life of our Creator himself. For this reason we read of Zechariah's prophecy in Luke 1: 68 ***"Blessed be YHVH the Elohim of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people."*** YHVH our Elohim's plan of salvation for all mankind tells us that mankind still has the potential of becoming sons of Elohim, as Yahshua the visible image of the invisible Elohim, died for us and was the first 'human' to be resurrected as a Spirit Being. He made it possible for us to go through the same process to be born again. YHVH died as the 'man' Yahshua, and was resurrected, to give us a second chance. Almighty YHVH did all this by Himself - without any elohim besides him. This is in line with what we read in Psalm 49: 7 ***"No man can by any means redeem his brother, Or give to Elohim a ransom for him."*** and in Psalm 49: 15 ***"But Elohim will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol; For He will receive me."***

The feast days that we as Nazarene Israelites are commanded to keep, picture the plan of salvation of YHVH for all mankind. In Leviticus 23: 1 & 2 we read: ***"YHVH spoke again to Moses saying: (2) "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, Elohim's appointed times which you shall proclaim as Set-apart convocations - My appointed times are these.""*** These days were given to Israel, even though most other religions think that these are the feast days of the Jews only, YHVH says in Leviticus 23: 4 that ***"These are appointed times of YHVH, Set-apart convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them."*** The Feast Days of YHVH are overlaid in the picture of a Menorah shown on the next page:

The Genius of the Hebrew Calendar - Agricultural Based Calendar



We read in Colossians 2:16 -17: 'Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day (17) things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Messiah.' We keep the Feast Days of YHVH as a shadow of things to come. Let us consider each of the Feast Days in turn:

Passover: YHVH displayed His power to deliver Israel from slavery in Egypt by a series of plagues. He told the Israelites that on the night of the Passover, He would kill all the firstborn of Egypt to convince Pharaoh to let the Israelites go from slavery. The firstborn of Israel would be protected if the sign of the blood of a lamb was seen on the doorposts of their houses. YHVH said that the Passover should be a memorial, which they shall keep as a feast to HIM throughout their generations. This pointed forward to Yahshua's sacrifice to pay the penalty of death that we have incurred by our law-

breaking, as the lamb of YHVH. We partake of the Unleavened Bread and Wine that represents His broken and bloodied body, and wash one another's feet during the annual Passover (John 13:1-15). We keep Passover in remembrance of Yahshua's death in the evening of the 14th Aviv, the night during which He was betrayed, according to 1 Corinthians 11: 23 - 26.

Days of Unleavened Bread: The First Day of Unleavened bread is the first annual Set-apart day or Sabbath of YHVH. Every year that the Israelites kept the days of unleavened bread they were and are still reminded that YHVH delivered them from Egypt. The Israelites coming out of Egypt foreshadows us coming out of a life of habitual willful sin. Partaking of unleavened bread for seven days in our case means coming out of sin completely – seven meaning complete. We gladly get rid of the leaven in our houses for seven days to remind us of cleansing ourselves of false doctrine, which leads to sin. The wave sheaf, the first fruits of the harvest, was waved on the day after the first annual Sabbath. We eat unleavened bread for seven days, from the 15th through the 21st of Aviv; the 15th and the 21st being annual Sabbaths.

Feast of Weeks (Pentecost): This is the day on which the Torah was given to Israel at Mount Sinai. It is also the day upon which the Holy Spirit was given, as recorded in Acts 2, so that we may keep the Torah with a Spiritual intent. We start counting 50 days after the First Day of Unleavened bread to arrive at Pentecost. It is at the time of the first small harvest of barley in Israel. Romans 8: 29 speak of Yahshua Messiah as the *"firstborn of many brethren"*. We who are called now are also considered to be a type of first fruits. We read in James 1: 18: *"In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures."* It points to the initial harvest of souls, a kind of first fruits unto YHVH, those to be resurrected (or changed) at the return of Messiah.

Feast of Trumpets: The Feast of Trumpets begins at the new moon on the seventh month and is a Set-apart convocation. We look forward with eager anticipation to the return of Yahshua the Messiah, for he will return at the sound of the last trumpet and the shout of the archangel. The blowing of trumpets was also used to call Israel to assemble together to prepare for a journey or for war. When Yahshua our Messiah

returns to the Mount of Olives, the nations of the earth will gather together to fight against Him. Satan has deceived the whole world (Revelation 12: 9) and they will try to destroy the Messiah at His return. Satan will influence the nations to fight against Yahshua Messiah at His return. The feast of Trumpets also signals the first resurrection of the dead in Messiah. Paul wrote about this in 1 Corinthians 15: 21-23

Day of Atonement: The Tenth day of the Seventh Month is a time of fasting, "afflicting our souls," not eating or drinking for the 24-hour period from evening of the 9th day until evening of the 10th day. It pictures our sins being covered, reconciliation with YHVH, and the wedding of Yahshua, the Son of YHVH, to His bride, the Assembly, who has made herself pure and ready. It also pictures the putting away of Satan for the duration of the millennium rule of Messiah (see Revelation 20: 1 & 2).

Feast of Tabernacles: Once Satan has been bound hand and foot and thrown into the bottomless pit, the thousand-year reign of Yahshua will commence from Jerusalem. During Yahshua's thousand-year rule from Jerusalem, He will restore all things to their former glory. Those of us, who are first fruits and will be part of the first resurrection, will serve under Yahshua as kings and priests, assisting Him in the restoration of all things.

Last Great Day: The "8th day of the Feast," the day following the Feast of Tabernacles, is the last High day of the year. It symbolizes the Great White Throne Judgment of Revelation 20, the Final Judgment, and the Latter Harvest, of those not being called, during this time. YHVH our Elohim's spiritual plan of salvation is shown in the physical harvest season festivals that He gave to ancient Israel. We have seen previously in 1 Timothy 2: 4, that YHVH desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. So what will happen to the millions who have never known the plan of salvation of YHVH for mankind? We can read what happens to these people in the first part of Revelation 20 verse 5, as follows: ***'The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed.'*** In verse 11 to 12 we read: ***"And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds."***

This describes a time in history during which all people who ever lived will come to realize the reason for being born. The Scriptures will be opened to their understanding at this time. This will be similar to when Yahshua in Luke 24: 45 opened His Disciple's minds to understanding the Scriptures. (Yahshua only opened his disciple's minds to the scriptures after His resurrection. Are our minds opened to it yet?) These people will then have their first opportunity to understand and know the way of life of YHVH. They will be given a chance to make an informed decision as to whether they want to repent of their past sins, or not. Their 'day of salvation', their period of judgment will begin at that time. In Isaiah 65: 20 we see that this period will last for one hundred years: ***"No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Shall be thought accursed."*** There will be no premature deaths during this period, and those who repent and overcome during this period of time, the 100 years, will be blessed with eternal life. They will also be given the opportunity to accept Yahshua as their Master and Savior, or reject His way of life. Eternal life will be offered to the entire multitude who ever lived. Those who accept Yahshua as their Savior will be immersed into His saving name. However, there might be some that will never accept the way of life of YHVH. Their fate is, to be burned up once and for all. They will not be tormented forever. Only spiritual beings such as Satan and his demons have that fate facing them. Human beings who are made from flesh and blood will burn until they are turned to ashes. The Last Great Day pictures the fact that our Father YHVH will give all these millions of people a chance to be judged, only after they have learnt the truth about HIM.

At this point I hear many disagreeing and saying: We concur with you up to the Feast of Tabernacles, but where do you get the rest from? Are you making it up?

No, I am not! Therefore for clarity purposes, let us backtrack a bit. You all agree that YHVH is at this time calling a group of people, to be kings and priest under Yahshua and to rule with Him on earth, during the millennium. YHVH calls us (John 6: 44) and Yahshua is the one who does the choosing. We read in the last part of Revelation 1: 5 & 6 ***'To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, (6) and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His Elohim and Father; to Him be the esteem and the dominion forever and ever, Amen.'*** To be a king and a priest means that we will have the opportunity, if we make it, to teach others YHVH our Elohim's way of life. We are presently in training, learning to overcome our carnal nature, Satan and the world, by the indwelling of the Set-apart Spirit in us. If we make it into the first resurrection, we will become first fruits unto YHVH. We will be made Spirit beings as those who are in the first resurrection. We read in Revelation 20: 6 ***'Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests to Elohim and of Messiah and will reign with Him for a thousand years.'*** Yahshua warned that it will take sacrifice and forsaking families, relatives (see Matthew 10: 37) as well as the world and the pleasures therein, when we are called. Are we willing to offer up our lives to take up the offer that YHVH extends to us? To sacrifice means to give up the things we value; to deny yourself something you would like to have, because you are seeking the kingdom of Elohim. Even though we may forfeit worldly pleasure now, eternal joy awaits us.

We are now called to be first fruits unto YHVH, as we have already read in James 1: 18. Yahshua was the first of the first fruits, the first of many brethren (as per Romans 8: 29). Yahshua is the image of the invisible Elohim, the first-born of all creation (Colossians 1:15). We, who have truly repented and have accepted His sacrifice to atone for our sins, are now His Spirit-begotten brethren, and when He returns, we will be Spirit-born into His Kingdom. First fruits are that part of a crop that is harvested first, around the Feast of First Fruits (Pentecost). The idea of us becoming first fruits, imply that there will also be second fruits. The second fruits are usually harvested after the Feast of Sukkoth, in Israel. This is when wheat, olives and the rest of the produce are harvested in the land of Israel.

It is obvious that not everyone is now being called. Billions and billions of people have been born, lived and died, without once ever hearing the Name of Yahshua their Savior, let alone obeying Him. Not even all those who heard the Savior Himself speak were being called at that time. In fact YHVH does not want to save all at this time. We read in Mark 4: 9 – 12 ***'And He (Yahshua) was saying, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (10) And as soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, began asking Him about the parables. (11) And He was saying to them, "To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of Elohim; but those who are outside get everything in parables, (12) in order that while seeing they may see and not perceive; and while hearing, they may hear and not understand lest they return and be forgiven.'"*** This is specific language that is hard to be misunderstood. Either their time had not yet come, or Yahshua was a respecter of persons, which we know is contrary to what is recorded in Acts 10: 34. Do you think the Savior would have spoken in a way that they could not understand him, if He knew that it would have doomed them to be lost forever? Are they hopelessly lost?

Let's read a few more related scriptures: In John 12: 37 – 40 we read: ***'But though he had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him; (38) that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, "YHVH, who has believed our report? and to whom has the arm of YHVH been revealed?" (39) For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, (40) "He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; lest they see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and be converted, and I heal them.'"*** This is a hard saying to some, especially in light of what we read in 2 Peter 3: 9: ***'YHVH is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.'***

This seems like a contradiction, at first glance. How could YHVH purposely blind some, and at the same time not be willing that any should perish? We must also not forget that a large number of the ones spoken about here are already dead and buried. In Romans 10: 1 - 3 we read: ***'Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to Elohim for them (Israel) is for their salvation. (2) For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for Elohim, but not in accordance with knowledge. (3) For not knowing about Elohim's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of Elohim.'*** However, in the first part of Romans 11: 1 we read: ***'I say then, Elohim has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be?'*** We continue in verse 5: ***'In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to Elohim's gracious choice.'*** We, the ones being called now, are that remnant. We continue in verse 7, as follows: ***'What then? That which Israel is seeking for, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened.'*** Then on to verse 11 and 12, reading: ***'I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. (12) Now if their transgression be riches for the world and their failure be riches for the gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!'*** We make our Jewish brother jealous by keeping the Feast Days of YHVH, like they do.

Continuing in verse 17 we read: ***'But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree.'*** And in verse 23: ***'And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for Elohim is able to graft them in again.'*** If most of them are already dead, when will they 'not continue in their unbelief' and when will they be grafted in? We know that this will only happen after their resurrection. We read accordingly in Romans 11:25 - 26, ***'For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation; that a partial hardening has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; (26) and thus all Israel will be saved*** (even those who now think they are Gentiles): ***just as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob."*** We read about our Father's mercy in verses 32 & 33, as follows: ***'For Elohim has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all. (33) Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of Elohim! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!'***

Yahshua explained about a time during which people from all generations will be judged at the same time in Matthew 11: 20 – 24 as follows: ***'Then He began to reproach the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. (21) "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. (22) Nevertheless I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the Day of Judgment, than for you. And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You shall descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom, which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. (24) Nevertheless I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the Day of Judgment, than for you."*** These people from ancient times will respond once they have a genuine opportunity to understand the Scriptures. Even the perverts of Sodom will find it tolerable in the Day of Judgment, compared to those in Capernaum, who personally knew Yahshua and rejected Him. The reason is that these ancient peoples – sinful as they were – had no knowledge of the true Elohim and His Torah. Messiah only appeared a number of years after them and they did not know Him or His Saving Name. Nevertheless we read in Acts 4: 11 & 12: ***"He (Yahshua) is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the very cornerstone*** (upon which the ecclesia of YHVH is build). ***(12) And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."***

However, we read in Isaiah 25: 7 - 8 ***'And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations. (8) He will swallow up death for all time, And YHVH Elohim will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For YHVH has spoken.'*** When will that veil be destroyed? When will death be swallowed up?

After the Day of Judgment of course! The Day of Judgment for all the billions who lived over the past centuries will only come after the Millennial rule of Yahshua Messiah. We see that these people who were blinded in the past will have the veil, which is stretched over them, removed. Make no mistake: If these untold billions of formerly blinded people are merely judged by their works, many of them were thieves, prostitutes, dictators and false prophets will all perish in the lake of fire. They did not ever repent and were not immersed as we are taught to do in Acts 2: 38. They did not study the Scriptures to grow in grace and knowledge, as we are taught in 2 Peter 3: 18.

However, do not be mistaken. The second resurrection is the resurrection of the wicked and the unsaved dead. YHVH our Elohim does not have double standards – the countless unsaved billions deserve to have the same chance that we are having. Yes, they will only be judged on what they did, after they learn about the Truth of YHVH our Elohim. Yet, numerous theologians and ministers, being deceived themselves, try to imagine that Elohim will save many of their ‘friends’ and relatives who were Christians, but will let the multitudes from ages past perish, without them ever coming to real repentance and true surrendering to the Living Messiah. These religious leaders could not be more wrong. The damnations that we read about in the Scriptures apply to us who are being called during this age. We are being judged during this age and if we do not make it, will burn to become ashes under the feet of the righteous. For the unsaved billions of Buddhists, Muslims, Shintoist and those who believed in a false messiah, who came to do away with his Fathers laws, both at present and in the past, the Scriptures will be opened to their understanding after the second resurrection. This is not a second chance – since they were blinded by YHVH Himself in the past. This is truly the second harvest of souls (human beings) into the everlasting kingdom, as pictured in the Menorah on page 53.

YHVH our Elohim’s purpose remains. He is not trying to save everyone during this age; If He was, they would not all be saved. He is only calling out the First Fruits to rule with Yahshua during the Millennium and onto eternity. The vast majority of blinded individuals will be brought back to life during the Great White Throne Judgment. Then He will call them to spiritual understanding and will fill those who are willing with His Set-apart Spirit. He will grant them salvation in His kingdom. Those not willing will be burnt to ashes, with the wicked ones who sinned willfully after being called, during this age. There is no second chance - we read accordingly in Hebrews 10: 26 & 27: ***‘For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, (27) but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES.’***

What went before?

YHVH planned to bring forth beings that could become his children from the very beginning. These children would be like Him in every respect. They would have His character reproduced in them by His Set-apart Spirit. YHVH commenced His plan to reproduce Himself by creating powerful spiritual beings called angels. These angels were free moral agents, with the ability to choose to go the way of YHVH – the way of giving and sharing, or the way of get. For many years these angels followed the correct way, until one day, Lucifer, decides in rebellion against YHVH, to take over the throne of YHVH in the third heaven (see Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28). Being a cherub, or one of the three original archangels, Lucifer, was in charge of a third of the angels: We know that in the Scriptures angels are referred to as stars (as explained in Revelation 1: 20); Comparing the first part of Revelation 12: 4 with verse 9 we see that Satan was thrown down to the earth, and his angels (a third of the angels of heaven, under his control) were thrown down with him.

Satan and his angels fought against the other two archangels and their angels, still loyal to YHVH. They were overcome and thrown down to earth, where they are now living as fallen angels or demons. These angels, who are spirit beings, could not change once they had decided to follow a life of wrongdoing. The result of war between the angels and demons left the world formless and void. This is the condition we find the earth in when we open our Scriptures at Genesis 1: 2. At that point in time YHVH decides to recreate the heavens

*and the earth. YHVH also chose not to create his future children as spirit beings, again, but to (initially) create them from physical matter. He creates them in His image with mind power to think and plan and 'create'. They too have free moral agency to decide between good and evil. However, they had to prove through their lives that they would develop the perfect character of YHVH and follow His way of life. However, we know that Adam and Eve did sin – induced by the lies and temptation of Satan. Since then all humankind have sinned and fall short of the esteem of YHVH. Death spread to all humankind through the sins of our forefathers. YHVH has allowed all of mankind to be led into sin by Satan, thus allowing us to see for ourselves where sin leads us. We see: **'For the wages of sin is death,'** according to the first part of Romans 6: 23. So as opposed to Satan's lie, that after disobeying YHVH our forefathers would not die, death was introduced. This left humankind in a miserable condition. However, as we read the good news in the second part of Romans 6: 23, as follows: **'but the free gift of Elohim is Eternal life in Messiah Yahshua our Master.'***

Chapter 9: Israel: from Father Abraham until today.

YHVH said to Abram in Genesis 12: 1 – 3 ***“Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you; (2) And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing. (3) And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”*** YHVH commanded Abram and on the condition that he obeyed, he was made an eternal promise. YHVH started the world from this point on with one man who obeyed Him.

Abram did not argue with YHVH at all. In fact we read from the Scriptures in Genesis 12: 4 ***‘So Abram went forth.’*** YHVH established Abram, whose name He later changed to Abraham, as the father of united Israel. YHVH later promised the land of Canaan to Abram and his descendants after him, for an everlasting possession. YHVH said to him in Genesis 17: 10 & 11: ***“This is My covenant, which you shall keep between Me and you and your descendants after you; every male among you shall be circumcised. (11) And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.”***

Of this new nation Israel that YHVH started, He said in Isaiah 43: 21 ***“The people, whom I formed for Myself, Will declare My praise.”*** This specific prophesy will soon be fulfilled, when all Israel will be saved. Few people today realize that there is a duality which runs throughout the plan that YHVH is working out on the earth. There was the first Adam, physical and carnal, and there is Messiah, who is the second Adam, who is spiritual and divine. Similarly there was the original Covenant which was physical (or material) and temporal. And there is the renewed Covenant which is spiritual and therefore eternal. YHVH also made man mortal from the dust of the ground and of the human kind; but through Messiah we may be begotten immortal, spiritual and of the Elohim kind.

In like manner there were two phases to the promises that YHVH made with Abraham. One was material and national, and the other spiritual and individual. Most students of the Scriptures are aware of the spiritual promise of Messiah and salvation through Him. Most students understand that YHVH gave a spiritual promise to Abraham of the Messiah to be born as Abraham’s descendant, and that salvation comes through Messiah to us. Nevertheless, most people do not understand what salvation is: the promise that we receive through Messiah and how and when we receive it. However, we are not discussing that truth in this sermon, as we are primarily focusing on the national and material promises that YHVH made to Abraham.

YHVH made a twofold promise to Abram in Genesis 12. He said: ***‘I will make you a great nation*** (a promise of race)’ and ***‘in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed*** (a promise of grace).’ The last promise is repeated in Genesis 22: 18: ***“And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you obeyed My voice.”*** It is at this point where Christianity has fallen into error, or spiritual blindness. They do not see the two-fold promise that YHVH made to Abraham. As I said before, they know about the Messianic promise of spiritual salvation through Messiah, but they miss the point that YHVH gave Abraham promises of physical race as well as spiritual grace. Christianity falsely assumed that the promises are that believers go to heaven at death. However, the promise of ‘a great nation’ refers to race and not the one ‘seed’, who was Messiah according to Galatians 3: 16: ***‘Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as referring to many, but rather to one, “And to your seed,” that is Messiah.’*** Yes, we know that Messiah was the Son of Elohim, but also the son of Abraham.

Israel was to become many nations. Notice carefully and understand the promises. In Genesis 17: 1- 5, we read: ***‘Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, YHVH appeared to Abram and said to Him, “I am Elohim Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. (2) And I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly.” (3) And Abram fell on his face, and Elohim talked to him, saying, (4) “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. (5)***

No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations.” Also notice that the promise was conditional upon Abraham’s obedience and blameless living. The ‘great nation’ now becomes a ‘multitude of nations’ and can definitely not refer to the one seed, Messiah.

In verse 6 of Genesis 17 we read: ***“And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you.”*** There will come forth out of Abraham nations and kings – physical generation - multiple seed. In verses 7 and 8 of Genesis 17 we see: ***“And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be an Elohim to you and to your descendants after you. (8) And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their Elohim.”***

Notice that the land is promised to plural descendants of whom YHVH is ‘their’ and not ‘his’ Elohim. Yes, the future of the great nations of the world rest on the promises that YHVH made to Abraham. The hope of life after death for anyone, regardless of race, is dependent upon the spiritual part of the promises made to Abraham – the promise of mercy and favor through Messiah, the ‘one seed’ of Abraham.

The children of Abraham have indeed become a multitude of nations. But, they lost their identity because they started keeping pagan holidays such as Sunday, Xmas and Easter, like the pagan nations amongst whom they lived. They forgot the commandments of YHVH and are no longer His people. They have also forgotten the name of YHVH and even though some know that Yahshua died for their sins, they do not know His real name. In addition they do not know that they are Israelites who should keep the Torah commands of YHVH. They worship a three-headed deity whom they call God and do not keep the Feast Days of YHVH any longer: They have for this reason, forgotten YHVH our Elohim’s plan of salvation for all mankind. This deception is Satan’s way to keep these Israelites from knowing their ultimate human potential - to become sons of Elohim in His everlasting Kingdom on earth.

The promises to Abraham are not casual unimportant promises; they are foundational to the establishment of the greatest powers in the world. In approximately 740 – 720 BCE the early Israelites were exiled and lost their identity and their descendants are to be found throughout the world, but mainly amongst the so-called ‘gentile’ peoples of Northwest Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The Jews in Israel and those in the Diaspora are mainly descended from the tribe of Judah. The early Israelites are proven to have migrated to the west and over many years formed the nations of France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, The USA, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The most prominent tribes were Joseph; Ephraim and Manasseh are mainly to be found in the present day English-speaking nations; the tribe of Reuben became the forefather of the French; Benjamin the forefather of Belgium; Zebulon the forefather of the Dutch; Asher gave rise to the Scots; Issachar the Swiss; Dan contributed to the Welsh and Irish and fathered the Danes and so on. Issachar was dominating in Switzerland and Zebulon in Holland, but groups of both tribes were found in each country. The Scots and the Jews are amongst the most intelligent people in the world and many scientific breakthroughs may be attributed to both these groups.

It is commonly accepted that the aforementioned peoples have always been attached to the Scriptures, especially the original Hebrew Covenant. Abraham was the first ancestor of the Hebrew nation. The blessings of Abraham was passed on to his son Isaac and then onto Jacob. In Genesis 49: 1 – 28 we read about the blessings that Jacob blessed his 12 sons with, as follows: ***‘Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, “Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what shall befall you in days to come. (2) Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; And listen to Israel your father. (3) Reuben you are my first-born; My might and the beginning of my strength, Preeminent in power. (4) Uncontrolled as water, you shall not have preeminence, Because you went up to your father’s bed; Then you defiled it – he went up to my couch. (5)***

Simeon and Levi are brothers; Their swords are implements of violence. (6) Let my soul not enter into their council; Let not my glory be united with their assembly; Because in their anger they slew men. And in their self-will they lamed oxen. (7) Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel (both these tribes are scattered throughout both Judah and Israel and those from the tribe of Levi, are usually the priests amongst both houses). ***(8) Judah your brothers shall praise you; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's sons shall bow down to you. (9) Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he lies down as a lion, And as a lion, who dares rouse him up? (10) The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples*** (this verse is essentially saying that Judah have authority over religious matters [the Oracles of YHVH], until Yahshua comes to rule His people. We know He already came: but whereas His first advent was to die for the sins of the world and to remarry His bride; His second advent will be to come and rule His people from Jerusalem). ***(11) He ties his foal to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine; He washes his garments in wine, And his robes in the blood of grapes. (12) His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk. (13) Zebulun shall dwell at the seashore*** (the Dutch are the only people who are in fact living in the sea: they built dykes and have been living below sea level for many years); ***And he shall be a haven for ships, And his flank shall be toward Sidon. (14) Issachar is a strong donkey, Lying down between the sheepfolds. (15) When he saw that a resting place was good And that the land was pleasant, He bowed his shoulder to bear burdens, And became a slave at forced labor. (16) Dan shall judge his people, As one of the tribes of Israel. (17) Dan shall be a serpent in the way, A horned snake in the path, That bites the horse's heels, So that his rider falls backward. (18) For Thy Salvation I wait, O YHVH. (19) As for Gad raiders shall raid him, But he shall raid at their heels. (20) As for Asher, his food shall be rich, And he shall yield royal dainties. (21) Naphtali is a doe let loose, He gives beautiful words. (22) Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a spring; Its branches run over a wall. (23) The archers bitterly attacked him, And shot at him and harassed him; (24) But his bow remained firm, And his arms were agile, From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), (25) From the Elohim of your father who helps you, And by the Almighty who blesses you With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and the womb. (26) The blessings of your father Have surpasses the blessings of my ancestors Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; May they be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers*** (Joseph: Ephraim (Britain) and Manasseh (The USA) are the two birthright tribes. These two tribes received a double portion of the blessings of wealth and we also know that they became a force to be reckoned with since the nineteenth century. However, because of sin, the blessings are being taken away and YHVH will execute vengeance in anger and wrath on the nations which have not obeyed, as may be seen in Micah 5: 10 – 15). ***(27) Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; In the morning he devours the prey, And in the evening he divides the spoil." (28) All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him.'***

The Israelite seed of Abraham were European colonist from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. The overall effects of colonialism were in the most beneficial, despite claims to the contrary. British, Dutch and French colonialism put an end to internecine (mutually destructive) warfare, ended human sacrifice and slavery, founded and improved irrigation systems, reformed agricultural practices and public hygiene, built bridges, roads, public works and many other beneficial things in the nations that they colonized. The colonial powers made large investments and improved the lives of the population greatly. The investments benefited all parties – which is part of the blessing of Abraham, with which all the nations whom Israel came in contact with, were blessed.

“South Africa was colonized mainly by people of British and Dutch descent with others in addition to the presence of several different African nations. The white (and colored) peoples are those who in this case belong to Israel. The coat of arms of South Africa, prior to 1994 featured a lion (from Joseph- Britain) and two deer (a Springbok and an Oryx). The deer was a symbol of Naphtali of whom it was prophesied that he

would be greatly blessed and receive 'the west and the south' in Deuteronomy 33: 23. The motto on the previous coat of arms of South Africa means 'Unity is Strength'. Even though Naphtali was primarily to be found in Norway and Zebulun in Holland, Naphtali had also historical connections to the area of Holland and groups relating to Naphtali were to be found amongst the Dutch, many of whom settled in South Africa. In addition, Vikings from Denmark colonized northeast England. Vikings also settled in parts of Wales and Ireland, and Tribes of Naphtali and Dan had given rise to the Viking movement. It may well be that amongst both the English and Dutch settlers of South Africa many were descendant from Naphtali. On the whole, however, the land should be attributed to the domain of Joseph. Things have now changed in South Africa and it remains to be seen what the fate of white people there will be." This last section is a direct quotation from Yair Davidy's book entitled: "The Tribes". It is a very interesting book and I believe we should have copies of this book available for our people to read. Yair also has other books on this subject available and may be ordered from him.

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I remember a few years ago when some of the Ministers of the offshoots from The World-wide Church of God, severely criticized Mr. H. Armstrong for saying that we are Israel, Yair came to his defense, saying that he was correct all along.

Chapter 10: We are Ambassadors of another Kingdom.

Many believers fail to figure out how to 'put on the new man' and to live successfully as believers, even after immersion. Many have tried in their exited days of being a new creation, but as time went on, they forgot and reincorporated their old ways of life. Even amongst Nazarene Israelite and other like-minded believers, compromise rules once-committed believers, who have lost their boundaries. Worldly ways still have a strong influence in the hearts of many. In fact many believers stopped with positional salvation; they believe that once they are saved, they are always saved. They believe their duty is over as long as they attend Sabbath services, and pray and read the Scriptures when they get time.

The idea that we are ambassadors of the Kingdom entails that we by example show the world what the kingdom of Elohim will be like. We ought to be better than we are – striving to improve the old self on an ongoing basis. Like Messiah was our example whilst He was on earth with mankind, we are to be a perfect example of what we will be like in the Kingdom. On Sabbath Days and during Feast Days, we should look forward to the kingdom of Elohim, not backward into our miserable lives and the way we used to keep Sunday and Xmas. Instead we should give our lives in service and obedience to Elohim, practicing righteousness and the give way of life – instead of the get way. We should study the Scriptures with a view to improve the self, on an ongoing basis. Repentance is a lifelong process. It is like looking into a mirror to see the dirt on our faces. When we see it we should remove it at once – when we discover a sin, we should get rid of it immediately, we should strive to clean up our lives continuously. We must remember that at Sabbath services and on Feast Days we come into the presence of Elohim, to worship Him and to learn from His word.

As we ponder the reality of becoming a new creation, we begin to understand that Yahshua's untainted blood was shed to atone for our sins. He gave His life for the salvation of the world. We read accordingly in Romans 5: 10, ***'For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to Elohim through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.'*** This means that we should lose our previous way of life on earth and become a class of people who migrate to the next dimension of living. Rav Shaul puts it as follows in Galatians 2: 20: ***"I have been crucified with Messiah; and it is no longer I who live, but Messiah lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of Elohim, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me."*** Rav Shaul explains how our impalement was already accomplished by Yahshua in the initial salvation act. Through the cross we become partakers of the promise, in that we have already been impaled with Messiah. It is already accomplished and we do not have to die over and over again. However, the problem is that our old self should remain dead.

We read in Galatians 5: 24, ***'Now those who belong to Messiah Yahshua have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.'*** All we have to do from now on is to make sure that our old nature remains dead and buried far from our present actions. Just like those who passed Yahshua on the cross and hurled abuse at Him saying in Mark 15: 30, ***'save Yourself, and come down from the cross,'*** so our carnal nature, shouts at us to come down from the cross. However, we need to through the Set-apart Spirit control our sinful old nature. To allow the Set-apart Spirit to conduct His work of revealing the new creation in us; He unveils Messiah who now lives within us to obtain our destiny. Messiah now lives in resurrection power within us, helping us to be like Him in character and nature and to understand the power of on-going salvation. We read accordingly in Hebrews 7: 25, ***'Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to Elohim through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.'***

Yahshua explained it in John 17: 11, saying: ***"And I am no more in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world."*** Believers remain here living above this worldly society. We read further in John 17: 14, ***"I have given them Thy word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."*** We see in verse 15 that Yahshua did not ask that we be taken 'out of the world' or raptured away, but that we are kept from the evil one. We are separated out from the old self and that separation is

what keeps us from the evil one. We become a new creation living in the world as ambassadors of the kingdom of Elohim. That means that we are no longer content with our worldly nature, or are tempted by the carnality of the worldly systems.

The new creation exhibits the Elohim kind of life that is in Yahshua, and not in the world. We should as much as possible demonstrate a life without sin. We walk in the same domain as Yahshua our Messiah did. Not of this world, establishing the kingdom of Elohim, on earth as it is in heaven. As ambassadors of the kingdom of Elohim, we live independently from these world systems, with new eternal principles and standards that govern our lives. We live in the world in order to salvage the world, but we are not of the world.

Yahshua became our example of being a first fruit living in the world, but not of it. We, who are, as it were first fruits among His creatures, should follow His perfect example. We read about Yahshua in Titus 2: 14, ***'who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.'*** Back in John 17 verse 18 we read: ***"As thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."*** As a new creation, Yahshua sent us to display a new nature and the likeness of Messiah into the world. When we separate ourselves from worldly ways, YHVH will receive us as we read in 2 Corinthians 6: 16 & 17: ***'Or what agreement has the temple of Elohim with idols? For we are the temple of the living Elohim, just as Elohim said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR ELOHIM, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. (17) Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says YHVH. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you."'*** These promises of YHVH remain for those that maintain a lifestyle, even though in the world, separate from the ways of the world. This is how we show the people in the world, the example Messiah showed His disciples, whilst He lived here about two thousand years ago.

We know that ultimately YHVH our Elohim wants to come and dwell with us on earth, in the New Jerusalem, that will come down from heaven, as we read in Revelation 21: 1 – 3, as follows: ***'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. (2) And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from Elohim, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. (3) And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold the tabernacle of Elohim is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and Elohim Himself shall be among them."'***

To explain the notion of us being ambassadors from a different perspective, let us consider the Jewish people and by extension us as part of the sect of the Nazarenes (Acts 24: 5 & 14), who follow the Hebrew Calendar. Nazarene Israelites often criticize our Jewish brothers for having two 'Beginnings' or 'Heads of the year'. To clarify the subject discussed up to now, as well as give us a better understanding of the two 'Beginnings' found in the Hebrew calendar, I present the following insight from a Jewish origin: We are all aware of the fact that our Jewish brothers have two 'new years' or 'beginnings'; both beginnings are referred to as 'heads'. The first one occurs in the Hebrew month of Tishrei known as Rosh Hashanah, while the second occurs during the month of Aviv and is designated as 'the beginning of months.'

Jews accept two different, but distinct ways of life, each with its own beginning. The 'Head of the Year' that we are all familiar with, is the one on which we blow the Shofar and pray for a healthy and successful year. In addition for us as Nazarene Israelites it pictures the day on which Yahshua will return and when the first fruits will be resurrected. According to our Jewish brothers, the 'head of the year' on the first of Tishrei is the anniversary of Elohim's creation of the universe and particularly His creation of Adam. On this day Jews reaffirm their commitment to YHVH as their Creator and King, and ask that He inscribed them in the book of life.

Whereas the first of Tishrei is the first day of human history, the month of Aviv marks the birth of Israelite time. On the first of Aviv, approximately 2, 500 years after the creation of man, YHVH commanded His

chosen people the fledgling nation of Israel – to leave the land of Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month, in the evening, by the light of the full moon to start on a seven-week journey to Mount Sinai.

Israelites share their status as citizens of Elohim's world with all other races and creatures. As such, their 'head of the year' on the first of Tishrei is the birthday of man and the beginning of the natural world. However, the Israelite also inhabits another reality; a reality born of the super natural events of the Exodus, the splitting of the Red Sea, and the divine revelations at Sinai. This dimension of his life has its own 'head' – the miraculous month of Aviv.

The world and its history remained more or less the same for the two and a half thousand years. The Torah records miracles and super natural events before the exodus, but these are exceptions, temporary departures on the part of YHVH from His normal manner of running the world in accordance with the pre-defined laws of nature. The Exodus, on the other hand, produced the Israelite, a being whose very existence is an ongoing miracle.

This is why when YHVH revealed Himself at Sinai He said: ***"I am YHVH your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."*** Would it not have been more appropriate, for YHVH to introduce Himself as the creator of the heavens and the earth? Is not the fact that we owe our very existence to YHVH more significant than the fact that He took us out of Egypt? But YHVH as the creator of the heavens and the earth, YHVH as the author of nature, is the Elohim that Israel shares with the rest of creation. At Sinai, however, YHVH did not speak to us as the Elohim of creation, but as the Elohim of the Exodus. At Sinai, a new chapter was opened in divine-human relations as YHVH and the people of Israel committed themselves to a relationship that does not recognize the dictates of convention and normalcy.

If the Torah is the document that outlines our mandate as a people un-constricted by the laws of nature and history, of what relevance are the events of the pre-Exodus era? And even if they are of historical and educational value, should the Torah begin with these accounts? However, the Torah does not begin with the command given, on the first of Aviv, but with the creation of the world on the first of Tishrei. Our covenant with YHVH, though a product of the Exodus, has its roots in the soil of Tishrei. Indeed, the Exodus itself also has its beginnings in the month of Tishrei: the Talmud notes that the process of our liberation from Egypt began on the first of Tishrei, when the hard labor imposed upon our forefathers by the Egyptians ceased six months before they actually left Egypt.

The reverse is also true: the creation of the natural world on Tishrei has its origins in the month of Aviv. The Jewish sages tell us that while the physical world was created in the six days that culminate in the first of Tishrei, the idea of creation was birthed six months earlier, on the first of Aviv. In other words, the natural and the miraculous time-systems are mutually interconnected, each serving as the basis for the other. As Israelites, we follow both cycles, spanning both worlds. On the one hand, even the most natural aspects of our lives are predicated upon the miraculous, and are saturated with a norm-surpassing vision. On the other hand, our most miraculous achievements are grounded in the natural reality. For our mission in life can be achieved only by inhabiting both worlds – only by being a part of the natural world and, at the same time, rising above it to transcend its strictures and limitations.

Our mission in life is to transform the very nature of reality, to build 'A dwelling for YHVH in the lower realms.' This is the purpose of His creation and the creation of all the worlds – that we transform the natural, material world which, by its nature, conceals the face of its Creator into an environment receptive to the divine truth, into a place in which the goodness and perfection of YHVH is at home and is the dominant reality.

But here is the irony, a seemingly closed logical circle: we ourselves are part of this 'lower realm'; we are to transform, or are we a step above it? If we are part of the material world, how can we change it and uplift

it? A prisoner cannot release himself from prison, if he himself is restricted by its parameters; from where might he derive his ability to replace them? On the other hand, if we are, in essence, transcendent beings, existing beyond the confines of the natural reality, then whatever effect we have upon the world cannot truly be considered 'a dwelling for YHWH in the lower realms.' For the world as such has not been transformed; it has only been overwhelmed by a superior force. The true meaning of 'a dwelling in the lower realms' is that the lowly realms themselves change, from within.

So to achieve His aim in creation for a dwelling in the lower realms, YHWH created the Israelite, a fusion of the Tishrei and Aviv realities. For only in incorporating both these time-cycles in our lives, combining a norm-defying approach with a natural-pragmatic approach are we able to achieve deliverance of ourselves and our world. Only by drawing from above to change from within can we make our world a home for YHWH.

Yes, the Passover during the month of Aviv is a new beginning for all of us, but the Feast of Trumpets (or Rosh Hashanah) during the month of Tishrei, will be another new beginning when Yahshua our Messiah will begin to rule the world to come (Olam Haba) during the seventh Millennium since the creation of man. We should therefore continue to strive to become a better, more Set-apart people, to be true ambassadors of the world to come; an example to the world of what the people in the kingdom of Elohim should be like.

Chapter 11: The Ten Commandments.

According to Deuteronomy 4: 13, the two tablets of stone that Moses received from Elohim's own hand at Mount Sinai, contained His covenant which He commanded us to perform; that is the Ten Commandments. Each of the tablets contains five of the Ten Commandments. The first five commandments are precepts between man and Elohim and the second five, between man and his equal. Yahshua explained in Matthew 22: 35 – 40 that everything written in the Torah and the Prophets, take place under two main headings; namely love toward YHVH and love toward our neighbor. He emphasized that the Torah and the Prophets define what the relationship between us and our Creator and between each other should be.

The Ten Commandments are not only suggestions or regulations and those who see them in that light misunderstand Elohim's intent in giving His commandments. YHVH tells us that all His commandments are for our good and that they are a blessing to mankind. When Yahshua himself was asked which of the commandments is the foremost of all. He answered without hesitation in Mark 12: 29 - 30, ***"The foremost is, 'Hear O Israel! YHVH our Elohim is One; and you shall love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."***

The first commandment:

The main focus of the first commandment is as given in Exodus 20: 3 ***"You shall have no other elohim before (or besides) Me"*** The relationship that YHVH wants with us is that of a Father with His children. It is very important for us to understand Elohim's character, because He wants to create the same character in us. We read about this in 2 Peter 1: 2 - 4 ***'Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of Elohim and of Yahshua our Master; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.'*** Our Father wants us to develop righteous character so that we may ultimately fulfill our human potential, of becoming His children – who will rule as kings and priests under Yahshua during the millennium and on into eternity. We also read about this in 1 John 3: 1 – 3, as follows: ***'See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of Elohim; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of Elohim, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.'***

It is remarkable to realize what YHVH the creator of the universe has in store for us. He wants us to be his people and to have everlasting life in His eternal Kingdom. Yahshua, the word of YHVH, who according to John 1: 1 – 3 created the universe, said in Matthew 6: 33 what our highest priority should be, as follows: ***"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you."*** Our Father gives us a period of about seventy years to establish a relationship with Him, so that we may receive eternal life in His kingdom, as His people. We read about this in Revelation 21: 3 ***'And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold the tabernacles of Elohim is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and Elohim Himself shall be among them."*** YHVH alone is our Elohim. We should honor, obey and serve Him with all our being. Fellow believers, we better make sure that we understand and believe that YHVH is One and that there is no elohim besides Him! In Hosea 13: 4 we read: ***"Yet I have been YHVH your Elohim since the land of Egypt; And you were not to know any elohim except Me, for there is no savior besides Me."*** There is no Savior except YHVH; this means that Yahshua the Messiah is none other than YHVH in the flesh.

The second commandment:

The second commandment specifically forbids worshipping inanimate or manmade objects. It specifies that we should not make any likeness of anything in heaven, or on earth or in the waters beneath the earth, and worship it. Even though we are made in the image of Elohim, we need to realize that our creator is a living Elohim and not a statue or a picture. He cannot be limited in any way and He does not want us to limit or distort Him in our own minds. It is easy for us as Nazarene Israelite believers to think that we do not make images and worship them. However, we need to consider this command carefully. Do you spend more time in front of the one eyed elohim in our homes called TV, than what we do worshipping YHVH; or do we spend more time playing golf or going to the movies or washing your car, etc.? Are you drinking or eating too much? What are our excesses? Be very careful, that too may develop into an idol or so-called 'god'.

The third commandment:

The third commandment focuses on showing YHVH proper respect. It has to do with the name of YHVH as we read in Exodus 20: 7 ***"You shall not take the name of YHVH your Elohim in vain, for YHVH will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain."*** What does the word vain mean? It could mean to use lightly, to destroy or bring to naught, i.e. You are not to ('shavah') use lightly, destroy or bring to naught, the name of YHVH your Elohim, by hiding, refusing to use, and purposely misspelling His name. Also notice the word take or use. There are so many ways in which we can use the name of YHVH in vain. If for example we keep non-scriptural festivals like Xmas, we twist scripture to fit doctrines of men. No-where in the Scriptures do we find the birth date of our Messiah given, let alone stated as the 25th of December - by keeping the Messiah's birthday we propagate a lie and use the name of YHVH in vain.

Another way to use the Name of YHVH our Elohim in vain is by our conduct. We who call ourselves by the Messiah's name (Nazarene/Messianic believers) must be very careful how we conduct ourselves in public. We must not be hypocrites and behave like believers on the Sabbath, but continue to practice sin during the week. We read about this in Romans 2: 21 – 24 ***'You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one should not steal, do you steal? You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor Elohim? For "The Name of Elohim is blasphemed among the gentiles because of you," just as it is written.'***

We, who claim to be the Almighty's people, should know His name as stated in the first part of Isaiah 52: 6 ***"Therefore My people shall know My name"***. However, we should be careful not to use His name in everyday language like some people in TV programs do. Perhaps it is a good thing that most do not know the true name of YHVH, as the generic name G-d, as used by people in TV programs is not His name. The name of YHVH should only be used in prayer, blessings, worship services and teachings. Finally let us also consider the warning to refrain from using the names of pagan gods, in Exodus 23: 13 we read: ***"Now concerning everything which I have said to you, be on your guard; and do not mention the name of other gods, nor let them be heard from your mouth."***

The fourth commandment:

In Exodus 20: 8, 9, 10 & 11 we read the Fourth or Sabbath Command as follows: ***"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of YHVH your Elohim; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days YHVH made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore YHVH blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."*** Do we today, know which day is the Sabbath? Is it possible after so many years after YHVH gave the ten original commandments to His people, to identify which is the

Sabbath Day? I would say yes. The Jewish people who are the people of the nation of Judah of the Scriptures are still keeping the original Sabbath day, from Friday evening at sunset to Saturday evening at sunset.

This is the Sabbath of YHVH, the seventh day, which YHVH blessed and sanctified after having completed the creation of the heavens and the earth. Only YHVH can sanctify anything - He has declared which are His appointed times in Leviticus 23. We do not have the right as human beings, to proclaim feast days to YHVH. We can read an example where Aaron declared a feast to YHVH in Exodus 32, with dire consequences. In Hebrews 4: 9 we read that: ***"There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of Elohim"***. If we claim to be the people of YHVH, then we better make sure that we are keeping His Sabbath days (weekly and annual Sabbaths).

The fifth commandment:

The fifth commandment (in Exodus 20: 12) reads: ***"Honor your father and your mother that your days may be prolonged in the land which YHVH your Elohim gives you."*** Although this commandment appears to belong in the category between man and man, it teaches us to appreciate that our parents are the connection between us and our Creator. Just as parents withhold that which they believe is not good for their children, from them, similarly YHVH withholds from each of His children that which may not be in their best interest, spiritually. If we understand this, then we will never feel envy towards our neighbors. This commandment is the first commandment with a promise to those who obey it; the promise is a prolonged life in the land which YHVH our Elohim gives us. The fifth commandment also sets the scene for the last five. It teaches the importance of treating each other with respect and honor.

Learning to obey the fifth commandment helps children establish a pattern of respecting rules, laws and traditions. YHVH places the responsibility for teaching children the basic principles of life, on the parents of such children. Parents should also think of themselves as children. Yes, children of perhaps now elderly or deceased parents, but also children of YHVH our Elohim. It is just as important for us to obey and honor our heavenly Father as it is for our children to obey and honor us. We and our children should also be sure not to neglect honoring our grandparents. We should make opportunities to spend time with grandparents. Ask them questions about our origins. Children, who honor and respect their grandparents, also show respect to other older people.

The sixth commandment:

The sixth commandment is the prohibition against murder. There is an integral relationship between the sixth commandment and the first commandment. Only by acknowledging that there is a Creator who fashioned every human being in His image, can we explain rationally why eating steak and swatting flies is any different from killing fellow human beings. Without knowing this distinction, we should all be either vegetarians or serial killers. Human life has become very cheap today. Criminals do not only steal people's possessions, but also the lives of their victims. Many people view unwanted pregnancy as an inconvenience and millions of unborn babies are being killed worldwide annually. Our papers are full of crime and violence and the murder of the day is usually the first topic featured in newspapers and TV programs. Random killings by gangsters are threatening many communities around the world.

It is ironic that despite our fear of death, we are fascinated by stories of murder and bloodshed. These are the stories that sell newspapers and make for many so-called 'good' movies and TV shows. Violence is so inter-woven into the fabric of society that it is glamorized into most of our modern day entertainment. We need to stop teaching ourselves and our children to make war. Stop watching violence! Start by controlling what we watch. In addition, we need to watch our tempers. Road rage has become a major problem, especially in our country. We need to repent and return to Torah. Elohim's mercy and forgiveness remains available for sinners, including murderers. But He wants us to repent and forsake our evil ways. We need to

overcome evil with good. If we want to be called sons (and daughters) of elohim, we need to become peacemakers, as we read in Matthew 5: 9.

The seventh commandment:

YHVH intended men and women to be together from the very beginning. Marriage is ordained by our Father and He hates divorce. He ordained marriage and sex – in that order. Adultery is a violation of the marriage covenant by willfully participating in sex with someone who is not your spouse. YHVH created sex, because He wants us to enjoy a stable sexual relationship within marriage. There are many warnings against adultery in the Scriptures. One such warning appears in Proverbs 6: 32, as follows: ***‘The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; He who would destroy himself does it.’*** In 1 Corinthians 6: 18 & 19: Rav Shaul writes: ***‘Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Set-apart Spirit who is in you, whom you have from Elohim, and that you are not your own?’*** Adultery is linked to Idolatry (the second commandment) - Adultery is about unfaithfulness to one’s partner; and Idolatry is about unfaithfulness to Elohim.

By staying with your married partner, we are showing YHVH our Father that once we agreed to follow Him (after He has called us); we will remain loyal to Him, forever. So if and when someone like our husband or wife offends us, we must think twice, before making him or her jealous with someone else, or before we spite him or her by not talking to him or her for a day or longer. Think about your own character development, before you make these ridiculous decisions to spite your partner. Marriage is an institution which helps us to build character – which will last into eternity.

Broken homes are very costly to human society. The majority of economically disadvantaged people are from broken homes. Homes headed by single parents are a leading factor in subsequent criminal activity. To this must be added the cost of legal fees, the reduction in productivity and income of divorced parents. It also results in the frequent loss of homes and other belongings. Divorce often results in long custody battles with devastating effects on the children. Society suffers because we have neglected to treat our partners the way that YHVH intended from the beginning. Most human beings desire and need the benefits that come from a stable marriage. We need to return to the way that Elohim intended and give marriage the respect that it deserves.

The eighth commandment:

The eighth commandment forbids theft. Theft is the result of the greedy, often lustful way of life that most human beings have grown accustomed to in modern society. The Almighty placed everything in this world for our use, conditional only upon recognizing that everything comes from Him. To misuse His name is to fail in that recognition, rendering all benefits from the material world the equivalent of theft. The eighth commandment ensures every human’s right to legitimately obtain and own property. YHVH wants us to honor and protect that right. YHVH wants to bestow upon us physical blessings and He wants us to enjoy that. He wants us to be thankful for what He gives us and wants us to use what He gives us with wisdom. However, He does not want us to make wealth our major interest. YHVH wants us to be charitable and let generosity and not greed motivate our choices. YHVH wants us to earn our living and not steal from others. YHVH wants those who stole, to stop stealing, and start working for an income (see Ephesians 4: 28). A thief must repent and return to Torah – he must stop stealing and start working for six days a week, to earn a living.

There are many forms of stealing from someone. Today there are many sophisticated scams used to swindle money out of poor and defenseless people. Untrue advertisements have the same effect. Workers who claim more hours than what they worked for, is another example. There are also those people who borrow

from their friends and never return. YHWH wants us to have generous hearts. He wants us to share our wealth with less fortunate people. YHWH is willing to help us serve others, when we replace greed with a dedication to serve. Rav Shaul puts it as follows in 2 Corinthians 9: 7 – 8 ***‘Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for Elohim loves a cheerful giver. And Elohim is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything; you may have abundance for every good deed.’*** YHWH wants us to learn true values and build character traits that will endure beyond the grave.

The ninth commandment:

The ninth commandment forbids bearing false witness against your neighbor. It tells us not to tell lies about other people. We need to make sure that whatever we say is true. What is truth? In John 17: 17 Yahshua said: ***‘Sanctify (set-apart) them in the truth; Thy word is truth.’*** In psalm 15: 1- 3 David wrote: ***‘O YHWH, who may abide in Thy tent? Who may dwell on Thy Set-apart hill? He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, And speaks truth in his heart. He does not slander with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor takes up a reproach against his friend.’***

Yahshua is the visible image of the invisible Elohim and His character reflected the character of our heavenly Father, the Elohim of truth. Yahshua said in answer to a question from Thomas in John 14: 6 ***“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.”*** To be disciples or students of Yahshua, we need to speak the truth on an on-going basis. Lying has become an accepted way of life today. We read about our society in Isaiah 59: 4 ***‘No one sues righteously and no one pleads honestly. They trust in confusion, and speak lies; They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.’*** May I pose a blatant question here - the question is to all of us: Do we lie? Or are we put off by lying? Ask yourself these questions and answer it truthfully in your own company. We know that Yahshua said in John 8: 44 about Satan that: ***‘he is a liar, and the father of lies.’*** We have a choice – do we follow Yahshua who, being the word of YHWH is truth, or do we follow Satan who is a liar? Most people find it almost impossible to abandon all lies, until they surrender their lives to Elohim and seek His help. We know that Rav Kepha (the apostle Peter) had a similar problem, in that He denied Yahshua and also lied during the night when Yahshua was betrayed.

We need to ask our Father to help us if we have this problem. He will certainly help us, if we repent and return to studying His word. YHWH wants us to commit ourselves to truth and show it in all that we do and say.

The tenth commandment:

The final command is against coveting. Coveting is a major problem in most of our lives. Our transgressions of Elohim’s Torah begin in our hearts. We read this in Mark 7: 21 – 23, as follows: ***‘For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thought, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile a man.’*** We know that the heart is the seat of desire. Desire is another word for crave or covet, especially when it is improper or excessive. Coveting is a longing for something which is not yours. It also includes wanting something that belongs to others. Our natural inclination is to see what we can get, rather than what we can give; whereas YHWH our Elohim’s way is the way of giving and sharing. Coveting, when put above self and Elohim, becomes idolatry. Rav Shaul warns in Colossians 3: 5 – 6, as follows: ***‘Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed which amounts to idolatry. For it is on account of these things that the wrath of Elohim will come.’***

We need to steer our desires in the right direction. Yahshua said in Matthew 6: 33 ***“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.”*** A desire to excel in our life’s

pursuits are an appropriate ambition. YHWH wants us to excel and He approves of our gaining knowledge and skills for our advancement in life. However, YHWH wants us to have concern for others and if He blesses us with wonderful gifts, then He wants us to bless the less fortunate with similar blessings. We may start by blessing our own family and brethren who are less fortunate. In Hebrews 13: 16 we are reminded to do good as follows: ***'And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such sacrifices Elohim is pleased.'***

Conclusion:

In His teachings in Deuteronomy 30: 19 YHWH admonished us to make the right choices, as follows: ***"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live and your descendants."*** Yes, fellow believers, the commandments are for our own good. In addition we read in the book of James that we show our faith by our DEEDS. A second witness to this is found in Romans 2: 13: ***"For not the hearers of the Law are just before Elohim, but the DOERS of the Law will be justified."***

Chapter 12: The sin which not even Satan is able to recognize.

Do you know that there is a very dangerous sin described in the Scriptures, which not even Satan is able to identify? It is a sin which is prevalent in most communities and religions. It even exists in our community of Nazarene Israelites and if we do not repent of this sin, it will lead directly to the second death in the lake of fire. Are you able to recognize this sin in others or even yourself? It is so important for our salvation that we identify and deal with this particular brand of sin that there is an entire book of the Scriptures devoted to it.

To find out more about this sin, let us turn to the book of Job. Starting in the first chapter in verse 1, we notice that Job, who lived in the land of Uz, was blameless, upright, Elohim fearing and turning away from evil. We see in verses 2 and 3 of Job 1, that Job had seven sons and three daughters and that he was considered the greatest (wealthiest) man of all the men of the east. He possessed thousands of animals and had many servants. Reading on in verse 4 of Job 1, we notice that his sons used to keep their (birth) days and used to invite their sisters to come and eat and drink with them, during these celebrations. Job was very concerned for his children and usually after these birthday parties he offered burnt offerings according to the numbers of his children, in case they sinned, saying in the last part of verse 5 of Job 1: ***"Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed Elohim in their hearts."***

In verse 6 of Job 1, we notice that there was a day during which the sons of Elohim came to present themselves before YHVH. In addition we notice that Satan also came among them. We see in verse 8 that YHVH identifies Job as blameless and an upright man, fearing Him and turning away from evil. Reading on we notice that Satan is not able to see anything wrong in Job, saying that he is such a good person, because YHVH has built a hedge around him and his belongings, protecting him from Satan. In addition Satan says to YHVH that if YHVH allows Job to be harmed by him, that Job will curse YHVH to His face. Next we see that YHVH allows Satan to reach Job, but that he is forbidden from harming Job's person.

Continuing in verse 13 of Job 1, we read again that Job's children were having another party in the eldest brother's house. From verse 14 to 19 we see Satan unleashed disaster upon Job's family and property. The Sabaeans attacked his servants stealing all the oxen and donkeys. We also read that lightning struck from heaven burning all the sheep with the servants caring for them. In addition the Chaldeans formed three bands raiding the camels and killing all the servants taking care of the camels. Only the few servants reporting these disasters to Job survived the ordeal. Finally we read about a great wind which struck the house where Job's children were partying and all of his children died. Again only one of the servants reporting this final disaster to Job survived. In one day Job lost all of his children and possessions and only a few servants survived. But we read in verse 20 to 23 that Job did not curse YHVH because of what happened to Him. Instead we see: (20) ***'Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshipped. (21) And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. YHVH gave and YHVH has taken away. Blessed be the name of YHVH." (22) Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame Elohim.'***

In chapter 2 verse 1 we read: ***'Again there was a day when the sons of Elohim came to present themselves before YHVH and Satan also came among them to present himself before YHVH.'*** Continuing on in Job 2 verse 3 we see that YHVH again points Job out to Satan saying, ***"Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing Elohim and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without cause."*** We see in verses 4 & 5 of Job 2 that Satan issued a challenge to YHVH saying, ***"Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. (5) However, put forth Thy hand, now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse Thee to thy face."***

A second time YHVH puts Job in Satan's hand saying in verse 6, ***"Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life."*** Satan then smote Job with boils from the sole of his feet to the crown of his head. We see at this stage,

when Job's three friends Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar heard about his misfortune they came to sympathize with him and comfort him. At this point in time, I am sure that the same question comes up in all of our minds: Why did YHVH point Job out to Satan? Did YHVH know about a hidden sin that Job had, which was not evident to himself or to anybody else for that matter?

In the next few chapters we find Job and his three friends in a lengthy discussion. Job starts by questioning why Elohim did not take his life at birth. Throughout the deliberation, it is clear that Job and his friends know and believe in YHVH their Elohim. Job knows that YHVH alone stretches out the heavens and walks on the waves of the seas (Job 9: 8). Job knows that even if he dies that YHVH will resurrect him one day (Job 14: 14 & 15). The discussion continues and eventually ended up in an argument where Job's three friends accuse him of having committed some kind of sin. But, Job continued to maintain his uprightness. In Job 29 we see that Job is obsessed with himself; he mentions all the good deeds that he did throughout the 25 verses of this chapter, using 'me' and 'I' more than 25 times.

Only after a prolonged discussion, between Job and his three friends, does his problem begin to appear. In Job 32: 1 - 3 we read: ***'Then these three men ceased answering Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. (2) But the anger of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram burned; against Job his anger burned, because he justified himself before Elohim. (3) And his anger burned against his three friends because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.'*** We notice that Elihu does not regard himself as being knowledgeable but that he is nevertheless aware of the fact in Job 32: 8 that: ***"(But) it is a spirit in man, And the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding."*** He recognizes that it is the spirit in man which gives us the ability to understand; to consider various options open to us, and to make a decision as to which option to select. The young lad continues talking to Job, telling him about the wonders of Elohim, until the end of chapter 37.

At this stage we know that Job's problem is self-righteousness. In fact Job elevated himself above Elohim: Elihu said to him in Job 33: 8 – 12: ***"Surely you have spoken in my hearing, And I have heard the sound of your words; (9) 'I am pure, without transgression; I am innocent and there is no guilt in me. (10) Behold, He invents pretexts against me; He counts me as His enemy. (11) He puts my feet in the stocks; He watches all my paths.' (12) Behold, let me tell you, you are not right in this, For Elohim is greater than man."*** In Job 34: 5 to 6 and 36 to 37 Elihu continues saying to Job: ***"For Job has said, 'I am righteous, But Elohim has taken away my right; (6) Should I lie concerning my right? My wound is incurable, though I am without transgression.' (36) 'Job ought to be tried to the limit, Because he answers like wicked men. (37) For he adds rebellion to his sin; He claps his hands among us, And multiplies his words against Elohim.'" In Job 35: 1 to 2 we read: 'Then Elihu continued and said, (2) "Do you think this is according to justice? Do you say, 'My righteousness is more than Elohim's?'"***

Self-righteous people regard themselves to be very important and often exalt themselves above Elohim. It is because of self-righteousness that many do not believe YHVH or follow Yahshua: Without thinking they regard themselves above Elohim and when YHVH tells us in Isaiah 43: 11, that He is YHVH and that there is no savior besides Him; such people will still argue the point. Similarly when Yahshua tells us that He was in the grave for three full days and three full nights, these people deny Him by believing that He was buried on 'good Friday' and resurrected on Easter Sunday (i.e. only one and a half days in total). Self-righteousness is a sin comparable to pride. It is this very same sin which caused Satan to fall as we read in Isaiah 14: 12 to 14, as follows: ***"How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! (13) But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars (angels) of Elohim, And will sit on the mount of the assembly In the recesses of the north (where Elohim's throne is). (14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'" Like Satan, Job was afflicted with the sin of self-righteousness. YHVH knew about Job's problem and allowed Satan to persecute him, to bring the problem to his attention.***

In Job 38 YHWH answered Job and tells Job about His creation in detail. He asked Job questions such as (in Job 38: 4 – 6): ***“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding, (5) Who set its measurements, since you know? Or who stretched the line on it? (6) On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone?”*** YHWH continued asking Job these questions, until Job finally answered Him in Job 40: 4 & 5 saying, ***“Behold I am insignificant; what can I reply to Thee? I lay my hand on my mouth. (4) Once I have spoken, and I will not answer; Even twice, and I will add no more.”*** Then YHWH answered Job again and this time tells him about two great animals that He created. He tells Job about the behemoth (probably a hippopotamus) and the leviathan (probably a crocodile) and how powerful these creatures are. He also tells Job that there is nothing like the Leviathan on earth; it is without fear and it looks on everything that is high; it is king over all the sons of pride. In Job 42: 2 – 6 Job answered YHWH and saying: ***“I know that Thou canst do all things, And that no purpose of Thine can be thwarted. (3) Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge? Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. (4) Hear now and I will speak; I will ask Thee and do Thou instruct me. (5) I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees Thee; (6) ‘Therefore I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes.’”*** We see finally that YHWH restores Job’s fortunes when he prayed for his three friends (in verse 10 of chapter 42). We need to take this to heart: We will certainly be blessed if we learn to pray for the wellbeing of our friends and family.

The account of Job in the Scriptures was recorded for us so that we may learn from his mistakes. We should learn that our righteousness can never be compared to that of YHWH our Elohim. In addition we should learn that self-righteous people tend to also exalt themselves above their fellow believers and others. A very good example of this may be read in Luke 18, where Yahshua told a parable in verses 9 to 14, as follows: ***‘And He also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: (10) “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax-gatherer. (11) The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, ‘Elohim, I thank Thee that I am not like other people; swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer. (12) I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’ (13) But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘Elohim, be merciful to me, the sinner!’ (14) I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted.”’*** Once we start comparing ourselves with others we develop the wrong attitude of self-righteousness. Such an attitude gives us a false sense of security – we believe that we are OK and need not strive for improvement any longer.

Instead of thinking ourselves better than others, we should learn from the lesson of Job, but more importantly from Yahshua our Messiah. We read His example in Philippians 2: 5 to 8, as follows: ***‘Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Messiah Yahshua, (6) who, although He existed in the form of Elohim, did not regard equality with Elohim a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of them (mankind). (8) And being found in appearance as a man, He emptied Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death on the cross.’*** Before Yahshua was born in the form of a man, He existed as Elohim. However, we know that He did not hold on to that position, but was willing to empty Himself and died as the Lamb of Elohim, for the sins of the world. Are we prepared to follow our Master Yahshua in the examples that He set for us?

YHWH corrected Job by means of severe trials, which eventually achieved the desired result. Job repented and YHWH blessed him with more than what he had before. Have we learned the lesson from the account of Job, recorded as an example for us in the Scriptures? Are we like Job prepared to acknowledge that YHWH can do everything and that He knows everything? Are we like Job no longer prepared to exalt ourselves in our own righteousness? If we persist in denying (contradicting) Yahshua our Messiah, we will ultimately land up in the lake of fire. We read Yahshua’s own words in this regard in Matthew 10: 32 & 33, ***“Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. (33) But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.”*** Yes, we

have to acknowledge that we believe in Yahshua the Messiah, however, we need to realize that 'believe in Yahshua', means that we believe in His Saving Name, i.e. Yahshua – the Salvation of Yah, but it also means that we believe in what He (Yahshua) taught whilst He was on earth.

Let us therefore humble ourselves and follow the examples that He set for us in the Scriptures, fully. Let us also refrain from judging our neighbor as we are admonished in James 4: 10 - 12, as follows: ***'Humble yourselves in the presence of YHVH, and He will exalt you. (11) Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother, or judges his brother, speaks against the law, and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge of it. (12) There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?'***

Chapter 13: We need to qualify for rulership.

YHWH our Elohim is not a respecter of persons. We read in Romans 2: 11 that there is no partiality with Elohim. A second witness to this may be found in Acts 10: 34 as follows: ***‘And opening his mouth Peter said: “I most certainly understand now that Elohim is not one to show partiality.”’*** YHWH judges individuals on their own merit, as explained in Colossians 3: 25: ***‘For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.’***

YHWH has a plan and He works strictly according to that plan. In 1 Peter 4: 17 we read that we are being judged now: ***‘For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of Elohim; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of Elohim?’*** Scriptures tell us in Hebrews 1: 1 - 2 that Yahshua is the heir of all things: ***‘Elohim, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.’***

We have the opportunity to become joint heirs with Yahshua. We read this in Romans 8: 15 & 16: ***‘For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of Elohim.’*** We also read in James 2: 5 that we are heirs of the kingdom, as follows: ***‘Listen, my beloved brethren: did not Elohim choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?’***

We know that if we overcome and make it into the Kingdom of Elohim, then we will become kings and priests ruling under Yahshua on the earth. We read this in Revelation 5: 9 & 10 ***‘And they sang a new song saying, “Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for thou wast slain, and didst purchase for Elohim with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our Elohim; and they will reign upon the earth.”’*** The intention is that we need to qualify to enable us to become rulers in the Kingdom of Elohim.

In Isaiah 14: 12 we read about Satan’s fall from heaven. We know that Satan was once one of three Archangels. He ruled over a third of all the angels. However, he was not always content with his position as ruler over the angels. He wanted to be the ruler over all things – he wanted to be on Elohim’s throne. In verse 13 & 14 of Isaiah 14 we read about Satan’s rebellion: ***“But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars (angels as understood from Revelation 1: 20) of Elohim, And I will sit on the mount of the assembly In the recesses of the north (where the throne of YHWH is). I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’”*** Satan was perfect in all his ways, until lawlessness was found in him. We read in Luke 10: 18 that Yahshua witnessed Satan’s fall from heaven like lightning. Satan was disqualified from being a ruler. The account of the creation of the first man and woman, in the image of Elohim, in Genesis 1: 27, hints at our destiny to become rulers. YHWH gave Adam an opportunity to become a ruler.

YHWH gave Adam and Eve a set of instructions, which He wanted them to follow exactly. Failure to obey His instructions would bring the death penalty. We read about this in Genesis 3: 1 & 3 as follows: ***‘Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the beast of the field which YHWH Elohim had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed Elohim said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” ‘And the woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, Elohim has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.’”*** Never before this was there a death penalty. Disobedience to the rules of YHWH our Elohim confers the death penalty on all of us. If our names are not written in the book of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the earth, we will worship the dragon, who is Satan. This is recorded in Revelation 13: 8. However in verses 9 & 10 of Revelation 13, we are admonished to persevere and remain faithful. In Romans 8: 29 & 30 we also

read: ***'For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.'*** YHVH predestined those of us whom He has called during this age, to become rulers during the millennial rule of Messiah and beyond. However, we need to qualify for rulership.

We know that Adam and Eve induced by the lies and temptation of Satan, did sin. Since then all humankind have sinned and fall short of the esteem of YHVH. Death spread to all humankind through the sins of our forefathers. Sin entered on the human level and death reigned from Adam to Moses as is recorded for us in Romans 5: 12 – 14 ***'Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned – for until law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.'*** We see in Revelation 20 in the 1st part of verse 14 that death will be the last thing that will be destroyed: ***'And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.'***

Reading in Matthew 4 we see that Yahshua qualified to replace Satan as ruler. When Satan tempted Yahshua with the kingdoms and riches of the world, it was his to give. Satan offered Yahshua rulership of the kingdoms of the world, provided that He (Yahshua) bow down and worship him (Satan). We see that Yahshua did not dispute the fact that these kingdoms were Satan's to give, but instead He said to him (Satan) ***"Be gone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship YHVH your Elohim, and serve Him only.'"*** Messiah has become the first fruit of them that are asleep. We read this in 1Corinthians 15: 20 as follows: ***'But now Messiah has been raised from the dead, the first fruit of those who are asleep.'*** We also read in verses 21, 22 and 45 of 1 Corinthians 15: ***'For since by a man came death, by a man also come the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Messiah all shall be made alive. So also it is written, "The first Man Adam BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam (Yahshua) became a life-giving spirit.***

By man came death because of sin, but by Messiah came the resurrection to life. His (Yahshua's) obedience conferred a blessing on us, His followers. We read in Hebrews 2: 8 - 10 that Yahshua has passed the test, as follows: ***'THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. For in subjecting all things to him, He Left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Yahshua, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of Elohim He might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to esteem, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.'***

We know from the Scriptures that Yahshua was tested in all points and qualified as recorded for us in Hebrews 4: 15 as follows: ***'For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.'*** Yahshua qualified to replace Satan in rulership. We see also that Abram qualified by being obedient to the instructions that YHVH gave him. In Genesis 12 we see that Abram did not argue when YHVH told him to go forth from his country, from his relatives and from his father's house, to a land which YHVH will show him. Abram left without questions. YHVH entered into a covenant with Abram and as a sign of the covenant he (Abram) and his descendants would be circumcised. At this time YHVH changed Abram's name to Abraham, which means father of a multitude. Abraham further obeyed YHVH, when YHVH told him to offer up his son Isaac in Genesis 22. In verse 10 of Genesis 22, we see that Abraham passed the test and that he qualified to rule in the kingdom of Elohim. We see in Hebrews 11: 9 & 10 that Abraham was looking forward to being in the kingdom of Elohim as follows: ***'By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations,***

whose architect and builder is Elohim.’ In Genesis 22: 18 YHWH says to Abraham: ***“And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”***

In Genesis 26: 2 – 5 we read YHWH appearing to Isaac, ***‘And YHWH appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you. Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. And I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge My commandments, My statutes and my laws.”’***

YHWH shows mercy unto them who love Him and keep His commandments as is recorded for us in Exodus 20: 5 & 6 as follows: ***“You shall not worship them (idols) or serve them; for I, YHWH your Elohim, am a jealous Elohim, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing loving-kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”*** There is not even a question – we show YHWH that we love Him by keeping His commandments. We know that YHWH rejected King Saul for failing the tests that YHWH gave Him. We also know that YHWH called David a man after His own heart, despite having committed adultery and murder. The reason is that David did not blame others for the sins that he committed. He owned-up and repented in sackcloth and ashes. Psalm 51 is a Psalm of David after he sinned. The point is that there is no inheritance without testing. We know that Joseph passed his test and that his brother, Jacob’s first born son Reuben failed – because of sin.

Let us focus for a moment on Israel’s first king – King Saul. King Saul failed the test which YHWH gave him; he offered up a burned offering – something which only a priest could do. We read the account in 1 Samuel 13: 5 – 9 as follows: ***‘Now the Philistines assembled to fight with Israel, 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen, and people like the sand which is on the sea shore in abundance; and they came up and camped in Michmash, east of Beth-aven. When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the people were hard-pressed), then the people hid themselves in caves, in thickets, in cliffs, in cellars, and in pits. Also some of the Hebrews crossed the Jordan into the land of Gad and Gilead. But as for Saul he was still in Gilgal, and all the people followed him with trembling. Now he waited seven days, according to the appointed time set by Samuel, but Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were scattering from him. So Saul said, “Bring to me the burnt offering and the peace offerings.” And he offered the burnt offering.’*** In verse 13 and the 1st part of verse 14 of 1 Samuel 13 we read: ***‘And Samuel said to Saul, “You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandments of YHWH your Elohim, which He commanded you, for now YHWH would have established your kingdom over Israel for ever. But now your kingdom shall not endure.”’*** Saul lacked faith in YHWH and failed. In Hebrews 11: 6 we read that it is impossible to please YHWH, without faith: ***‘And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to Elohim must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarded of those who seek Him.’***

In addition we read in 1 Samuel 15: 1 - 3 ***‘Then Samuel said to Saul, “YHWH sent me to anoint you as king over His people, over Israel; now therefore, listen to the words of YHWH. Thus says YHWH of hosts, ‘I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he set himself against him on the way while he was coming up from Egypt. Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, and do not spare him; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.”’*** We see in 1 Samuel 15: 9 that Saul disobeyed YHWH – he saved Agag the king of Amalek, as well as the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good. When Samuel question Saul about this in 1 Samuel 15: 13 - 15, Saul blamed the people for his indiscretion. In verse 23 of 1 Samuel 15 we see that YHWH rejected Saul from being king over Israel, as follows: ***“For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is an iniquity and idolatry. Because you (Saul) have rejected the word of YHWH, He has also rejected you from being king.”***

If we are planning to become kings and priest in the kingdom of Elohim, we need to make very sure that we pass the tests that YHVH put before us. Let us learn from the examples of the first two kings of Israel, namely Saul and David. Saul lacked faith in YHVH and blamed others for his wrong decisions. Even though David also committed major sins, he never blamed others for his indiscretions. Instead he repented and returned to the teachings of YHVH. Let us do likewise and qualify for rulership.

Chapter 14: Are we Victims?

Do we blame other people for what we do and are? Do we blame our siblings or our parents for the way we turned out? Are we victims of circumstances beyond our control. Do we blame the Government for not getting ahead in our lives? Are we always looking for reasons for not succeeding in our lives? Did you know that in The Scriptures there is never a reference to a victim or victims?

Last week Keith reminded us that life is a journey and that we should enjoy our trip into the Kingdom of Elohim. Rav. Shaul saw his life as a journey – and that he had to go through it and come out victorious – he did not see himself as a victim. We read this in 2 Timothy 4: 6 – 7 as follows: ***‘For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.’*** Yahshua our Messiah knew that according to the plan of YHVH for the salvation for all mankind that He had to die on the tree. In John 10: 17 & 18 He said: ***“For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.”*** We see here that Yahshua was not blaming anyone for His coming impalement – He did not blame the Jews of His day, nor did He blame the authorities of His day for what was about to happen to Him.

We as Israelites are known as over-comers after our Father in the faith, Jacob, who has striven with Elohim and prevailed or overcame. We read about this in Genesis 32: 22 - 32 as follows: ***‘Now he arose that same night and took his two wives and his two maids and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of Jabbok. And he took them and sent them across the stream. And he sent across whatever he had. Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. And when he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob’s thigh was dislocated while he wrestled with him. Then he said, “Let me go, for the dawn is breaking.” But he said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” So he said to him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.” And he said, “Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with Elohim and with men and have prevailed.” Then Jacob asked him and said, “Please tell me your name.” But he said, “What is it that you ask my name?” And he blessed him there. So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said, “I have seen Elohim face to face, yet my life has been preserved.” Now the sun rose upon him just as he crossed over Peniel, and he was limping on his thigh. Therefore, to this day the sons of Israel do not eat the sinew of the hip which is on the socket of the thigh, because he touched the socket of Jacob’s thigh in the sinew of the hip⁶.*** The question is: Was Jacob a victim or was he an over-comer. We saw in the scriptural account that Jacob hanged in – he prevailed.

Joseph had many ups and downs in his life. We know from the scriptural account concerning him, that he overcame every obstacle in his life: His brothers sold him to slave traders; he was made a personal servant of Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, he was thrown in jail because Potiphar’s wife lied to her husband about Joseph wanting to molest her; he eventually came out of jail and saved Egypt as well as his father and family from a worldwide famine and was re-united with his family. Every person who has ever lived; or who will live in the future; or is alive today have personal circumstances which he/she needs to overcome. Some people are born perfectly normal, whilst others are born with disabilities. Some develop major life threatening diseases such as cancer or aids, due to the environment in which they live or due to the lifestyle that they lead. Some people because of lust and the way they live become drug addicts, others

⁶ As a side light: How many of you can recall how your Grannies (or mother’s) removed the sinew from a leg of lamb, prior to cooking it – If you can remember that, then you are most probably an Israelite. Even though most modern ladies have forgotten how this was done, it was taught from mother to daughter throughout many generations – probably before the captivity of Israel by the Assyrians in 721 BCE. For this reason Kosher Butchers rarely sell you a leg of lamb or of any other Kosher animal, as it is a fairly difficult process to remove the sinew from a leg of lamb or other Kosher animal.

become alcoholics. However, none of us should ever judge our fellow man, as we read in James 4: 12 ***‘There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?’***

Every one of us has our own set of circumstances to overcome – it reminds me of the saying that: each person must bear his own cross. Overcoming involves righteousness (godliness) with great contentment. We need to learn to be content with every situation in which we find ourselves in life. Contentment or gratitude is the recognition that life owes us nothing and that all we have are gifts. Pride is a major obstacle – if we have no pride, then we have no obstacle. Overcoming in this life is one of the requirements of those of us who are called by YHVH to be first fruits in the world to come. We read about this in Revelation 2: 26 as follows: ***‘And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS.’*** In Revelation 3: 21 we also read: ***‘He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.’*** This promises over-comers rulership with our Messiah. Overcoming is dealing with a problem in the correct way, as required by Elohim - it requires analyzing a given problem in the light of what the Scriptures say about it.

We always have choices to make and we need to make sure that we choose correctly, taking into account what the word of YHVH has to say about our situation. In Romans 12: 9 we read: ***‘Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.’*** We need to rejoice in hope; be patient in tribulation; bless those who persecute us and overcome evil with good. The biggest negative in life is if we see ourselves as victims. A victim almost always blames someone else for what happens to him/her. The question is where does forgiveness come into it?

Joseph saw the hand of YHVH in being sold in slavery by his brothers. We read about it in Genesis 45: 1- 5 as follows: ***‘Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried, “have everyone go out from me.” So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard of it. Then Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence. Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come closer.” And he said, “I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for Elohim sent me before you to preserve life.”’***

Why do we let someone else determine the state of our mind or emotions. Do not be easily offended – do not take offense, rather leave it. Rules for overcoming are contained in the two greatest commands, which are: that we should love YHVH our Elohim with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our might; and our neighbor as ourselves. We need to continually focus forward – keep your eyes on the coming Kingdom of Elohim. We need to reach forward and forget what lies in the past. We cannot overcome on our own strength. We need to ask YHVH to help us overcome those sins and problems which so beset us. Our struggle is not against other human beings. We read about this in Ephesians 6: 10 – 12 ***‘Finally be strong in YHVH, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of Elohim, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of the darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places.’***

We must remember that our daily trials prepare us for bigger trials to come, such as the tribulation – it serves to strengthen us. We read in 2 Corinthians 10: 3 - 5 ***‘For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised (argument) up against the knowledge of Elohim, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Messiah.’*** What manner of people should we be – we should be over-comers as time is getting short. We read in 2 Peter 3: 9 that: ***‘YHVH is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you,***

not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. We need Elohim's grace on a continuous basis, but need to keep on trying as we see in Proverbs 24: 15 & 16 as follows: ***'Do not lie in wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; Do not destroy his resting place; For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, But the wicked stumble in time of calamity.'***

In Hebrews 12: 1 – 2 we read ***"Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Yahshua, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the stake, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of Elohim."*** This tells us that we need to run the race of life set before each one of us, with endurance to the end. We need to follow Messiah Yahshua who endured to the end.

We need to stop blaming others for what we do and are in life. We need to face our problems head on and strive to overcome them, with the help of our Father YHVH. We need to replace bad habits with good habits, making our overriding goal in life to overcome, so that we may qualify to rule under Messiah in the coming Kingdom of Elohim (as we've seen in Revelation 3: 21 quoted already). HalleluYah!

Chapter 15: In love with Death.

Why has today's youth culture gone mad? There are no bounds to what young people will do today. Take for example body piercing: it has progressed from earrings for ladies, to earrings for men, to multiple piercing for both men and woman in literally every part of the body; the tongue, the nose, eyebrows, lips, cheeks, naval, breasts and even the things you do not want to know about. Tattooing, something that is specifically prohibited in the Scriptures (Leviticus 19: 28), is done in the same progression to the extremes. Then there are such things as genital beading, stretching and cutting, under-the-skin implants, scrotal implants and tooth art. In addition there are such things as tongue splitting, branding (like the branding of cattle), and amputations.

The forbidden are what attract people. They are so confused and rebellious that they even worship Satan. Some people hang by the skin on their backs suspended from metal hooks. Even if we think that this sounds like torture, some people attend 'suspension' parties, where a number of people will do this during the course of the 'party'. If you believe that is all – I have some more of these bizarre stories. There are now those who are known as 'bug-chasers' who go all out to be infected with the AIDS virus. For them this is the ultimate sexual experience. Then there are the 'self-mutilators'. These are young people who purposely cut their bodies with knives or razors to get relief from emotional conflict. Physical pain and the sight of oneself bleeding become solutions due to their ability to overpower the strength of those feelings. It usually commence with feelings of anger, pain or anxiety. When such an individual becomes overwhelmed with one of the emotions mentioned he/she will knock something over or throw an object against the wall or floor. If this does not help, such an individual will plunge his/her fist into a wall or closed window, or even bang his/her head against a wall. A self-mutilator is ashamed of the mental pain that he/she experiences and cannot describe the feeling to others. It seems that such a person has found that physical pain can be a cure for emotional pain.

If you think that these things are limited to teens and youngsters then you are in for a surprise. I believe that here in South Africa, there are 12 year old school girls who wear different colored buttons on their school clothes to show boys how far they are prepared to go with certain favors, including with multiple partners. Furthermore, there have been a number of reports about 12 year olds with very fancy cell phones, making pornographic movies using their classmates as 'actors'. What is the cause of today's youth culture that has gone mad? The answer is found in Ephesians 6: 12 ***'For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.'*** Mankind's history is full of times and places, when something sweeps over a particular society. People are drawn to this something, as into a vacuum, into societies that have lost their way, and have listened to the voice of deceitful leaders and philosophies. We know that in the 1940's an evil spirit swept over Germany, leading to terrible crimes against millions of Jews and other people who were considered undesirables. We have seen similar things happening in Africa during the past 10 – 15 years. We have also seen the spread of the maniacal jihad suicide cult that is attracting thousands of Muslims.

The cause of all this is nothing other than peer pressure, going a bit further like a mass hypnosis, where large numbers of people adopt the same bizarre mindset, practices or beliefs at the same time. It is in fact the spiritual possession of society, considered ripe for rebellion against YHVH. It may almost be compared with the number of people who are today being called by YHVH to consider their so-called Hebrew roots, except that this is the exact opposite. It is in fact Satan who is the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience, as per Ephesians 2: 2. When I was young we used to say that cocktail parents have ducktail children. Immediately following the Second World War, our parents, became more aware of recreational activities, than their parents ever were. They held fancy parties, serving the best of food and a variety of cocktails. Dancing, drinking and partying were the craze – to help them forget the horrors and shortages that the war caused. Some of those parents eventually became alcoholics and divorce

was rampant during the fifties and sixties. We, their children grew up in the so-called ducktail era of the sixties. The rebellion that we see today is against the entire society or the children of the 1960's, a time which birthed free sex, drugs and rock and roll.

There are no more heroes and even the elected leaders are criminals and or sex-offenders. People like Bill Clinton and his escapades with Monica immediately come to mind. In South Africa, we have the likes of Jacob Zuma, who is alleged to have embezzled millions from the arms deal with a European nation and was recently accused of rape. He has a very good chance of becoming our next President. These escapades of our 'leaders' have everything to do with the explosion of secondary school sexual adventures in the western world. The lying politicians, our school system and society are responsible for what is happening to our children. Very little have changed - We are simply going from bad to worse. It reminds me of wise words written by a Greek slave and fable author Aesop who lived from 620 BC to 560 BC, stating: "We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office."

Our children are rebelling and the insane hell-bent culture of today, are waiting in the wings to welcome them with open arms. What has arisen out of the pits of today's world is the same ageless rebellious spirit now indwelling many people 'freed' from Elohim and His laws. Why might you ask? The same reason as always: **so that they can be their own gods and make up their own rules.** In the past, even if parents were imperfect or corrupt, their children still had a reasonable chance of growing up correctly, because the rest of society still more or less reflected Judeo-Christian values. The child could bond with a teacher, a minister of religion, a mentor or organization that could provide stability and a healthy direction. But, because of the corrupt, hell-bent society in which we live, if parents fail to guide and protect their children today, our youngsters get swallowed up by the child-molesting monster called culture.

So far we have spoken in the most about the young people of today. But what about the average citizen of South Africa, the United States of America or any other western nation? We read in Ezekiel 22: 26 about modern day Churchianity as follows: ***"Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My Set-apart things; they have made no distinction between the Set-apart and the profane, and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they hide their eyes from My Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them."*** Everything near and dear to our Father YHVH is being changed and profaned. Even in so-called Christian nations, you name the Torah command and the people will do the opposite. It is like when you tell a child not to smoke since it is detrimental to his/her health and he/she will go right ahead and start smoking.

Almost everyone today wants to be the master of his own destiny. We do not want to be told what to do by anyone. We have become so self-reliant that we believe in ourselves, only. Our Father, who is the Creator of all that exists, made things like the Sabbath and kosher foods, specifically for us. However, humanity prefers to establish standards by themselves. They have changed the Sabbath to either Friday or Sunday, depending on which so-called deity they follow, i.e. either Allah or Jesus. The latest advertisement on the South African Broadcasting Corporation is another example. It simply states that healthy lean South African pork is very good for food. This despite what we read in Leviticus 11: 7 ***'and the pig, for though it divides the hoof, thus making a split hoof, it does not chew cud, it is unclean to you.'*** What about us as Nazarene Israelites? Are we totally happy with following YHVH, or are we also making changes to reflect our superior intellect. Why do we not believe the word of YHVH? In Leviticus 23: 27, for example, we are told: ***"On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present and offering by fire to YHVH."***

This is essentially saying that the Day of Atonement can only be on one specific day of the year, and not when we want it to be. How many refuse to accept the Scriptural authority in both the Tanach and the renewed Covenant that Judah is Elohim's lawgiver (in Psalms 60: 7 and Romans 3: 1 – 2). Instead many choose to put their own thumb print on things. They want to specify when the Sabbath and Feast Days of

YHVH commence, despite Yahshua saying to us in John 5: 46 – 47 ***“For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”*** Do we believe the word of YHVH, or are we contradicting our only Master? We read about this in Jude 4, as follows: ***‘For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our Elohim into licentiousness (permissiveness) and deny (contradict) our only Master and Adon, Yahshua Messiah.’*** The word deny here is translated from the word ‘arneomai’ in Greek which also means ‘contradicting’. As I have mentioned in a previous sermon, we are warned about dishonoring our Father’s Name in this way in Malachi 2: 1 - 8.

Yahshua our Messiah was both circumcised and immersed, do we follow our Master, by doing what He taught us to do; or do we say that it is not necessary any longer. We read Yahshua’s own words in Matthew 7: 21 – 24 ***“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Master, Master,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. (22) Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Master, Master, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles?’ (23) And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; ‘DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’ (24) Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house on the rock.”*** The underlined section means that we should build our faith on Messiah, the Rock (Greek - Petra) of our salvation, and not on Peter (Greek – Petros: meaning a small stone), like the Roman Catholics and some Assemblies/congregation of YHVH do. Ask yourself: Do you listen to the word of YHVH (Yahshua), when He says that we should follow the Pharisees and do what they tell us to do, but not do according to their deeds in Matthew 23: 1 – 3, or do you contradict Him? Do you believe YHVH when He repeats many times that He is only one, as is recorded in Isaiah 43: 10 & 11: ***“And My servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no Elohim formed, And there will be none after Me. (11) I, even I, am YHVH; And there is no savior besides Me.”*** Or do you contradict Him?

O yes, you might say, but Jim you sound like a broken record (repeating yourself), because you have told us this before. My fellow believer, it is by repetition that we Nazarene Israelites learn. That is why we read the annual Torah portions over and over again. That is also why we keep the Feast Days of YHVH our Elohim from year to year, until Yahshua our Messiah’s return to rule us from Jerusalem. I pray that even though most of us were taught and followed false doctrines for many years that we repent and return to full Torah observance. Let us follow the pattern that we were taught for many years i.e. do Torah, and then learn Torah. This is the lesson of tefillin: tefillin are bound on the arm and then on the forehead. If we do it the other way round, we will try and work things out with our own intelligence, before we start doing it. The problem with most are that despite the fact that they call themselves Nazarene/Messianic or even Christian, they do not follow the one whose name they use, and obey His teachings. Many do not even know what sin is. An example is the idea of many in Churchianity that the drinking of alcoholic beverages is sin. Yet in Deuteronomy 14: 26 we read (paraphrased), that we may spend our annual Festival Tithes at the Feast of Tabernacles, on whatever our hearts desire; oxen, sheep, wine or strong drink. O yes, I may even buy double distilled Jameson Irish Whiskey, if I so desire. But, I don’t, since I prefer not to drink other than a little wine at the Passover and perhaps a tot of Whiskey once in two to three years. In addition my diabetic condition does not allow for it.

Sin is the transgression of the Torah commands of YHVH. Drinking alcoholic beverages is not sin, unless we overdo it and get drunk. Drunkards and other sinners will not make it into the kingdom of Elohim, as we see in 1 Corinthians 6: 9 & 10: ***‘Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of Elohim? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, (10) nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of Elohim.’*** My point is: Do we have double standards. If so, then our children will also have double standards. It is only by being a genuinely caring and loving parent, who does not compromise when it comes to the Torah of YHVH that we are giving our children the best chance possible to not follow every new craze

or culture that is going around. This will also ensure their success and the blessings of YHVH as it says in Exodus 20: 6, as follows: ***“but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”***

Did you know that about 20% of boys in primary schools are diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), due to so-called hyperactivity, impulsivity and inattention? Doctors on request of teachers prescribe Ritalin for these children. The scientific name of Ritalin is methylphenidate. Children using this drug for prolonged periods, show the same symptoms as people on drugs like cocaine and methamphetamine. Symptoms such as ‘depression’ and ‘schizophrenia’ develop, but disappear when the drug is discontinued. Dr. Peter Breggin in a paper⁷ states that parents, teachers, therapists and physicians need to retake responsibility for our children (Breggin 2000). In addition he says that nothing can replace the personal relationships that children have with us as parents, teachers, counselors or doctors. On a societal level, our children need improved family life, better schools and more caring communities. In my day, boys used to do all the things that these poor boys are doing, yet these children are considered to have a problem by teachers and society. Many years ago, we as children were considered healthy when we displayed signs of being very active. Our parents and teachers knew how to control us. Today two forbidden words in schools and society are ‘corporal punishment’. Because of this and the abolition of the death penalty in our country, there is no more fear of anything, not even of Elohim.

Today’s culture has become so toxic that our only hope is to start a new culture. We need to start a culture of following YHVH and His Torah, as it is for our own good. This is what most of our grandparents used to do, before the Second World War, during and after which most (and especially people from Europe) lost their faith in YHVH our Elohim. The next step to stabilize the situation for our children is to consider home schooling. Network with likeminded parents in your area and you will soon learn that home schooling is being done already. This is another way in which we can ensure that our children will not get lost in today’s Sodom and Gomorrah culture. We need to truly come out of the Babylon of confusion so prevalent in our society. We need to repent (and return to Torah) and take full responsibility for the education of our children – else Yahshua’s words in the second part of Luke 18: 8 ***“However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”*** will be answered in the negative. Let us make sure that we and our children will be able to change this answer to the affirmative. (Selah) Think about it!

⁷ Source: “Confirming the Hazards of Stimulant Drug Treatment” – a paper by Peter Breggin, MD.

Chapter 16: We need to prepare to rule.

In Genesis 1 we read how YHVH created the heavens and the earth and populated it with living creatures. But we see that human kind was different from the rest of the life forms that He created. In verse 27 of Genesis 1, we read as follows: ***“And Elohim created man in His own image, in the image of Elohim He created him, male and female He created them.”*** We look like the image of Elohim, Yahshua. The fact that we are created in the image of Elohim hints at our destiny.

When we are humble and become teachable, then YHVH will reveal His ways and purpose to us. His purpose is to bring many sons to esteem, so that Elohim and all humanity will be of the same family – see Hebrews 2: 10 & 11 as follows: ***“For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to esteem, to perfect the author of their salvation through suffering. For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.”***

Even if this sounds unbelievable, you and I were created to be changed into spirit beings as the immortal children of YHVH our Elohim. We read this, one of the most inspiring passages that Paul wrote, in Romans 8: 16 and 17 ***“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of Elohim, and if children, heirs also, heirs of Elohim and fellow heirs with Messiah, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified (exalted) with Him.”***

In Luke 19 (starting in verse 12) we read the parable of the minas. In verse 16 we read about the slave who used the mina that his Master gave him, to make ten minas more. In verse 17 we see his reward for being industrious, as follows: ***“And he (his master) said to him, ‘Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, be in authority over ten cities.’”*** We understand that this parable is talking about Yahshua’s ascension to heaven, from where He will return to rule the world from Jerusalem, shortly. Those of us who have been called to be first fruits and who have used our minas (or talents) to increase the investment that YHVH made in us, will at Yahshua’s return be given authority to rule over cities, under Him during His millennium rule.

If we believe that we are going to rule over cities in the world to come, we need to start preparing ourselves for the Kingdom of Elohim. Yahshua will now soon return as conquering King of the Kingdom of Elohim. We read about His return in Revelation 19: 11 -16 as follows: ***‘And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no man knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of Elohim. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and he treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of Elohim, the Almighty. And on his robe and on His banner He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND MASTER OF MASTERS.”*** Yahshua’s first coming fulfilled a vital role of the Gospel - His sacrifice to make possible our forgiveness and justification, to finally enter His Kingdom and also to re-marry His bride Israel. His Second Coming will be to establish that incredible Kingdom.

From the above we see that Yahshua will rule as King of Kings and Master of Masters from Jerusalem, in the coming kingdom of Elohim. He will rule the people who survive the Great Tribulation and their children during the Millennium. We, who will be in the first resurrection at Messiah’s return, will rule under Messiah as Kings and Priests for a thousand years. We read about this in Rev. 5:10 as follows: ***“And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our Elohim; and they will reign upon the earth”*** and Rev. 20:6 ***“Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of YHVH and of Yahshua and will reign with Him for a thousand years”***.

However, we need to prepare ourselves to rule cities in the Kingdom of Elohim. The question is: How do we prepare for such a job function? The same laws and rules used to rule at the time of Moses will again be used in the Kingdom of Elohim. We will rule according to the “rules” set up by Elohim in Torah. It is therefore important that we repent and return to Torah, so that we will be able to rule under Yahshua during His millennium Kingdom. When Yahshua the Messiah returns, He is going to change people. All the evil that Satan caused will be stopped. Crime will be eradicated by divine force and people will be re-educated to know and keep the Laws of YHVH. As priests under Yahshua we will assist Him in the re-education of people.

We need to not only study Torah, we need to muse on it (think about it) always. We need to meditate on it day and night. We need to meditate and develop the power of the sub-conscience mind. Much like a good golfer, we need to practice our shots – even think it through (meditate on hitting a perfect shot). Meditation feeds on the sub-conscience mind. The power of positive affirmation is very important. We read in Joshua 1: 8 as follows: ***“This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”*** We need to be mindful (think) that YHVH is with us, wherever we go. In Psalm 19: 14 we read: ***‘Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Thy sight, O YHVH, my rock and my Redeemer.’*** We are what we believe and think. We read about this in Proverbs 23: 7 as follows: ***‘For as he thinks within himself, so he is.’***

What are we worth to YHVH? We must be worth a great deal to Him - He sent Yahshua the visible image of the invisible Elohim to die for us. If we are worth that much to our Father in Heaven, then we need to make sure that we do not disappoint Him. We need to show our love to Him by being obedient to His teachings or Torah. We need to love our neighbor as ourselves as put in Philippians 2: 4 - 6 ***‘do not merely look out for your own personal interest, but also for the interest of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Messiah Yahshua, who although He existed in the form of Elohim, did not regard equality with Elohim a thing to be grasped.’*** O, yes Yahshua was Elohim in the flesh, but He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, for us. YHVH is calling us out of this world to become first fruits in the Kingdom of Elohim.

However, He does not want us to remain as we are (like Christianity teaches). He wants us to develop perfect character before He will be able to use us as Kings and Priests during the Millennial rule of Yahshua and on into eternity. Character and skills have to be built and developed. As we see in 2 Timothy 1: 7 that YHVH gave us the right foundation to start with: ***‘For Elohim has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.’*** We need to build on that foundation by seasoning our speech as we read in Colossians 4: 6 ***‘Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.’*** YHVH wants us to hunger and thirst for righteousness as we see in Matthew 5: 6 ***“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”*** For our ladies YHVH says through Rav. Shaul in 1 Timothy 2: 15 ***‘But woman shall be saved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.’*** Our focus should be on the New Jerusalem, like our father Abraham’s was, as is recorded for us in Hebrews 11: 10: ***‘for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is Elohim.’***

How do we become more effective for the Kingdom of Elohim:

- Avoid situations that can lead to compromise; do not watch movies with violent or sexual content; do not eat or party with unbelievers; do not wear revealing clothes – make sure you are properly covered; do not visit people of the opposite gender without your or their partners presence; etc.
- Make sure that your words are encouraging to others.
- Make sure that your way of life reflects positively at all times.
- Set a good example to your children, friends and brethren.

- Use clean language at all times.
- As far as possible, eat only kosher foods.
- Keep the Sabbath with all your heart.
- Keep the Feast Days of YHVH as given in Leviticus 23 – it does not have to be kept in Jerusalem only, as long as we keep it in spirit and in truth. Please read Yahshua's own words recorded in John 4: 21 - 24.
- Pray and study regularly – that is our only two ways of staying in contact with our heavenly Father.
- Repent as soon as you have sinned and return to the right way of doing things, i.e. Torah.
- Think positively about yourself – meditate on the future and get focused.

In Philippians 4: 4 – 8 we read: ***'Rejoice in YHVH always; again I say, rejoice! Let your forbearing (moderation, self-control) spirit be known to all men. YHVH is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanks giving let your requests be made known to Elohim. And the peace of Elohim, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Messiah Yahshua.'*** We need to think on good things. Think of three or four people from Scriptures, whom you admire. Write down what you want to accomplish, within the next few days, months and years, example:

- Stop swearing and lying in the next week.
- Stop losing your temperin the next month.
- Start praising people for things well done..... in the next two months.
- Read the annual Torah portionnightly.

Remember that if we overcome these sins that so besets us, we will rule with Yahshua as promised in Revelation 2: 26 as follows: ***'And he who overcomes and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations.'*** Satan wants us to be negative. He wants us to think that we are losing the battle. However, we know that YHVH wants everyone of us to succeed, as we read in the last part of 2 Peter 3: 9 as follows: ***'not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.'*** The power of positive thinking and being positive is very important. Therefore: Say to yourself on a regular basis: "I am overcoming, I will be a pillar in the temple of My Elohim and Yahshua will write upon me the Name of Elohim" as recorded in Revelation 3: 12.

Chapter 17: What did Yahshua do in the temple on Chanukah?

Our Nazarene community is a very suspicious people. We do not trust anyone any longer. We who come from other pagan religions are most distrustful of all people on the face of the earth. Some do not even believe The Scriptures any longer, because of the mistranslations in the many versions available to us today. In addition they say that there is so much confusion around that they do not want to be taught anything by anyone any longer. My answer to them is that our function as called out ones is to preach the good news of the coming of the kingdom of Elohim and to teach people that there is hope of a better life in the world to come (Olam Haba). We read about the question of teachers (preachers) in Romans 10: 13 & 14, as follows: ***“for “WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF YHVH WILL BE SAVED.” (14) How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?”***

We all need teachers. I promise you, that you may read the Scriptures through many times in a year and without guidance by true teachers you will not understand a thing. This is described in Isaiah 28: 9 – 13: ***“To whom would He teach knowledge? And to whom would He interpret the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just taken from the breast? (10) For He says, ‘Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there.’ (11) Indeed, He will speak to this people Through stammering lips and a foreign tongue, (12) He who said to them, ‘Here is rest, give rest to the weary,’ And, ‘Here is repose,’ but they would not listen. (13) So the word of YHVH to them will be, ‘Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there,’ That they may go and stumble backward, be broken, snared, and taken captive.”*** Without teachers we will go right back where we came from. We need to grow in grace and knowledge (as we read in 2 Peter 3: 18), else we will be backsliding. But, I hear you say, where will we find teachers of truth, in our deceived world? For the answer let us turn to Malachi 3: 16 – 18 ***‘Then those who feared YHVH spoke to one another, and YHVH gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear YHVH and who esteemed His name. (17) “And they will be Mine,” says YHVH of hosts, “on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him. (18) So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves Elohim and one who does not serve Him.”’*** We cannot always sit on our own and study, we need to fellowship and get teachings. If we do that we will again be able to discern right from wrong and true teachers from false teachers.

We should not continue to major in the minors, such as arguing about the times of the Feast Days of YHVH our Elohim, as these have already been established by the Jews, who have the Oracles of Elohim (Psalms 60: 7 and Romans 3: 1 – 2). We should see the big picture: YHVH our Elohim’s plan of salvation for all mankind. This is one of the keys to the Kingdom of Elohim, but we are so busy arguing that we cannot understand it at all. It is déjàvu all over again. We need to take action and start doing something about it. To be Nazarene Israelites, we need to answer two vitally important questions. Number one is: Does YHVH exist? Number two: Is The Scriptures the word of YHVH our Elohim, from Genesis to Revelation? How do we do that, might you ask? How do we know that YHVH exists and that He is only one? Let us go to Genesis 9, where we read the account of Noah. We read about the covenant that YHVH made with Noah after the flood in verses 11 – 16 ***“And I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut off by water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth.” (12) ‘And Elohim said, “This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations; (13) I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be as for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. (14) And it shall come about, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, (15) and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. (16) When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant between Elohim and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.”’*** Fellow believers, is the rainbow enough proof for you that YHVH exists? Or have you already worked out some scientific explanation other than what He told us in

these verses. I am positive that some will do that because other than taking YHVH at His word, it has become customary for some, due to 'superior intellect' to contradict (or deny) YHVH our Elohim.

I recently had a report back on a few of the teachings that I sent out weekly. Two ladies in Cape Town in conversation said the following about my teachings: 'Jim Coetzee makes too much of Yahshua being the image of Elohim.' My answer to them is: 'I am only quoting the word of YHVH, if you do not believe in The Scriptures, give it away to someone who does.' We read in Romans 1: 19 - 20: ***"Because that which is known of Elohim is manifested among them (mankind), for Elohim has manifested it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible qualities (YHVH is invisible, and has no form⁸) have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, both His everlasting power (Yahshua is the Power of Elohim⁹) and divine nature (The Set-apart Spirit is the divine nature of Elohim¹⁰), for them to be without excuse."*** This section as I have explained before is all about the Oneness of Elohim. It states that from what has been made (created), we (mankind) should understand that, as we are made up of spirit, soul and body (as per 1 Thessalonians 5: 23); we have no excuse and should know YHVH our Elohim: That He like us is composed of three component parts; but is only ONE! After all, we are made in His image. Continuing on in verse 21 to 23 of Romans 1, we read: ***'For even though they knew Elohim, they did not honor Him as Elohim, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (22) Professing to be wise, they became fools, (23) and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible Elohim for the image in the form of corruptible man.....'*** We should know that YHVH exists by considering His creation. The quoted verses inform us, that even if some knew YHVH, they became wise in their own eyes and regarded Him (Yahshua) as merely a man. Like explained in a recent book by Rabbi Moshe Koniuchowsky entitled 'Our Last

⁸ According to 1Timothy 1: 17 YHVH our Elohim is eternal, immortal and invisible: ***"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only Elohim, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amein."*** This is confirmed in 1Timothy 6: 16, as follows: ***"who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amein."*** YHVH cannot be understood by mankind, since we cannot see or define Him. He is the invisible Elohim.

⁹ Colossians 1: 15, talking about Yahshua, states that He is the image of the invisible Elohim. This implies that we look like Yahshua as we read in Genesis 1: 27 that: ***"And Elohim created man in His own image, in the image of Elohim He created him; male and female He created them."*** YHVH worked with human beings by appearing in the flesh thus becoming their kinsman redeemer. In Exodus 13: 14 we read: ***"And it shall be when your son asks in time to come, saying, 'What is this?' then you shall say to him, "With a powerful hand YHVH brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery."*** In the last part of Psalm 98: 1 we read: ***"His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him."*** In Isaiah 52: 10 we read: ***"YHVH has bared His holy arm in the sight of all the nations, that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our Elohim."*** The name Yahshua means salvation as can be understood from Matthew 1: 21 ***"And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Yahshua, for it is He who will save His people from their sins."*** Yahshua the salvation of YHVH is His right hand and holy arm. In 1 Corinthians 1: 24 we read; ***"but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Messiah the power of Elohim and the wisdom of Elohim."*** Yes YHVH has brought Israel out of both the slavery of Egypt and sin, with a powerful hand: He indeed is our Savior.

¹⁰ The spiritual essence of YHVH is His divine nature. We are given a small portion of His divine nature, called a pledge of our inheritance when we are sealed by the Set - apart Spirit at immersion, according to Ephesians 1: 13 & 14 ***"In Him you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of salvation – having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Set-apart Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of Elohim's own possession, to the praise of His glory."*** It is by the indwelling of the Set-apart Spirit, that we demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit or divine nature of love, peace, patience, kindness, goodness and the like. In 1 Corinthians 2: 11 & 12 we read: ***"For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of Elohim no one knows except the Spirit of Elohim. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from Elohim, that we might know the things freely given to us by Elohim."***

Days Meal' Yahshua was not half man half Elohim; He was 100% Elohim, as we read in Colossians 2: 9 ***'For in Him all the fullness of Elohim¹¹ dwells in bodily form.'***

Answered prayer is another proof that YHVH exists. We are told in James 5: 13 – 15 ***'Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises. (14) Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the ecclesia, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of Yahshua; (15) and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and Yahshua will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.'*** The question is: How do we pray? Do we like most say the same prayer (or even reading it) over and over again, not even recalling what we say, or do we in heartfelt prayer talk to our Father in heaven and telling him what we and others need. I have many times prayed for protection, when traveling and know for a fact that YHVH has protected my wife and me at least once from certain death. I am positive that if you think carefully about it, you will be able to say the same.

Let us at this point answer the question regarding the Scriptures being the (true) word of YHVH. In Genesis 1: 7 we read: ***'And Elohim made the expanse and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so*** (no argument).¹² Turning to the book of Job we read in chapter 26: 7: ***"He stretches out the north over empty space, And hangs the earth on nothing."*** This fellow believer tells us that there is nothing at the North Pole and it will not be inhabited before the earth is renewed one day. It also tells us about gravity: stating that the earth hangs on nothing. Gravity like all the other laws of YHVH is an unseen force that will remain in force for ever.

Another example, showing that the Scriptures are true is where the apostle Peter prophesied about the power of the atom. In the book ***"Messiah" by Moore*** we read¹²: ***'The phrase "stored with fire" illustrates that Peter, although not knowledgeable himself about the atom, accurately described the immense power stored within it, which when split, emits much heat and fire, thus causing the disintegration of matter. Peter in 2 Peter 3: 10 – 13(KJV) states: "But the day of YHVH will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and Godliness. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of Elohim, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Here, in what Elohim inspired Peter to reveal to us, we have the explanation of how Elohim creates room for us to live in His New Earth! It is interesting to note that we could not have clearly understood these verses until the age of Einstein, nearly 2000 years after they were inscribed on papyrus. Through our modern understanding of nuclear physics, we can grasp something of Elohim's description to Peter of the immense heat and fire released when He explodes every atom. Furthermore, we now know Einstein was not the first to realize the power of the atom. We see it was also encoded by Elohim in the Holy Scriptures long ago.'***

Now that we have proven that YHVH exists and that the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation are indeed to word of YHVH, let us get back to answering the question raised at the beginning of this sermon. Let us turn to John 10 for the answer. We commence reading Yahshua's words in verse 11, as follows: ***"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep."*** Most of us from a non-Jewish background do not fully realize what Yahshua was saying here. Our Jewish brothers understood that Yahshua was implying that He is Elohim, seeing as king David stated clearly in Psalm 23: ***'YHVH is my shepherd.'*** Continuing in verses 12 & 13 of John 10 we read: ***"He who is a hireling, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, beholds the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees, and the wolf snatches them, and scatters them. (13) He flees because he is a hireling, and is not concerned about the sheep."***

¹¹ For those who prefer not to use the word Deity – rather use Elohim, instead of the word Mightiness as used by some.

¹² I replaced the title God in the quoted portion of the book 'Messiah' by Moore, with the Hebrew word Elohim.

Yahshua is our owner. He is according to John 1: 1–3 the Elohim who created us. He is stating here that He is not simply an agent of Elohim, but He is very Elohim.

In verses 14 - 18 of John 10, we read: ***"I am the good shepherd; and I know My own, and My own know Me, (15) even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. (16) And I have other sheep which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock with one shepherd. (17) For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. (18) No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."*** Here Yahshua is telling the Jews two important points. The first being, that the Jews did not kill Him, like so many Christians assert. He died willingly for the sins of the world, laying His life down for His sheep (those who follow Him). He told them that apart from them, He has other sheep also (talking about us – the called out ones), who will eventually be joining their Jewish brothers, to become one flock with one shepherd. We see in verses 19 - 21 of John 10 that at this point ***'There arose a division again among the Jews because of these words. (20) And many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?" (21) Others were saying, "These are not the sayings of one demon possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?"'***

In verse 22 - 24 of John 10, we are reminded about the time of the year during which Yahshua gave the teaching recorded in John, as follows: ***'At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; (23) it was winter, and Yahshua was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon. (24) The Jews therefore gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Messiah tell us plainly."*** In verse 25 - 27 ***'Yahshua answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me. (26) But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep. (27) My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me,"'*** Yahshua was a Jew and attended the Feast of Chanukah. We see here that Yahshua was telling some of the Jews that they do not believe Him, because they are not His sheep. He said His sheep follow Him in whatever He does. Yahshua attended Chanukah and gave one of His most important teachings at this time. Ask yourself, are you prepared to follow where Yahshua leads? Some Nazarene Israelites insinuate that Yahshua was not keeping 'this Jewish festival' and was only present in the temple, because it might have been on the Sabbath during Chanukah. My question to those is: Why if Chanukah was a 'pagan' Jewish festival, did He not rebuke them regarding its observance? Think carefully about it. If He observed Chanukah, will you follow Him, or not. If you are not prepared to follow our Master Yahshua, then I am sorry to tell you, that you are also not of His sheepfold. Continuing in verses 28 & 29 of John 10 Yahshua said: ***"and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. (29) My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."*** Once we are part of the sheepfold of Yahshua, we cannot be snatched out of His hand; we have made it, provided we remain faithful to YHVH and His Torah and do not leave the fold on our own accord. The important teaching that Yahshua gave on Chanukah was that He is one with YHVH, as is recorded in verse 30 of John 10, as follows: ***"I and the Father are one."*** The Jews understood exactly what Yahshua was claiming here and as we read in verse 31 ***'The Jews took up stones again to stone Him.'*** How long are those who call them by His title: Nazarenes, going to contradict their Master?

We all know that Yahshua our Messiah's return is near. Are we prepared to follow Him or not? If not, we might be the ones who are spoken about in Matthew 7: 21, as follows: ***"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Master, Master,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven."*** Think about it and make the correct decision.

Chapter 18: What do the Scriptures say about First Fruits?

The first time that we read about the concept of first fruits in the Scriptures is in Genesis 4: 3 – 5. We read here, that YHVH had no regard for Cain's offering, as follows: ***'So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to YHVH of the fruit of the ground. (4) And Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And YHVH had regard for Abel and for his offering; (5) but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.'*** The reason why Cain's offering was not accepted by YHVH, was that it was not of the first fruit of the ground, as was the case with Abel's offering; of the firstlings of his flock. Even though Cain was the firstborn son of Adam and Eve, he lost his firstborn rights to Abel, because of disobedience.

We read in Exodus 13: 12 ***'that you shall devote to YHVH the first offspring of every womb, and the first offspring of every beast that you own; the males belong to YHVH.'*** The Hebrew word for firstborn or offspring here is "peh'ter", meaning to separate as belonging to YHVH. In verse 2 of Exodus 13 YHVH says to Moses: ***"Sanctify to Me every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me."*** In Scriptural times the firstborn son was very important to YHVH. The firstborn son in a family was given a double portion of his father's possessions, and at his father's death, he became the head of the family. At that time he becomes the responsible ruler of his family and as a servant of YHVH, he is supposed to act as a custodian of Torah.

However, to retain his firstborn status, the firstborn had to satisfy a number of requirements: He had to demonstrate his faithfulness to both the Torah of Elohim and to his earthly father. If he violated these requirements, he lost his position to a younger brother, as we see in the examples of Esau and Reuben. The firstborn had to be prepared to give up his life for the sake of his family. He had to be prepared to redeem his kin, when they were taken into slavery for some reason. From very early in the history of mankind, the firstborn held the position of ruler (king) and spiritual leader (priest) in their extended families. The position was passed on from one firstborn to another. However, when mankind increased into many nations, YHVH conferred the position of firstborn to the nation of Israel (whose forefather Jacob, was also a firstborn son), who became His chosen nation from among all the nations in the world at that time. This was YHVH our Elohim's nation of choice, through whom He planned to reveal His presence. Because Abram was a firstborn son, YHVH made a covenant with him in Genesis 12: 1 – 3, as follows: ***'Now YHVH said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; (2) And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; (3) And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."***

The covenant promise was passed on to Isaac and then to Jacob, who was the first to represent the chosen nation Israel. When the time came for Jacob to transfer the birthright to his firstborn son, he denied Reuben, his firstborn the birthright, because he was not found worthy. Jacob favored his son Joseph, the firstborn of his second wife, more than his other eleven sons, but could not because of the Torah principle found in Deuteronomy 21, grant Joseph, full firstborn rights. The Torah principle in Deuteronomy 21: 15 – 17 is as follows: ***"If a man has two wives, the one loved and the other unloved, and both the loved and the unloved have borne him sons, if the firstborn son belongs to the unloved, (16) then it shall be in the day he wills what he has to his sons, he cannot make the son of the loved the firstborn before the son of the unloved, who is the firstborn. (17) But shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the unloved, by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; to him belongs the right of the firstborn."*** But, Jacob found a way around this Torah principle. He adopted Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh and gave Ephraim the double portion blessing of the birthright. He did not give the full role of king and priest to any one of his sons, but divided the position into two parts: According to Genesis 49: 8 – 12 Judah was the one who was given the position of leader and teacher of Torah and the priestly role went to Ephraim.

Because of this division of the birthright, there was no firstborn in the full sense in the family of Israel, even though many years later YHVH declared that the people of Israel were His firstborn in Exodus 4: 22. However, the nation of Israel has never taken up that position, even though it was destined for it. But this could only take place once the sin has been removed from those called to be a kingdom of priests. Therefore Yahshua fulfilled the righteous requirements of a firstborn when He appeared on the scene in the history of Israel. He became the sacrifice for sin, atoning for both the nations of Judah and Israel.

The firstborn according to Torah does not belong to anyone, but YHVH. The ones who are His are identified as marked out through circumcision of both the flesh and the heart. In Exodus 19: 5 & 6 YHVH said to Moses: ***'Now if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; (6) and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.'*** Israel was to be a light to the other nations in the world, by revealing YHVH to them by practicing Torah. However the nation of Israel could not live up to the requirements of becoming a kingdom of priests. As a result YHVH rejected Israel from being His priests. He finally caused the nation to split into two separate nations namely Judah and Israel. Israel was later exiled by the Assyrians and lost their identity. They became known as "Not My people", as is recorded in Hosea 1: 9.

At this point, let us backtrack for a bit. Whilst the Israelites were in the wilderness, we read the account where YHVH made the Levites the firstborn in place of Israel, because of sin in the camp. We see in Exodus 32: 1 – 6, when Moses was receiving the Torah from YHVH, the people asked Aaron to make a golden calf for them to worship, as follows: ***'Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron, and said to him, "Come make us an elohim who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him."*** (2) ***'And Aaron said to them, "Tear off the gold rings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me."*** (3) ***'Then all the people tore off the gold rings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. (4) And he took this from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, and made it into a molten calf; and they said, "This is your elohim, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt."*** (5) ***'Now when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a feast to YHVH."*** We see here that Aaron also declared a feast to YHVH. This was a grave mistake, as we know that YHVH has given us His appointed times which Moses (or the ones sitting in his seat) shall proclaim as Set-apart convocations, at the times appointed for them.

When Moses eventually returned to the camp, he became very angry and threw the two tablets, on which YHVH wrote the commandments with His own finger, and shattered them at the foot of the mountain. In verses 26 - 29 of Exodus 32, we read: ***'then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, "Whoever is for YHVH, come to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered together to him. (27) And he said to them, "Thus says YHVH, the Elohim of Israel, 'Every man of you put his sword upon his thigh, and go back and forth from gate to gate in the camp, and kill every man his brother, and every man his friend, and every man his neighbor."*** (28) ***'So the sons of Levi did as Moses instructed, and about three thousand men of the people fell that day. (29) Then Moses said, "Dedicate yourselves today to YHVH – for every man has been against his son and against his brother – in order that He may bestow a blessing on you today."*** YHVH through Moses temporarily appointed Levi as His firstborn, because they executed judgment on the people of Israel and killed about three thousand men amongst those who worshipped the idol calf. We read accordingly in Numbers 3: 12 ***"Now, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the sons of Israel instead of every firstborn, the issue of the womb among the sons of Israel. So the Levites shall be Mine."*** This should also serve as a warning to us, that we do not have the right to proclaim feast days to YHVH our Elohim.

We have seen before that the firstborn are identified by circumcision of the heart (and the flesh – to live in the land promised to Abraham). We are marked with a sign to identify us as the firstborn to YHVH. However, we see in Isaiah 49: 16 that our owner is also marked for our sake: ***“Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.”*** Brethren do we now understand the true gospel? In Deuteronomy 30: 1 - 8 Moses prophesied about the renewed covenant, before Israel entered the promised land, as follows: ***“So it shall be when all these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where YHVH your Elohim has banished you, (2) and you return to YHVH your Elohim and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, (3) then YHVH your Elohim will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where YHVH your Elohim has scattered you. (4) If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there YHVH your Elohim will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. (5) And YHVH your Elohim will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. (6) Moreover YHVH your Elohim will circumcise your heart (immersion) and the hearts of your descendants, to love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live. (7) And YHVH your Elohim will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. (8) And you shall again obey YHVH your Elohim, and observe all His commandments which I command you today.”*** After the establishment of the new covenant, by the death and resurrection of the kinsman redeemer of Israel, everything was in place for the nation of Israel to receive their priestly position among the nations in the world.

Yahshua, who is also the firstborn son of YHVH, paid the penalty for our sins and nailed the certificate of debt, for transgressing Torah to the cross. After, Yahshua dealt with our sin through His priesthood and sacrifice, the ‘temporary’ Levitical priesthood came to an end. Yahshua has done away with the Levitical Priesthood, with its requirement to shed the blood of animals for the forgiveness of sin, to establish the Melchizedekian Priesthood. We see in 2 Thessalonians 2: 13 & 14 that in these last days YHVH is calling us through the gospel to become first fruits (or from the beginning for salvation), as follows: ***‘But we should always give thanks to Elohim for you, brethren beloved by YHVH, because Elohim has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in truth. (14) And it was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Master Yahshua Messiah.’*** A second witness to this may be read in James 1: 18; ***‘In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures.’*** As chosen first fruits we are again a Chosen Race, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR ELOHIM’S OWN POSSESSION, according to 2 Peter 2: 9. This is also confirmed in Revelation 1: 5 & 6, as follows: ***‘and from Yahshua Messiah, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, (6) and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His Elohim and Father; to Him be the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.’***

Our Father YHVH cannot lie. In Deuteronomy 30 He promised through Moses, to gather us from where we were scattered because of our sin. Through Messiah Yahshua we are now part of the commonwealth of Israel. We the Israel of Elohim are like Isaac, the children of promise. If we overcome our sins we will be given a position of rulership under Messiah during the coming kingdom of Elohim (as per Revelation 3: 21). Our Messiah will rule from Jerusalem for a thousand years and we, who are called to be first fruits during this age, will rule under Him as kings and priests on the earth, during the age to come. We read this in Revelation 5: 10 ***“And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our Elohim; and they shall reign upon the earth.”***

Let us end by reading Romans 11: 25 – 33, noting especially verse 29: ***‘For I do not want you, brethren to be uninformed of the mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel (the Jews) until the fullness of the Gentiles (those Israelites who have been scattered because of sin and who lost their identity and think that they are gentiles) have come in: (26) and thus all***

Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB. (27) AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS." (28) From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of Elohim's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; (29) for the gifts and the calling of Elohim are irrevocable. (30) For just as you once were disobedient to Elohim, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, (31) so these also now have been disobedient, in order that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy. (32) For Elohim has shut up all in disobedience that He might have mercy to all. (33) Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of Elohim! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!'

Chapter 19: What is truth?

Where are we able to find truth in our world today? Do we find truth with those who profess to believe in Messiah? Ask anyone who claims to be a Christian, Nazarene or Messianic believer what truth is and such a believer will tell you that whatever he/she believes is truth. Most of these groups claim that their belief system or doctrines are based on the Scriptures, and each group claims to have the truth. However, if we examine their doctrines, we will see that, even though most believe in a savior, very few agree doctrinally. All claim to be Spirit filled but all of them disagree on some points. Surely if we consider all the different doctrines, we must agree that all cannot be right, when some doctrines of one group are completely opposite to those of another. Why all this confusion? Why such differences of beliefs? Where can we find real truth?

To get to the root of the problem, we need to ask ourselves, who is the originator of all the confusion? We all know that right at the beginning, after our Father YHVH created, or rather recreated the earth, Satan came on the scene again. Let us backtrack a bit: Prior to this, at the very beginning, Father YHVH planned to bring forth beings that could become his children. These children would be like Him in every respect. They would have His character reproduced in them by His Set-apart Spirit. YHVH commenced His plan to reproduce Himself by creating powerful spiritual beings called angels. These angels were free moral agents, with the ability to choose to go the way of YHVH – the way of giving and sharing, or the wrong way - which is in essence a way of get. They followed the correct way for many years, until one day, a third of the angels followed the archangel Lucifer in rebellion against YHVH to take over the throne of YHVH in the third heaven. They fought against the other two thirds of the angels, still loyal to the Eternal, but, they were overcome and thrown down to earth, where they are now living as fallen angels or demons. These angels, who are spirit beings and who sinned with full knowledge, could not change once they decided to follow a life of wrongdoing (Isaiah 14).

This war between the angels and demons left the world formless and void. This is the condition we find the earth in when we open our Scriptures at Genesis 1: 2 and it was at this point in time that YHVH decided to recreate the heavens and the earth. He also at this point chose not to create his future children as spirit beings. He decided at the outset, to create human kind from physical matter, in His image with the mind power to think, plan and 'create'. They too would have free moral agency to decide between good and evil. They had to prove through their lives that they would develop the perfect character of YHVH and follow His way of life. The plan was that when they have fully developed the character of our Father YHVH, they would eat of the tree of life and live forever. But, at this point in time the serpent, Satan came on the scene. Being the adversary, he did not come on the scene to promote harmony with YHVH, but rather to sow disunity. He succeeded and the rest is history: Adam and Eve sinned, induced by the lies and temptation of Satan. Since then all humankind have sinned and fall short of the esteem of YHVH. At that point in time they were banished from the Garden of Eden, so that they cannot access the tree of life, any longer. Death spread to all humankind through the sins of our forefathers. YHVH has allowed all of mankind to be led into sin by Satan, thus allowing us to see for ourselves where sin leads us. He is allowing humanity to experiment with different forms of government, culture, education and religion. He is allowing us to learn that by living life free of His leadership only leads to failure.

This seems to be a very simple explanation of what happened in those early days. There might have been numerous reasons why Eve succumbed to Satan, but the end result is the same. Both she and Adam moved away from YHVH and His word. This is also the same reason why so many Christian/Messianic and Nazarene groups have been seduced by Satan. They have decided to follow some doctrines and to reject others and in doing so, they have moved away from the word of YHVH. Many will assure you that they only listen to YHVH, and not to Satan, as mother Eve did. But, is this really the case? When Satan came to Eve, he did not start by telling her that he is the great deceiver who came to turn her and Adam away from YHVH. No, we read in Genesis 3: 1, ***'Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field.'*** Being the deceiver of

the whole world (as we see in Revelation 12: 9), Satan disguised his real intent. He tempted Eve with something that she desired. Before she knew she had departed from our Father's truth and presence. If some of the so-called doctrines of the various religious groups do not come from YHVH, then where do they come from? Have they not come from that great deceiver called Satan, the devil?

Mother Eve was deceived by Satan to partake of the fruit of the tree of good and evil. We read in Genesis 3: 6 ***'When the woman saw that the tree was good for food*** (it appealed to the lust of the flesh), ***and that it was a delight to the eyes*** (it appealed to Eve's human reasoning), ***and that the tree was desirable to make one wise*** (it appealed to Eve's vanity or pride of life), ***she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her and he ate.'*** Mother Eve was deceived by Satan to partake of the fruit of the tree of good and evil. He is even today, busy deceiving people to partake of that very tree. To get you to abandon your current beliefs, Satan through a human agent offer you a position or something that appeals to your vanity, the lust of the flesh, or your human reasoning. In our previous affiliation, when the group started going back from the Sabbath to Sunday; from observing the Feast Days of YHVH and from eating Kosher Foods, they started offering members positions in the Ministry, to get them to stay on and accept the changes without complaining.

The fruits of the tree of good and evil are mixed: some good, combined with some evil. That is why these fruits are desired by many people. There is a coating of truth which conceals varying amounts of error. A glass of milk is good for you, but if it contains poison, it could kill you. It is the same with truth. If you believe in truth, it will set you free from sin. However, if it is mixed with error, it could result in your spiritual demise. There are groups who accept that Messiah is the son of our Heavenly Father YHVH. Yet, they absolutely refuse to use the Set-apart Names of both our Father and His son. By doing so they are essentially saying that they are 'not His People', as we read in Isaiah 52: 6 ***"Therefore My people shall know My name; therefore in that day I am the one who is speaking, 'Here I am.'"*** These people ignore the only name by which men must be saved, as we read in Acts 4: 12, as follows: ***"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."*** There are many other examples of truth and error being mixed, such as keeping Xmas as the birth of Messiah, even though we are not given the date of His birth anywhere in the Scriptures.

YHVH warns repeatedly that His people must not adopt pagan ways. Yet many believe that they may dress up as Santa Claus saying that our Messiah is the reason for the season. How can any group who desires to walk in truth, support paganism? Satan soothes the consciences of many by means of half-truths and ultimately by means of blatant lies. Like the ministers in various groups, Satan, the great deceiver comes to the different groups, as an angel of light to deceive the servants of YHVH who are not on their guard. The Oneness of Elohim is one doctrine where Satan is having a field day convincing believers otherwise. Satan seduced Eve, right under our Father's nose, so to speak. He even tried to tempt Yahshua. These two incidents show us clearly that no individual or group is exempt from the onslaught of Satan, by virtue of the fact that they have a close relationship with Father YHVH. In fact the closer one desires to be with YHVH, the greater will be Satan's effort to break that relationship. Do not forget that Satan is presently the god of this world (see 2 Corinthians 4: 4). Let us also not forget that He wants to detract us from the pure worship of YHVH, so that most will not know whom they really worship. His main purpose is to make a mockery of true worship. He even enters our fellowship at times and distracts our thoughts, so that we do not hear or listen to what we are being taught.

One of the causes for the conflicting beliefs is a false confidence, which ignores the facts given in Ephesians 6: 12, as follows: ***'For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places.'*** We have seen that Eve's beliefs were ultimately based on Satan's words, even though she started on the correct path. At the beginning she and Adam listened to YHVH, but eventually deceived by Satan, she obeyed Satan. We see in Revelation 2: 4 that in the case of the Ecclesia at Ephesus, they too allowed other

things to creep in, for we are told that they left their first love. We see in 1 Timothy 4: 1 ***'But the spirit explicitly says that in the later times (our day) some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.'*** How can that be, you may ask? Are we not all filled with the Ruach HaKodesh? The most important evidence of having the Ruach HaKodesh, is that such a group will have truth. How is it then possible that not every group claiming to have the Ruach HaKodesh has the truth of YHVH? The reason is that they might have the wrong spirit present in their group. Yahshua himself said in the first part of John 16: 13 ***"But when He, the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth."*** Yahshua also said in Matthew 7: 21 – 23 that in the end, what will matter are not claims to fame of having the Ruach HaKodesh, but the extent to which we were walking in truth by obeying His commandments. All the 'wonderful works' would be claimed by groups and people who also claim to have the Ruach HaKodesh. These people like to point to the good works and miracles that they perform in our Master's Name. But Yahshua said that only those who hear His words and acts upon it may be compared to a man who built his house on the rock – Messiah.

What is truth? If we want to be obedient to truth, we need to know what it is. We cannot rely on customs, beliefs, popularity poles, persuasive clever arguments – we cannot even trust the claims of these many so-called spirit filled groups. Where then, can we find truth? We know that truth is defined as: accurate, authentic, information, which is consistent with fact or reality, not full of errors and falsehood. Yahshua himself said in John 17: 17 ***"Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth."*** However, even knowing what truth is, there are still many obstacles in finding the real truth. Satan has placed many barriers and obstacles in the way of finding truth. Satan has not only concealed the original translation of the Scriptures, but he has also compounded the difficulty by the nuances of translators' preferences or beliefs. Satan started deceiving mankind in the Garden of Eden, but is even now busy deceiving people and groups by hiding truth through mistranslations, etc. In the process many a believer has fallen foul to his devices. He continues to trap the unsuspecting and gullible, and has led many astray.

However, all is not lost. Those who are willing to study and search, truth will be found in the Scriptures, even without the original texts. Many translations have been made from the original manuscripts and even though these translations have tended to reflect the beliefs or agendas of the translators, they have been very important. In any case, despite the many translations, the Scriptures remain our only reference to be used to discover the Truths of YHVH. We need to study using many different translations as well as concordances, commentaries and encyclopedias. We must check and countercheck each reference, so as to weed out as much un-truths as possible. A good reference bible is an invaluable tool for checking one word or thought against a similar occurrence elsewhere in the Scriptures. It is a good motto to let the Scriptures be its own interpreter. Yahshua promised in John 8: 32 that those who believed in Him would know the truth, as follows: ***"and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*** This is not an empty promise if we keep studying the word of YHVH, we will be led into all truth by the Ruach HaKodesh. However, we must make an effort to search for it like one who is looking for treasure. We do not automatically obtain truth by saying that we believe in YHVH. We need to seek and we will find, as Yahshua said in Matthew 7: 7 and Luke 11: 9. These words are charged with His faith that raised the dead, stilled the storm and brought the world into being. We are told by the highest authority in the world, how to find truth.

Truth is not found by accepting that which has been honored by tradition. Neither is it found by accepting whatever we are taught. Truth is also not necessarily found by asking clever questions. We must personally search for YHVH in the Scriptures as we read in Jeremiah 29 verses 13 and 14: ***'And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. (14) And I will be found by you,' declares YHVH, 'and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you.' Declares YHVH, 'and I will bring you back to the place where I sent you into exile.'*** The truth is available and must be sought by digging for it in the Scriptures. YHVH will reveal truth to His true followers who are willing to delve beneath the many layers of tradition, but He conceals truth from those who do not

seek for it. Truth is given to those who are earnestly seeking to learn (YHVH)'s ways. Yahshua said in Matthew 5: 6 ***"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."*** Yahshua taught in parables to those who had eyes and saw not and ears and heard not. However, he expounded the meaning of these parables to his disciples. The disciples left all to follow their Rabbi. To find Rabbi Yahshua's truths today, we too must be willing to forsake all. We must turn from compromising, clever sounding, popular and shallow doctrines with no Scriptural backing.

Those who approach the Scriptures to find support for their doctrines will almost always come to the wrong conclusion. The correct method is to put the Scriptures first, and to learn what it teaches. All doctrines must be substantiated by two or three Scriptural witnesses. Truth will be found by those whose honest prayers are as we read in Psalm 86: 11 ***'Teach me Thy way, O YHVH; I will walk in Thy truth; Unite my heart to fear Thy name.'*** Yes brethren, with an attitude of total submission to YHVH and a desire to obey Him and learn of Him, we will be led by His Ruach HaKodesh into all truth. Only then will we know the truth that will lead to salvation (or make us free). Once we have found truth we must humble ourselves to be taught by YHVH. If we find that we were in error before we found the truth, we need to repent and make the necessary corrections in our lives, i.e. return to Torah observance.

We must never end our search for more of the truth of YHVH, as searching for and discovering more truth is the only way that we grow spiritually. However, when we search for truth and find it, YHVH expects us to implement such truth in our lives. If we do not change accordingly, YHVH will not give us more truth until we accept the new truth and return to Torah (Torah is truth). Truth should motivate us to continue to search for more truth. Nevertheless, finding truth imposes a major responsibility, as we read in the second part of Luke 12: 48 ***"And from everyone who has been given much shall much be required; and to whom they entrust much, of him they will ask all the more."*** When you have found the truths of YHVH, a flame is kindled in you that no opposition from man or demons can extinguish. You will want to shout out the truth knowing that you have indeed found that pearl of great price. Halleluyah!

Chapter 20: Knowing YHVH.

YHVH has no form – He is infinite. We read this in:

- *Deuteronomy 4: 12 “Then YHVH spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form – only a voice.”*
- *1 Kings 8: 27 “But will Elohim dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain Thee, how much less this house which I have built!”*

As we read in the following Scriptures, no man has ever seen YHVH our Elohim:

- *John 1: 18 “No man has seen Elohim at any time; the only begotten Elohim who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”*
- *1Timothy 6: 16 “who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amein.”*
- *1Timothy 1: 17 “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only Elohim, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amein.”*

However, who or what did Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, Isaiah and the seventy elders of Israel see?, as is recorded in:

- *Exodus 24: 9 &10 “Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the Elohim of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself.”*
- *Isaiah 6: 1 “In the year of King Uzziah’s death, I saw YHVH sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple.”*
- *Numbers 12: 8 “With him I speak mouth to mouth, Even openly, and not in dark sayings, And he beholds the form (manifestation) of YHVH. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant, against Moses?”*

The answer can be found in the following Scriptures:

- *Colossians 1: 15 “And He (Yahshua) is the image (form) of the invisible Elohim, the first-born (protokos = brought forth) of all creation.”*
- *Colossians 2: 9 “For in Him all the fullness of Deity (Mightiness) dwells in bodily form.”*
- *Hebrews 1: 3 “And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.”*
- *1 John 1: 1 & 2 “What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life – and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us.”*
- *John 1: 1 & 14 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and the Word was Elohim. And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us, and we beheld His esteem, esteem as of the only begotten from the Father full of grace and truth.”*
- *2 Corinthians 4 : 3 & 4 “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the esteem of Messiah, who is the image of Elohim.”*

This helps us realize that we look like the image of YHVH namely, Yahshua, as we read in:

- *Genesis 1: 27 “And Elohim created man in His own image, in the image of Elohim He created him; male and female He created them.”*

Our Father YHVH tells us that there is only One YHVH, in:

- *Deuteronomy 6: 4 “Hear, O Israel! YHVH is our Elohim, YHVH is one!”*
- *Exodus 20: 3 “You shall have no other elohim before/besides Me.”*

However how do we explain these seemingly contradictions in the following Scriptures?

- *Genesis 19: 24 “Then YHVH rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from YHVH out of heaven.”*
- *Zechariah 3: 2 ‘And YHVH said to Satan, “YHVH rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, YHVH who has chosen Jerusalem rebukes you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?”*

YHVH answers this question Himself in:

- *Deuteronomy 4: 35 “To you it was shown that you might know that YHVH, He is Elohim; there is no other besides Him.”*
- *Deuteronomy 4: 39 “Know therefore today, and take it to heart that YHVH, He is Elohim in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other.”*
- *Isaiah 44: 6 “Thus says YHVH, the King of Israel And His Redeemer, YHVH of Hosts: I am the first and I am the last, And there is no Elohim besides Me.”*

YHVH is one and He has become our Salvation, as is confirmed in:

- *Exodus 15: 2 “YHVH is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation.”*
- *Psalms 118: 14 “YHVH is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation.”*
- *Isaiah 63: 8 ‘For He said, “Surely, they are My people, Sons who will not deal falsely.” So He became their Savior.’*
- *Isaiah 43: 3 “For I am YHVH your Elohim, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior.”*
- *Isaiah 43: 10 & 11 “You are My witnesses” declares YHVH, “And My servant whom I have chosen, In order that you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He (or as it says in the Jerusalem Bible version of The Scriptures; ‘that it is I’). Before Me there was no Elohim formed, And there will be none after Me. I, even I, am YHVH and there is no savior besides Me.”*
- *Titus 1: 3 “but at the proper time manifested, even His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of Elohim our Savior.”*

We read in the following Scriptures, that YHVH is our Rock:

- *Deuteronomy 32: 3 “For I proclaim the name of YHVH; Ascribe greatness to our Elohim! The Rock! His work is perfect.”*
- *Psalms 78: 35 “And they remembered that Elohim was their rock, And the Most High Elohim their Redeemer.”*
- *Isaiah 26: 4 ‘Trust in YHVH forever, For in Elohim YHVH we have an everlasting Rock.”*

Yet we know Yahshua called Himself and was known as the Rock.

- **Matthew 16: 18** *"And I also say to you that you are Peter (Petros - meaning a pebble/or a small stone), and upon this rock (Petra:- meaning Himself) I will build My ecclesia; and the gates of Hades (death) shall not overpower it."*
- **Romans 9: 32 & 33** *"Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, just as it is written, : Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed."*
- **Peter confirmed this in Acts 4: 11 & 12** *"He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the very corner stone. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name given under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."*
- **1 Corinthians 10: 4** *"and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Messiah."*

Yahshua is the Right hand of YHVH, as is recorded in:

- **Psalm 98: 1(last part) & 2** *"His right hand and His set-apart arm have gained the victory for Him. YHVH has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations."*
- **Jeremiah 32: 17 & 21** *'Ah YHVH Elohim! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee.' 'And Thou didst bring Thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and with wonders, and with a strong hand and with an out stretched arm, and with great terror.'*
- **Isaiah 52: 10** *"YHVH has bared His set-apart arm In the sight of all the nations, That all the ends of the earth may see The salvation of our Elohim."*

Yahshua is the wisdom and the power of Elohim.

- **1 Corinthians 1: 24** *"but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Messiah the power of Elohim and the wisdom of Elohim."*
- **1 Corinthians 2: 7 & 8** *"but we speak Elohim's wisdom in a mystery; the hidden wisdom which Elohim predestined before the ages of glory (see Proverbs 8: 22 – 30); the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it, they would not have impaled the Master of glory."*
- **1 Timothy 3: 16** *"And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: Elohim, who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Beheld by Angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, taken up in glory."*

Finally we who understand this mystery and do not stumble over Yahshua any longer are a chosen race (the Israel of YHVH), a royal Priesthood, a set-apart nation, a people for Elohim's own possession, that we may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light (Paraphrased from 2 Peter 2: 9).

Summary.

- YHVH is one – He exists as the Infinite Eternal invisible Elohim.
- However, at the same time He reveals Himself as the image of Elohim, called the Word of YHVH, by which He is seen in the heavens and appears unto men such as Abraham, Moses, Nadab, Abidu, Isaiah and the 70 elders of Israel. YHVH made the heavens by the word of YHVH, who was with Him in the beginning.
- He also reveals Himself as the invisible presence by which He manifests His omnipotence and is as such experienced by His creatures (see Acts 2).
- In addition He appeared as the Angel of YHVH to Hagar (Genesis 16), Jacob (Genesis 32) amongst others.

To end this study I would like to quote from an e-mail a friend by the name **Tsippi Cohen** from the USA sent me a while back: *"Christianity Flees before us., Judaism has turned on its 'HEAD'..., Islam gets a look in but like all other religions, they just don't get it, to say that the "Father" plays us like a fiddle is a gross understatement. The "Father" extends Himself in the form of His "Word"...,the "Word" which is still the manifestation of the "Father" ...,extends Himself in the form of the "Son", who extends and reaches down to "Malkhut" (earth).It's still the "Father" and after all this it cannot be rocket science to see that Yahushuah is the "Father"... that's why salvation is not attained by any other name other than Yahushuah, ... because it's Him and will only hand us back to the "Father" when we fully comprehend, ... and I suspect that this would be somewhere at the end of His 1000 year reign... "Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh". Too many of us let the P'shats of scripture drag us back to division and dis-unity and then falling away from the "Oneness" of the "Father" and all that ensues.
May the "Father" of "Lights" give you peace"*

Chapter 21: Yahshua is the same Yesterday, Today and Forever.

There are many believers in Yahshua our Messiah, who insist that He had long hair, because as they believe He took a Nazirite vow, which forbid Him to drink any wine. This according to their theory means that He could not partake of the last Passover, before His death on the tree. Others say that He could not partake of the Passover, since He became the Passover lamb that died for the sins of the world, at the time when the Jews of His day slaughtered their Passover lambs. My purpose with this sermon is to refute these misconceptions and to hopefully give us a glimpse into His life, from the pages of the Scriptures. We will study facts about His earthly life, death and resurrection to awesome power and learn about the great impact that these events have on the daily lives of each one of us.

Knowing someone involves more than knowing what he or she looks like. It involves understanding his/her personality and character traits: how the person lives, what he/she believes and stands for. Most of us, including those who have grown up, know our parents. But the question is do we know our Elohim? Think about it: How well do you know Yahshua the Messiah? Do you know His character traits and personality? As much as it is important for children to know their human parents, so is it important for us to know YHVH our Elohim. Yahshua is a perfect example of what Father YHVH our Elohim is like. We come to know the Father by knowing what Messiah was like, whilst He was on earth. We read accordingly in John 14: 6 – 11, ***'Yahshua said to him (Thomas), "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. (7) If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." (8) 'Philip said to Him, "Master, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." (9) 'Yahshua said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father?'(10) Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. (11) Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves.'"*** Knowing who Yahshua the Messiah was and is, what He looked like, what He did and what He stood for is essential to knowing YHVH our Elohim.

During Yahshua's life time the camera was not invented yet; He could therefore not leave us any photographs or pictures of Himself. However, He has given us a written record of what He looked like when He was on earth. To find out How Messiah, who is Elohim in the flesh, described Himself, we turn to Isaiah 53. Here we find as accurate a description of our Master and Savior as He wanted us to have. We read in verse 2 of Isaiah 53, ***'For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to him.'*** Yahshua had no unusual or particularly outstanding physical appearance. Nor did He have physical beauty. He was neither handsome nor ugly. There was nothing about His appearance that impressed people or to make them flock to Him. He did not have biceps like a weight lifter, but was probably what we would call plain looking. He possessed no striking physical traits that made Him instantly recognizable – He definitely had no halo!

Yahshua our Messiah looked so much like the average Jew amongst whom He lived that Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Messiah, had to point Him out to the people who arrested Him, by kissing Him. We read this in Matthew 26: 47 – 50, as follows: ***'And while He was still speaking, behold Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a great multitude with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and elders of the people. (48) Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I shall kiss, He is the one; seize Him." (49) And immediately he went to Yahshua and said, 'Hail, Rabbi!' and kissed Him. (50) And Yahshua said to him, "Friend, do what you have come for." Then they came and laid hands on Yahshua and seized Him.'***

Also notice what else Yahshua said about the situation when Judas kissed Him in Luke 22: 52 & 53: ***'And Yahshua said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders who had come against Him, "Have***

you come out with swords and clubs as against a robber? (53) Whilst I was with you daily in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me; but this hour and the power of darkness are yours.” Yahshua said here that those who sought after Him saw Him many times in the temple. If He had any distinguishable physical traits, there would have been no need for Judas to point Him out to them.

One thing is certain, Yahshua would not have had long hair, as He inspired Rav Shaul to write in 1 Corinthians 11: 14 in the first part of verse 15: ***‘Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him, (15) but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her?’*** Yahshua is our High Priest as we read in Hebrews 7 & 8, especially in verse 24 of Hebrew 7: ***‘but He, on the other hand, because He abides forever, holds His priesthood permanently.’*** And verse 1 of Hebrews 8, as follows: ***‘Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.’*** We read in Ezekiel 44 from verse 15 on, about the Levitical priests, the Sons of Zadok, meaning sons of righteousness, during the millennium rule of Yahshua the Messiah. We see that they will wear turbans in verse 18 and that they will not have long hair, in verse 20, as follows: ***“Also they shall not shave their heads, yet they shall not let their locks grow long; they shall only trim the hair of their heads.”***

Many supposed pictures of Yahshua have Him wearing shoulder-length locks of hair. However, from these Scriptures the pictures of Yahshua are not consistent with what the word of YHVH said to be appropriate hair for men to wear. Yahshua would not have done something that He inspired Rav Shaul to say was shameful and dishonored Him. Yahshua’s hair was worn in the same style common among Jewish men of His day. Also remember that there was nothing in His appearance that made Him recognizable or outstanding. Racially, Yahshua was a Jew. As a Jew He was Caucasian, not Oriental or black. His skin color could have been anything from olive to what we know as white. His facial features would have been characteristic of Jews. His hair could have been black, dark brown or even red. However, it is dubious that His hair color was such that it could have drawn attention to Him. If he was indeed an average looking Jew, His eyes would have been darker than wine, similar to that of Judah, described in Genesis 49: 12. At the same time, we must remember, that His description lacks enough details for us to be able to draw a completely accurate picture of Him. I believe that this was intentional on His part, since it prevents us from making, and accordingly worshipping pictures of Him, which would be a direct violation of the Second Commandment.

Yahshua our Messiah was a law keeper and He did not come to do away with Torah at all. We read this in Matthew 5: 17, ***“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.”*** The word ‘fulfill’ here means to complete: Reading the rest of Matthew 5, we see how Yahshua shows us that the Torah is to be obeyed and lived with spiritual intent – not only in the literal sense. It means that He came to make the Torah more binding, as we read in verse 27 & 28 of Matthew 5, as follows: ***“You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY’; (28) but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.”*** We also see that Yahshua our Messiah, did not abolish the Sabbath command as some claim, but as we read in Luke 4: 16, ***‘And He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.’*** Yahshua did not only keep the letter of the law by not working on the Sabbath, but He also kept the spiritual intent by attending Sabbath services, at the synagogue.

To answer the question of whether Yahshua took a Nazirite vow as some believers assert, I quote here from note number 816 of the ‘Restoration Scriptures’ True Name Edition Study Bible, as follows: *“Yisraelites always use wine to live before YHVH, as did the Master Yahshua Himself¹³. They always partake, but are never to enter into excess. The custom that believers don’t, or should not even taste wine is a pagan tradition perpetrated by the so-called churches of Romanism and Protestantism. The only kind of Yisraelite that cannot drink wine is one under a Nazirite vow.”* There is no record of Yahshua having taken a Nazirite vow

¹³ Underlining for emphasis, mine.

anywhere in the Scriptures, and if He did, it would definitely be recorded as such for us. Instead we read what He said about Himself in Luke 7: 33 & 34, as follows: ***“For John the Immerser has come eating no bread and drinking no wine; and you say, ‘He has a demon!’ (34) The Son of Man has come eating and drinking; and you say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man, and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gathers and sinners!’”***

From Scriptures we know that He definitely kept the Passover, as He instructed His disciples to go to a certain man’s house to tell him that they will keep the Passover in his house. We read this in Mark 14: 14. Yahshua was obedient to Torah and I am therefore able to say with Scriptural authority that He would not have neglected keeping the final Passover, before His death as the Lamb of YHVH, who takes away the sins of the world. If Yahshua did not partake of the Passover prior to His death, he would have broken the commandment given in Numbers 9: 13, as follows: ***‘But the man who is clean and is not on a journey, and yet neglects to observe the Passover, that person shall then be cut off from his people, for he did not present the offering of YHVH at its appointed time. That man shall bear his sin.’*** If indeed Yahshua sinned by not partaking the Passover, He would not have been a perfect Passover lamb, and we would still be in our sin. However, we know that according to the plan of salvation of YHVH, a small part of Him became ‘the man’ Yahshua, which He purposed to die for the sins of the world. In addition we read in Mark 14: 23 - 25 ***“And when He had taken a cup, and given thanks, He gave it to them; and they all drank from it. And He said to them, “This is My blood of the renewed covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I say to you, I shall never again drink (meaning that He must have drunk it at this time) of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of Elohim.”*** Also we know that in Judaism, if you give thanks for something you will also partake of it.

The Passover was part of the Sacrificial Laws, which Yahshua came to fulfill. Once Yahshua became the sacrificial law – the lamb of Elohim who takes away the sins of the world, there is no longer a need for the type. Nevertheless, He instituted new symbols on the night during which He was betrayed, for us to remember His death by, until He returns. We no longer slaughter a lamb, but we partake of the new symbols and we do so on the night of the day of preparation for the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Jews of today, like in Yahshua’s day, still keep the Passover on the evening of the first Day of Unleavened Bread. However, Yahshua kept the Passover like the Israelites did on the evening of the 14th Day of Aviv, which starts as the 13th day ends. If we want to determine when to keep the Passover memorial, from the Hebrew calendar, we move back a whole day – the day of preparation for Unleavened Bread. This is what Rav Shaul recorded for us in 1 Corinthians 11: 23 – 26, as follows: ***‘For I received from the Master that which I also delivered to you, that the Master Yahshua in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; (24) and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” (25) In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it (once a year), in remembrance of Me.” (26) For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Master’s death until He comes.’***

We know that Yahshua our Messiah was Elohim, before He became flesh, according to John 1: 1 to 5 and 10 to 14: ***‘In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with Elohim, and the Word was Elohim. (2) He was in the beginning with Elohim. (3) All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. (4) In Him was life and the life was the light of men. (5) And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.’ (10) ‘He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. (11) He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. (12) But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of Elohim, even to those who believed in His name, (13) who were born not of blood nor the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of Elohim. (14) And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.’***

Yahshua Messiah is our creator, as recorded in Philippians 2: 6 – 8, ***‘who, although He existed in the form of Elohim, did not regard equality with Elohim a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of them. (8) And being found in appearance as a***

man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death on a cross.’ Yahshua our Messiah, YHVH in the flesh did all this so that we may one day become spiritual children of Elohim. He was the one whom Hagar, Sarah and Abraham referred to as YHVH in the Tanach. He is the form of YHVH which Moses saw as we read in Numbers 12: 8. He is the spiritual Rock that followed the Israelites in the wilderness as we see in 1 Corinthians 10: 4, as follows: ***‘and all (the Israelites) drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Messiah.’*** Yahshua is the word, the creator the healer, YHVH our righteousness, the High Priest; all of these are but different titles for the One who became Yahshua our Messiah.

Today Yahshua’s appearance is as is described in Revelation 1: 13 to 15: ***‘and in the middle of the lamp stands one like the son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. (14) And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes like a flame of fire; (15) and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters.’*** This is similar to the vision that Daniel saw of YHVH in Daniel 7: 9, ***“I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took His seat: His vesture was like white snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool, His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire.”***

Yahshua was called Immanuel (in Matthew 1: 23) which means Elohim with us. He is Elohim who became a ‘man’ and dwelt among men, to save them from their sin. Do you for one moment think that He, the visible image of the invisible Elohim, would have had long hair, contrary to what the Scriptures taught? Do you think that He would have neglected to partake of the last Passover prior to His death and resurrection, contrary to the command given in Numbers 9? If so then I would like you to think again, since we read in Malachi 3: 6 ***“for I, YHVH, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.”*** Yahshua is YHVH in the flesh, who died for our sins and true to character, this quoted Scripture is confirmed in Hebrews 13: 8, as follows: ***‘Yahshua Messiah is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever.’*** He changed water into wine, He drank wine and there is no record of Him taking a Nazirite vow. I am therefore 100% certain that Yahshua did not have long hair and that the last meal eaten by Him and His disciples, was indeed the Passover! Finally, we should refrain from using pictures of Yahshua, as it is a direct contradiction of the Second Commandment.

Chapter 22: Elohim's Sabbath Rest.

In the western world where we live, a new day is started at midnight and lasts for twenty four hours, until midnight when the next day commences. Most people in the western world call themselves Christian and keep 'their day of rest' on Sunday, the first day of the week, defined in dictionaries as the Christian Sabbath. There are three Scriptures in the renewed Covenant that led some to believe that Sunday was the day of rest and worship for the renewed Covenant ecclesia. We will discuss each one of these Scriptures in turn, here below:

- Some say that 1 Corinthians 16 verses 1 & 2 refers to taking up a collection during Sunday services. Examining these verses closer, reveals that, it was not what Rav Shaul meant. Although the Scriptures say that the collection took place on the first day of the week, nowhere does it say that a worship service was involved. This was merely a special collection for 'the saints', members of the ecclesia in Jerusalem who were in need (see verses 1 and 3). It was part of a wider relief effort involving other members in Galatia and Macedonia as well. The support was prompted by a famine described in Acts 11: 28 – 30. Rav Shaul did not say that this collection was to be taken up at a religious service. In fact he tells the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 16: 2, to ***'let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.'*** These contributions were to be put aside and saved, not to be brought to a worship service on Sunday. To say that this is an account of a collection taken up during a Sunday worship service (which was considered to be a normal working day, in those days), is to read into the Scriptures what it does not say.
- A Scripture which is commonly cited to justify Sunday worship is Revelation 1: 10. In this portion of The Scriptures, John was saying: ***'I was in the Spirit on (the Lord's Day) the Day of YHVH; and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet.'*** Some say that John was saying that he was at a worship service on Sunday and had a vision. However, nowhere in the Scriptures is 'the Lord's Day' defined as the first day of the week or Sunday. This is in fact the only place in the entire Scriptures, where this term is used, which would hardly be the case if the ecclesia (or church) had been observing Sunday for many years, as some claim. In fact the context of the vision which John had, was not referring to Sunday at all, but he wrote that the vision took him into the future time, which the Scriptures normally refer to 'as the day of the lord'; 'the day of the master Yahshua Messiah' or 'day of Messiah' (see 2 Peter 3: 10; 2 Thessalonians 2: 2; 1 Corinthians 1: 8; Acts 2: 20 and Jeremiah 46: 10). This does not talk about a specific single day, but refer to the end-time events surrounding the return of Messiah Yahshua. This is the time when He will intervene directly in human affairs. This is when mankind's rule will end and Yahshua will commence ruling us from Jerusalem.
- Another Scripture used by some who believe, to show that the renewed Covenant ecclesia, observed Sunday, is found in Acts 20: 7, as follows: ***'And on the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Rav Shaul began talking to them, intending to depart the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.'*** In fact this Scripture is used to say that this group kept the Passover on this particular Sunday. We however know that the Passover is a memorial of Messiah's death which is kept, like any other memorial, once a year, on the 14th AVIV every year. In this instance 'breaking of bread' did not mean the Passover, but the dividing of loaves of bread for a normal meal. This is confirmed in E.W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech Used in the Bible, pp.839 & 840. This is also proven in verse 11 of Acts 20, after Rav Shaul finished speaking, they broke the bread and ate. He continued talking until daybreak, when he left. Breaking bread to eat as a meal is also mentioned in Acts 27: 35 and Luke 24: 30. The timing of the events in Acts 20: 7 - 11, helps us understand things better. Several events are described during the same night. We know that in the Scriptures in both the Tanach and the renewed Covenant, days commence when the sun goes down. These events start with a meal on Saturday evening, after the Sabbath. Rav Shaul planned to leave the next day, to go to another town, so he spoke long into the night. One young man, who was sitting in a window sill,

became very tired and fell asleep. He was overcome by sleep and fell out of the window from the third floor. We see in verse 10, Rav Shaul healing the young man and returning to the meeting. In the morning, which was Sunday morning, Rav Shaul continued on his journey.

Since most of Churchianity observes Sunday as their day of rest and worship, many people assume that Sunday is the Sabbath. However, the fourth Commandment states clearly: ***“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy (or Set-apart). Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of YHVH your Elohim; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days YHVH made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore YHVH blessed the Sabbath and made it holy.”*** YHVH commanded that the seventh day be observed as the Sabbath.

Looking in any dictionary or encyclopedia will reveal that Saturday is the seventh day of the week, while Sunday is the first day of the week. In the book of Genesis we read of Elohim creating the earth, after which He fills it with plants and animals and forming it into a beautiful garden for mankind to dwell in. Elohim, who created the heavenly bodies and set them in motion to mark the passage of time, counts time from evening to evening. We see this indicated in the creation account in Genesis. In Genesis 1: 5, after dividing the day from night, Elohim tells us that the evening and the morning, were the first day. ‘Evening’ is mentioned first followed by ‘morning’. In each of the successive days that Elohim created, He describes each day’s creation in similar terms, as may be seen in Genesis 1 verses 8, 13, 19, 23 and 31.

We also read about the creation of the original Sabbath in Genesis 2: 2 & 3, as follows: ***‘And by the seventh day Elohim completed His work which He had done; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then Elohim blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which Elohim had created and made.’*** The Sabbath day was different from all the other days of the creation week. Elohim blessed the Sabbath and sanctified it. The word ‘sanctify’ simply means to set it apart or makes it ‘holy’. In the quoted Scripture above we read three times that Elohim rested from all His work which He had created and made. The Sabbath follows immediately after the sixth day which we have seen in Genesis 1: 31, ends at dusk on the sixth day. This brings us to the very important question: When does the Sabbath of YHVH our Elohim begin? In the Scriptures, evening began when the sun goes down, as we see in Joshua 8: 29 and quoted here in 2 Chronicles 18: 34: ***‘And the battle raged that day, and the king of Israel propped himself up in his chariot in front of the Arameans until the evening; and at sunset he died.’***

The usual way of calculating the beginning and ending of days are as given in Leviticus 23: 27 & 32, as follows: ***“On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; it shall be a Set-apart convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to YHVH. (32) It is to be a Sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall humble your souls; on the ninth of the month at evening, from evening until evening you shall keep your Sabbath.”*** This is also confirmed about the Sabbath in Nehemiah 13: 19, as follows: ***‘And it came about just as it grew dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut and that they should not open them until after the Sabbath. Then I stationed some of my servants at the gates that no load should enter on the Sabbath day.’***

However, some might conclude that the above two quotes come from the ‘Tanach’. So let us look at an example in the ‘Renewed Covenant’. In Mark 1: 21 we see that Yahshua and His newly called disciples attended a synagogue on the Sabbath in Capernaum. In verse 32 of Mark 1, we see the Sabbath coming to an end as the sun went down, as follows: ***‘And when evening had come, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed.’*** After the sun had set, marking the end of the Sabbath, crowds brought many sick people to Yahshua to be healed, having waited until the end of Sabbath to come to Him. The gospel accounts witness that Joseph of Arimathea buried Yahshua’s body

before evening, to keep from working on an approaching annual Sabbath (the First Day of Unleavened Bread). We see this by comparing John 19: 31 ***'The Jews therefore, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.'*** with Matthew 27: 57 - 60, as follows: ***'And when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Yahshua. (58) This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Yahshua. Then Pilate ordered it to be given over to him. (59) And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, (60) and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.'*** This is in total agreement with Luke 23: 50 – 54: ***'And behold, a man named Joseph, who was a member of the Council, a good and righteous man (51) (he had not consented to their plan and action), a man from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who was waiting for the kingdom of Elohim; (52) this man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Yahshua, (53) And he took it down and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb cut into the rock, where no one had ever lain. (54) And it was the preparation day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.'***

We are familiar with Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, which tells of a time when Lucifer rebelled against YHVH our Elohim, wanting to take over His throne in the recesses of the north and when he was cast down to the earth (Isaiah 14: 12). The war resulted in the earth becoming formless and void. When our Father recreated the earth, after it was destroyed in a war between Satan and his demons and the two thirds of the angels still loyal to YHVH, our Father created mankind from physical matter. This means that we need rest, as opposed to spiritual beings who can continue on and on, without ever getting tired. In fact in Mark 2: 27 we read about Yahshua: ***'And He was saying to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."*** Yahshua clarified the purpose of the Sabbath, which so many have missed throughout the centuries: The Sabbath, far from enforcing a tiresome bondage of forbidden activities, is something which Elohim made for man. Notice again in Genesis 2, it was sanctified when mankind was made, with Elohim creating Adam and Eve on the sixth day of creation, followed by the Sabbath on the following day. Yahshua understood the Sabbath to be positive and beneficial to man and not burdensome as depicted by the religious leaders of His day. In addition some in other religions will often say that the Sabbath was made for Israel only. However, we see that YHVH made it for man – all of humanity, from the very beginning. Yahshua understood the purpose of Elohim's Torah, including the Sabbath – which Elohim intended it to be for the good of all mankind.

The seventh day according to the Scriptures is – and has always been – the Sabbath day. Even though man has modified calendars through the ages, the seventh day weekly cycle has remained intact throughout history. The days of the week have always remained in the same order, with Sunday as the first day of the week and Saturday as the seventh. The Oracles of Elohim known as the divine instructions were entrusted to the Jewish people, as may be read in Romans 3: 1 & 2, and they have preserved the knowledge of the Sabbath, the Set-apart Days, Torah, which includes the kosher laws, faithfully since well before the time of Messiah to this day.

However, some in the Assemblies/congregation of YHVH as well as some Nazarene Israelites assert that because of the unbelief of some Jews, the Oracles of Elohim, were taken away from them and given to the Assemblies/congregation of YHVH (including Nazarene Israel) by the apostle Peter. They deduce this from the account in Matthew 16: 18, where Yahshua told Peter that he is a small stone (a pebble) and that His (Messiah's) ecclesia will be built upon Him (Yahshua the Rock of our salvation). Peter understood this and explained in Acts 4: 11 & 12 that Yahshua is the stone which the builders rejected, the cornerstone upon which the ecclesia is built and that there is no other Name under heaven, but Yahshua, by which men must be saved. We also see this confirmed by Peter in 1 Peter 2: 7, as follows: ***"This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone."***

These assemblies did not get the Oracles from YHVH, else Peter would have written about it. In addition we see that Rav. Shaul, another disciple of Yahshua, confirmed after Yahshua's resurrection and ascension to heaven, that the Jews still have these Oracles in Romans 3: 1 & 2 as well as Romans 9: 4. What have been given to Nazarene Israel (including the Assemblies/congregation of YHVH), is the key or knowledge of the kingdom of YHVH and His plan of salvation for all mankind, provided we keep the correct Feast Days of YHVH. No, brethren these Assemblies/congregations of YHVH and the Nazarene Israelites who say that the Oracles of Elohim, were taken away from the Jews, are liars according to Roman 3: 3 & 4, which says the following: ***'What then? If some (Jews) did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of Elohim, will it? (4) May it never be! Rather, let Elohim be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, "THAT THOU MIGHTEST BE JUSTIFIED IN THY WORDS, AND MIGHTEST PREVAIL WHEN THOU ART JUDGED."***

We read about the faithfulness of both Messiah and Moses in the first 6 verses of Hebrews 3. From verse 7 of Hebrews 3 we read about the failure of the first generation of Israelites as a lesson to us today. They failed because of unbelief and as a result did not enter the Promised Land. In Hebrews 4 we are admonished to have faith and obey the voice of YHVH, if we want to enter Elohim's rest – the kingdom of Elohim, which will be ushered in by Yahshua at the commencement of the seventh millennium since the recreation of the earth. We see in Hebrews 4: 4 that Elohim rested on the seventh day of creation. Verse 7 quotes from Psalm 95: 7 where David spoke of a promise of rest long after Joshua led the second generation of Israel to rest in the Promised Land. This shows that the rest fulfilled at Joshua's time, was only a type of the rest to come. In verse 9 of Hebrews 4, we read the statement: ***'There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of Elohim.'*** This means that at the simple level, we the people of Elohim are still required to observe the seventh day Sabbath, but it is also talking about the soon coming millennial rule of Yahshua our Messiah. In fact the weekly Sabbath pictures or is a shadow of the millennial Sabbath to come. The book of Hebrews weaves the three themes of rest together. The rest promised to Israel from their enemies, the weekly Sabbath, and the spiritual rest through Messiah. It concludes that Sabbath keeping is still required for us, the people of Elohim.

YHVH created the Sabbath for man and there will be a time, when all mankind will be keeping it. We read in Isaiah 66, talking about the Millennium rule of Messiah, in verse 23: ***"And it shall be from new moon to new moon And from Sabbath to Sabbath, All mankind will come to bow down before Me," says YHVH.*** The Sabbath identifies us as the people of Elohim, even if we are not sure about our bloodline. We read accordingly in Isaiah 56: 6 and the 1st part of verse 7: ***"Also the foreigners who join themselves to YHVH, To minister to Him and to love the name of YHVH, To be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant; Even those I will bring to My holy mountain (kingdom)."***

Finally we read in Jeremiah 33: 20 – 22: ***"Thus says YHVH, 'If you can break My covenant for the day, and my covenant for the night, so that day and night will not be at their appointed time. (21) then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne (obviously talking about Messiah), and with the Levitical priests, My ministers. (22) As the host of heaven cannot be counted, and the sand of the sea cannot be measured, so I will multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.'"*** I believe that this is enough said.

Chapter 23: Important Prophecies of the Major Prophets.

We are only three weeks into the world's New Year. This is usually the time when the people in the world want to know what will happen in the future. Would you like to know what will happen in the future? Do you wonder what this world would be like in the next five, ten or even twenty years from now? Do you know that it is actually possible to know what will happen in the near future? Do not misunderstand - I am not a prophet and cannot foretell the future at all. However, it is possible for us to know what will occur in the near future, by studying the events which YHVH inspired His prophets to record in His word, the Scriptures. Three books in the Tanach, namely Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, contain many prophecies. These are prophecies written by the Major Prophets, who were inspired by Elohim over 2500 years ago, to record about world events, soon to occur in advance.

YHVH used Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel to warn the nations of Israel and Judah of severe punishment, if they refused to repent of their sins and obey Him. Isaiah had a revelation from Elohim regarding Judah and Jerusalem and the spiritual condition of the nation. He prophesied over a period of forty years from about 740 – 700 BCE, in the days of Uzziah, Jothan, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Jeremiah in turn prophesied to the nation of Judah from 625 – 585 BCE during the time of power of Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah; a period that covered the final tragic forty years of the kingdom of Judah to the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of the two tribes living in the kingdom of Judah, to Babylon. The prophet Ezekiel prophesied from about 592 – 572 BCE. YHVH called Ezekiel to be His prophet whilst he was a prisoner in a slave camp near Babylon. Ezekiel prophesied primarily about the nation of Israel, however, in studying these prophecies we will see that they were intended for their modern day descendants.

Let us therefore proceed to look into the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel to see what our Father YHVH inspired them to record about the years immediately ahead for the modern nations of Israel and Judah. A vital key that unlocks prophesy to understanding is the knowledge of understanding who modern day Israel is. To begin with our patriarch Jacob (Ya'akov in Hebrew), whose name was changed to Israel in Genesis 32: 28, was the father of twelve sons. The families of these sons grew large in number and became known as the twelve tribes of Israel. However, After King Solomon (Shlomo in Hebrew), the twelve tribe nation of Israel split into two separate nations. The southern nation with its capital in Jerusalem became known as the house of Judah, also known as the Jews. The northern nation with its capital in Samaria was known as the house of Israel. The northern kingdom consisted of ten tribes. The two sons Ephraim and Manasseh fathered by Joseph in Egypt represent him as part of the ten tribes of Israel.

YHVH allowed the nation of Israel (the northern ten tribes), to be conquered by the Assyrians, because of the sins of Sabbath breaking and idolatry. In fact the first king of Israel instituted idolatry and changed the date of the Feast of Tabernacles soon after he became king over Israel. This is recorded for us in 1 Kings 12 : 28 – 33, as follows: ***'So the king (Jeroboam) consulted, and made two golden calves, and he said to them, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt."*** (29) ***And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.*** (30) ***Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan.*** (31) ***And he made houses on high places, and made priests from among all the people who were not of the sons of Levi.*** (32) ***And Jeroboam instituted a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast which is in Judah (but a month later – sounds familiar?), and he went up to the altar; thus he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves which he had made. And he stationed in Bethel, the priests of the high places which he had made.*** (33) ***Then he went up to the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised in his own heart; and he instituted a feast for the sons of Israel, and went up to the altar to burn incense.'*** This is similar to those Nazarene Israelite (or like-minded) believers who claim to have the Oracles of YHVH, and declare the Feast Days of YHVH on different dates to the Hebrew calendar.

The Assyrians conquered the ten tribe nation of Israel in the years 721 – 718 BCE and took them captive as slaves to Assyria. However, this only happened after YHVH warned the nation of Israel through His servants the prophets, as may be read in 2 Kings 17 verse 22 and the first part of verse 23: ***'and the sons of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, (23) until YHVH removed Israel from His sight, as He spoke through all His servants the prophets.'*** The Assyrians took the nation of Israel out of Samaria and settled another people in their place. The nation of Israel never returned to their homeland, but was eventually taken northwest into Europe, where some settled. The rest moved on into England and further on to the USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand. The seed of the Israelites were spread throughout the world and can be found amongst virtually every nation in the world. The children of Abraham have indeed become a multitude of nations. However, they lost their identity because they forgot the commandments of YHVH and started keeping pagan holidays such as Sunday, Xmas and Easter, like the pagan nations amongst whom they lived.

The nation of Judah also went into captivity, about 130 years after Israel was taken captive. This happened in three stages, during 604 to 585 BCE, when the army of king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, invaded and conquered the nation of Judah. However, they were allowed to return to their homeland when YHVH stirred the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia to let the Jews return to their land as is recorded for us in the book of Ezra. The prophet Ezekiel was commissioned by Elohim to go to the house of Israel with an important message, as we read in Ezekiel 3: 1, as follows: ***'Then He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel."'*** However, when Ezekiel was given this message, he was one of many Jews in captivity in Babylon. As may be read in Ezekiel 1: 1, He was in a slave camp by the river Chebar, near the city of Babylon. He was far from Samaria, where the northern ten tribes had been taken captive 130 years earlier and still further away from the Israelites, where they have by that time migrated to. In fact Ezekiel never took the message that YHVH gave him for Israel, to the house of Israel, since he was in prison and could not do so. Therefore the message that YHVH gave to Ezekiel is a prophesy intended primarily for the modern day descendants of the house of Israel and especially for those living in the western world.

All twelve tribes of Israel were greatly blessed by YHVH. The peoples of the western world have an above average standard of living. However, because they are not grateful: Instead of thanking YHVH for all their blessings, they have rejected Him and His Torah. In describing the people of Israel and Judah, the prophet Ezekiel said of us, their modern day descendants in Ezekiel 9: 9 & 10: ***'Then He (YHVH) said to me, "The iniquity of the house of Israel and the house of Judah is very, very great, and the land is filled with blood, and the city is full of perversion; for they say, 'YHVH has forsaken the land, and YHVH does not see!' (10) But as for Me, My eye will have no pity nor shall I spare, but I shall bring their conduct upon their heads.'"*** The northern ten tribes of Israel went into captivity because of Idolatry and Sabbath-breaking. Prophecy shows that they will soon suffer a much worse captivity and punishment because of their sins. However, Judah will also be punished.

We have seen that YHVH used His servants, the prophets to warn both houses of Israel and Judah of a coming punishment. YHVH made His servants perform unusual tasks to get the attention of His people. Let us read about these strange tasks that YHVH required Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel to perform, to teach His people what is going to befall them in the future. We read the following prophesy in Ezekiel 5: 1- 2: ***"As for you, son of man, take a sharp sword; take and use it as a barber's razor on your head and beard. Then take scales for weighing and divide the hair. (2) One third you shall burn in the fire at the center of the city, when the days of the siege are completed. Then you shall take one third and strike it with the sword all around the city, and one third you shall scatter to the wind; and I will unsheathe a sword behind them."*** This was a picture of what is going to happen to the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, and especially those in the western world in the near future.

In verse 12 of Ezekiel 5, we see the interpretation of the prophesy of the thirds, as follows: ***'One third of you will die by plague or be consumed by famine among you, one third will fall by the sword around you, and***

one third I will scatter to every wind, and I will unsheathe a sword behind them. A third of us will die from famine and disease, another third will perish in military attack and the last third will be taken captive into all parts of the earth. There will be no escape for those who continue to rebel against Elohim and His Torah. There will be no place of refuge – no place to hide from Elohim’s punishment as we read in Ezekiel 6: 12: ***“He who is far off will die by the plague, and he who is near will fall by the sword, and he who remains and is besieged will die by the famine. Thus shall I spend My wrath on them.”*** However, we see in Ezekiel 6 : 8 - 10 that YHVH will leave a remnant that will escape the sword among the nations and they will remember Him and will know that He is YHVH; That He has not said in vain that He would inflict disaster on them. This is confirmed in Romans 9: 27 and 28, as follows: ***‘And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, “THOUGH THE NUMBER OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL BE AS THE SAND OF THE SEA, IT IS THE REMNANT THAT WILL BE SAVED; (2) For YHVH will execute His word upon the earth thoroughly and quickly.”’*** The remnant of Israelites that will remain, if we read the prophesy of the thirds in Ezekiel 5:12, together with Zechariah 13: 8 & 9 and Isaiah 6: 13, will number about 100 million Israelites¹⁴.

Let us notice another unusual task that YHVH commanded Ezekiel to perform in Ezekiel 4 verses 4 to 6, as follows: ***“As for you, lie down on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel on it; you shall bear their iniquity for the number of days that you lie on it. (5) For I have assigned you a number of days corresponding to the years of their iniquity, three hundred and ninety days¹⁵; thus you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. (6) When you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, but on your right side, and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah; I have assigned it to you for forty days, a day for each year.”*** This was to impress on the prophet Ezekiel, and those who saw him performing this unusual task, the seriousness of Israel’s and Judah’s years of rebellion against Elohim’s rule and His Torah.

YHVH also had an unusual task for Jeremiah. YHVH told Jeremiah to take off his waistband (his belt) and bury it. After many days YHVH told Jeremiah to dig it up. We read in Jeremiah 13: 7: ***‘Then I went to the Euphrates and dug, and I took the waistband from the place where I had hidden it; and lo, the waistband was ruined, it was totally worthless.’*** We read the meaning of this explained in Jeremiah 13: 9, as follows: ***“thus says YHVH, ‘Just so will I destroy the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem.”*** YHVH was showing Jeremiah that He will also punish the house of Judah for their sins. The reason why YHVH will allow the modern day descendants of Israel to be punished, may be seen in Ezekiel 5: 6, as follows: ***‘But she has rebelled against My ordinances more wickedly than the nations and against My statutes more than the lands which surround her; for they have rejected My ordinances and have not walked in My statutes.’*** The modern day descendants of all the ancient tribes of Israel have refused to obey YHVH and to live according to His Torah. As a result they will be severely punished. This time of punishment is known as the great tribulation. Yahshua told His disciples about this coming tribulation in Matthew 24: 21, as follows: ***“for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.”*** We also read about the same tribulation in Jeremiah 30: 7: ***‘Alas! for that day is great, There is none like it; And it is the time of Jacob’s distress, But he will be saved from it.’***

¹⁴ Assuming that the population of the world is about 6 billion (6, 000, 000, 000) at present. A third of 6 billion equals 2 billion (2, 000, 000,000), and a tenth of 2 billion equals 2 hundred million (200, 000, 000). If we assume that the Israelites number about half the population of the world today, then only hundred million (100,000,000) Israelites will live on into the Millennium. This agrees with the promise that YHVH made to Moses in Deuteronomy 1: 11, i.e. to increase the Israelites that left Egypt a thousand fold more. We know that 600, 000 (Israelite) men plus woman and children, totaling about 3 million Israelites, left Egypt after the Passover. A thousand time’s 3 million equals 3 billion Israelites. A tenth of a third of that equals 100 million.

¹⁵ The house of Israel was to be punished for 2730 years, or 390 times 7 (as we read in Leviticus 26: 27 – 28). Therefore 2730 from 721 – 718 BCE takes us to from the year 2009 to the year 2012 (CE). Is that when the great tribulation will commence? Or when the remnant will go back to Israel? No one knows and it leaves us with a few unanswered questions and much speculation.

In Ezekiel 6: 6 we read how YHVH describes the conditions of the once great cities during the time of tribulation: ***"In all your dwellings, cities will become a waste and the high places (places of worship) will be desolate, that your altars may become waste and desolate, your idols may be broken and brought to an end, your incense altars may be cut down, and your works may be blotted out."*** This desolation sounds like nuclear destruction. YHVH will punish the modern day Israelites because He loves them like a Father, as we read in Hebrews 12: 6, as follows: ***'FOR THOSE WHOM YHVH LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.'*** We read in verse 11 of Hebrews 12 that even though this punishment will be difficult to bear, it will produce the desired results: ***'All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.'*** After this correction the remnant left of the nations of Israel will turn to Elohim and begin to reap the blessings of obedience to YHVH.

Once the modern day Israelites repent and cry out to Elohim for deliverance. He will hear their prayers and will send Yahshua to the earth to deliver them. When Messiah returns, there will be a great battle between Him and the nations who will have enslaved the people of Israel. We read this in Zechariah 14: 12 ***'Now this will be the plague with which YHVH will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth.'*** Yahshua will destroy these people and will commence his rule on earth. Yahshua will free Judah from captivity. We read in Isaiah 11: 11 about this release, as follows: ***'Then it will happen on that day that YHVH will again recover the second time with His hand The remnant of His people who will remain, From Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, And from the coastlands of the sea.'***

YHVH our Elohim will bless those who survive the captivity and live on into the millennium, as we read in Jeremiah 23: 3: ***"Then I Myself shall gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and shall bring them back to their pasture; and they will be fruitful and multiply."*** These prophecies in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel give us a glimpse of what the millennium will be like. It will be a time of world peace, not just peace in Israel. All nations will become obedient to Elohim, as we read in Isaiah 2: 1 – 4, as follows: ***'The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. (2) Now it will come about that In the last days, The mountain of the house of YHVH Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. (3) And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHVH, To the house of the Elohim of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways, And that we may walk in His paths. For the law will go forth from Zion, And the word of YHVH from Jerusalem. (4) And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war."***

The prophecies that we have studied in this sermon, deal with prophecies of war and captivity. However, just as Noah and His family were protected from the flood that erased all life on earth, YHVH promises that He will spare all those who turn from their sin to His way of life. However, we must never forget that YHVH does the calling as per John 6: 44. He promises Nazarene Israelites and like-minded believers, who keep His commandments and have faith in Yahshua, protection from the great tribulation. We read this promise of protection in Revelation 3: 10 ***"Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth."*** At Yahshua's return to rule the world from Jerusalem, we who are called during this age to be as it were, the first fruits among His creatures (James 1: 18), will either be raised imperishable (those who have died by then) or changed from perishable to imperishable (those alive at His return) as per 1 Corinthians 15: 50 – 52. We will then rule the remnant, under Yahshua as kings and priests during the millennium (and beyond) as per Revelation 5: 10.

Chapter 24: The prophecies of the Minor Prophets.

YHWH used His servants the prophets to record events to occur in our time, in the near future. In the last 12 books of the Tanach (according to the index used in modern day English versions, such as the King James and the New American Standard Bibles), we learn about these events soon to occur. These books are called the Minor Prophets, because of the length of their books and not because their messages are unimportant.

The kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon were great empires during the time of the prophets. These great nations were used by YHWH to defeat and enslave the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The kingdom of Israel was taken captive by Assyria between 721 and 718 BCE and the kingdom of Judah was taken captive by Babylon between 604 and 585 BCE. As mentioned in my sermon on the prophecies of the Major Prophets, the Assyrians took the nation of Israel out of Samaria and settled another people in their place. Whilst the nation of Judah returned to their homeland when YHWH stirred the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia allowing them to return, as is recorded in the book of Ezra, the nation of Israel never returned. Instead the nation of Israel was over time taken northwest into Europe, where some settled. The rest moved on into England and further on to the USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand. Eventually, the seed of the Israelites were spread throughout the world and can be found amongst virtually every nation in the world. The children of Abraham have indeed become a multitude of nations.

Modern day Israelites are dispersed throughout the world, but are in the main to be found in the nations of the western world. These people are in the Scriptures referred to as the *'house of Israel'*, *'Jacob'*, *'Ephraim'* and *'Samaria'*. It is also important to understand that Scriptural phrases such as *'in that day'* and *'at that time'* generally refer to the period known as the Great Tribulation, which will occur immediately before the return of Yahshua our Messiah (as mentioned in Matthew 24: 21). The phrase *'Day of YHWH'* refers to the time immediately after the Great Tribulation, and includes the events leading up to the return of Messiah.

Hosea's Prophecies:

The Minor Prophets lived and prophesied between the years 900 to 400 BCE. To commence with we read in Hosea 1: 1 that Hosea prophesied during the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the reign of King Jeroboam the second of Israel. Hosea directed his prophecies to the nation of Israel. YHWH commissioned Hosea to marry a prostitute named Gomer. The reason why YHWH told Hosea to marry a prostitute was because the people of Israel, promised at Mount Sinai to keep the covenant with Him as recorded in Exodus 24: 6 – 8, but committed spiritual adultery by worshipping false elohim. Hosea's wife, true to character also committed adultery, and her unfaithfulness in marriage pictured what the nation of Israel had done to Elohim. Hosea and Gomer had three children. The first child was a boy, which YHWH instructed Hosea to call *'Jezreel'*, meaning *'Elohim will scatter'*, to show that He was planning to disperse the house of Israel throughout the world (see Hosea 1: 4 & 5).

Hosea's second child was a daughter. YHWH told Hosea to call her name *'Lo-ruhamah'* meaning *'not pitied'* or *'no mercy'*. YHWH was telling the people of Israel through Hosea that He will have no pity and will definitely punish them for their sins. Hosea's third child was another boy, which YHWH told Hosea to call *'Lo-ammi'* meaning *'not my people'*. In this way YHWH warned Israel through Hosea that He no longer regards them as His people. In fact these three prophecies apply to us, the modern day descendants of Israel. We have been scattered throughout the nations of the world. Because of Sabbath breaking and idolatry, we have lost our Identity as the house of Israel and are no longer known as the people of YHWH. He has indeed punished us and showed no mercy in doing so.

Hosea continues with the same prophesy in Hosea 2: 16 & 17, as follows: ***'And it will come about in that day," declares YHWH, "That you will call Me Ishi (my Husband) and will no longer call Me Baali (my LORD, or, my Baal). (17) For I will remove the names of the Baals (false elohim) from her mouth, So that they will***

be mentioned (remembered) ***by their names no more.***” Also notice in Hosea 3: 5: ***“Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek YHVH their Elohim and David their king; and they will come trembling to YHVH and to His goodness in the last days.”*** Is this not what is happening to us today. The Set-apart names of YHVH and Yahshua have become known to many of us during the last number of years and many Israelites are returning to YHVH and His Torah. This is talking about us today, which is long after ancient Israel went into captivity. YHVH is warning modern day Israel, and especially the people in the western world, that if they refuse to repent, they will again go into national captivity. However, there is a bit of good news! After the corrective punishment, soon to be inflicted on modern day Israel, the remaining remnant, will again acknowledge their transgressions and seek Elohim as per Hosea 5: 15. We see in verse 15, this will essentially happen during their affliction, otherwise known as the great tribulation.

The remnant of Israel will again look to Elohim for help, as we read in Hosea 6: 1, saying: ***“Come let us return to YHVH. For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us.”*** Hosea shows in his prophesy to Israel that the modern day descendants of Israel will again come to recognize their true identity, when Elohim gathers His people from all over the world, as is recorded in Hosea 1: 10 & 11. In Hosea chapters 7 to 13, he continues to rebuke us, modern day Israel with condemnation from Elohim. But as we have learned, many of the people of Israel will eventually seek YHVH in their affliction. YHVH will again bless them with prosperity and happiness, as we read in Hosea chapter 14. However, this will only be after Messiah’s return, during the millennium. We read in verses 4 & 5 of Chapter 14, that: ***‘I (YHVH) will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from them. (5) I will be like dew to Israel; He will blossom like the lily, And he will take root like the cedars of Lebanon.’***

Joel’s prophecies:

Joel was a prophet who lived in Jerusalem, and was from the kingdom of Judah. The name Joel means ***“YHVH is Elohim”***. Joel in prophesy describes swarms of insects, symbolizing the invading armies, which came to destroy modern day Israel. In Joel 1: 7 he describes successive swarms of destructive insects that devour the food crops, as follows: ***‘It has made my vine a waste, And my fig tree splinters. It has stripped them bare and cast them away; their branches have become white.’*** Next Joel speaks of a devastating drought in chapter 1: 10, as follows: ***‘The field is ruined, The land mourns, For the grain is ruined, The new wine dries up. Fresh oil fails.*** Joel used the analogy of the insects to describe a great human army that will invade the lands of the modern day descendants of Israel. This will be a time of great trouble before the coming of the ***‘day of YHVH’***, as we read in Joel 1: 15.

In Joel chapter 2, He describes the ***‘Day of YHVH’***, the time when YHVH will intervene personally in human affairs. We read accordingly in verses 1 & 2: ***‘Blow the trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm on my Set-apart mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For the day of YHVH is coming; Surely it is near, (2) A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness. As the dawn is spread over the mountains, So there is a great and mighty people; There has never been anything like it, Nor will there be again after it, To the years of many generations.’*** We also read about an earth quake and the sun and the moon growing dark, with the stars losing their brightness in Joel 2: 10. These are terrible things which are about to happen to the inhabitants of our planet. How can people escape these terrible events that are about to happen? We read the answer to this question, in Joel 2: 12 & 13, as follows: ***“Yet even now,” declares YHVH, “Return to Me with all your heart, And with fasting, weeping, and mourning; (13) And rend your heart and not your garments.” Now return to YHVH your Elohim, For He is gracious and compassionate. Slow to anger, abounding in loving-kindness, And relenting (or repenting) of evil.’*** We see what YHVH says about the land devastated by the insect plagues in verse 25 of Joel 2, as follows: ***“Then I will make up to you for the years That the swarming locust has eaten, The creeping locust, the stripping locust, and the gnawing locust, My great army which I sent among you.”*** In verse 32 of Joel 2, we read: ***“And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of YHVH Will be delivered; For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem There will be those who escape, As YHVH has said, Even among the survivors whom YHVH***

calls.” This shows that it is important for us to know and call on the name of YHVH, if we want to escape the coming great tribulation.

We also see in Joel 2: 27 that the modern day descendants of Israel will come to know YHVH, as follows: **“Thus you will know that I am in the midst of Israel, And that I am YHVH your Elohim And there is no other; And My people will never be put to shame.”** After the great tribulation and the Day of YHVH, Elohim will once again bless the remnant of His people Israel. Yahshua will restore Elohim’s government over the whole earth and will give His spirit to all of mankind, as we read in Joel 2: 28 – 29: **“And it will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. (29) And even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.”** Messiah will rule from Jerusalem and Israel will dwell at peace as may be read in Joel 3: 16 – 20.

The prophecies of Amos:

Amos was born in Judah in a place called Tekoa. He was a shepherd and a cultivator of sycamore trees. Amos prophesied in the days of Uzziah, the 13th of 19 kings of the house of Israel, as we read in Amos 1: 1. Like the major prophets Amos prophesied about the destruction of Israel and among other the nations of Edom, Ammon and Moab who moved into the land, by exterminating the people of YHVH, as may be read in Amos 1: 3 -15 and 2: 1- 3. In verses 4 & 5 of Amos 2 we read what Judgment YHVH will send on the house of Judah, as follows: **‘Thus says YHVH, “For three transgressions of Judah and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they rejected the law of YHVH And have not kept His statutes; Their lies also have led them astray, Those after which their fathers walked. (5) So I will send fire upon Judah, And it will consume the citadels of Jerusalem.”’** This prophecy was fulfilled for Judah, when Nebuchadnezzar captured the city of Jerusalem in 604 to 586 BCE and the palaces were destroyed with fire. But as we will see later on, there is a duality in Scriptural prophecy. As I have said before, the Jews later returned to their homeland and many of their present day descendants live in the land today. In fact they are of the house of Judah and not the house of Israel as the name of the modern day Jewish state suggests. However, they together with the modern day descendants of the house of Israel will be punished severely during the great tribulation, before Messiah’s return.

The rest of the prophecies of Amos are addressed to the house of Israel. Israel had gone so far away from keeping Elohim’s Torah that YHVH asked the question recorded in Amos 3: 3 **‘Do two men walk together unless they have made an appointment?’** The word appointment here implies the appointed times of YHVH. It is essentially saying that people cannot walk together unless they agree about the appointed Feast Days of YHVH; The proper Feast Days are the ones celebrated by Judah, as we shall see when we discuss the prophecies of Nahum¹⁶. It is not possible for two to walk together unless they are in agreement with one another. The people of Israel were not in agreement with Elohim, and He was using Amos to warn them to repent from their sins and to return to Torah. We read in Amos 3: 7 that YHVH always warns His people, before punishing them, as follows: **‘Surely YHVH Elohim does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel To His servants the prophets.’**

YHVH showed Amos three visions along with their meanings. In the first vision in Amos 7: 7 & 8, he saw Elohim standing on a wall holding a plumb line, an instrument used by the construction industry to test the straightness of walls. The plumb line symbolizes Elohim’s testing of the righteousness of Israel. Because of their unrighteousness, we see the punishment that would come upon them in Amos 7: 9, as follows: **“The high places of Isaac will be desolated And the sanctuaries of Israel laid waste. Then shall I rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.”** This punishment will be meted out against the people of Israel scattered throughout the world today, but primarily located in the western world. However, why do we also

¹⁶ In Nahum 1: 15 we read: **‘Behold on the mountains the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace! “Celebrate your feasts, O Judah:”’**

read about Isaac and Jeroboam in this same judgment? Yes, the people of Israel are also called ‘house of Isaac’ as they were descended from him. But, we know that as Nazarene Israelites (and likeminded believers) we like Isaac, are children of promise (Galatians 4: 28), and according to Galatians 6: 16 the Israel of Elohim. In addition we are familiar with Romans 9: 6 & 7, stating: **‘But it is not as though the word of Elohim has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; (7) neither are they all children because they are Abraham’s descendants, but: “THROUGH ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE NAMED.”’** Could this plumb line test not also be a warning for us, Nazarene Israel and like-minded believers, today? The conundrum (mystery) that helps us understand why this might also be talking about us and the confusion that reigns in our midst, is (partly) the reason for mentioning king Jeroboam in the same judgment. Jeroboam was the first king of Israel after the original nation split in two. As we already stated, Israel was taken captive by Assyria because king Jeroboam started the sins of Sabbath breaking and idolatry, in Israel. In 1 Kings 12: 32 we see that Jeroboam instituted a feast in the eighth month on the 15th day of the month, like the feast which is in Judah. However, we know according to Leviticus 23: 34 that the Feast of Tabernacles in Judah starts on the 15th day of the seventh month. We should also be aware that the Feast Days of YHVH are part of His Sabbaths which we are commanded to observe. Are we observing the Feasts at Elohim’s appointed times?

In Amos 7 verse 17 we see how Israel will be punished: **“Therefore, thus says YHVH, ‘Your wife will become a harlot in the city, your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword, your land will be parceled up by a measuring line, and you yourself will die upon unclean soil. Moreover, Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.’”** In Amos 8 verses 1 & 2 we read about the second vision that Amos had. In this vision He saw a basket of fruit, symbolizing Israel being ripe for punishment. Amos’ final vision was of the destruction of a temple – not the Temple in Jerusalem, but a temple in the kingdom of Israel. In Amos 9: 8 we read: **“Behold the eyes of YHVH are on the sinful kingdom, And I will destroy it from the face of the earth; Nevertheless, I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob,” Declares YHVH.’** In Amos 9: 11 – 15 we see that after YHVH has corrected Israel, He promises to restore the ruined land and cities, and bring Israel back from captivity. After the tribulation and the return of Messiah, the nation of Israel consisting of all twelve tribes, will again be the head of all the nations on the earth.

The prophecies of Obadiah:

The name Obadiah means ‘servant of Elohim’. The prophesy of Obadiah is the shortest book in the Tanach. Obadiah prophesied about the destruction of Edom. The people of Edom are descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob. Edom will be punished at the return of Messiah for the reasons given in verses 8 to 10 of Obadiah. One of those reasons is as given in the first part of verse 10: **“because of violence (transliterated as Hamas in Hebrew) to your brother Jacob.”** The destruction of Edom will come during the Day of YHVH as we read in Obadiah verse 15: **“For the day of YHVH draws near on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head.”** Nations such as Edom will be destroyed (as may be seen in verse 16) and the people of Israel and Judah will once again possess all the land originally promised to father Abraham. This is confirmed in verse 20, as follows: **‘And the exiles of this host of the sons of Israel, Who are among the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, And the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad Will possess the cities of the Negev.’** According to verse 21, when Messiah returns to set up the kingdom of Elohim on the earth, those who¹⁷ are changed into immortal spirit-composed beings will be with Him at His return.

The book of Jonah:

Jonah is the only Minor prophet who did not prophesy about Israel or Judah. He was sent by Elohim to the ancient city of Nineveh, to convince its inhabitant to repent from their wickedness. But, we see that Jonah

¹⁷ Those who died in Messiah will be resurrected and those believers in Him, who are still alive at His return, will together be changed into immortal spirit composed beings.

did not obey YHVH and fled to Tarshish from the presence of YHVH, on board a ship. However, we should never be as naïve as Jonah was, thinking that there is a place where we can hide from YHVH. This is when YHVH stirred up a storm on the sea, so that the ship was about to break up. All the sailors on the ship became very afraid, but Jonah went into the hold of the ship and fell sound asleep. The captain approached Jonah, asking him how he is able to sleep during such a storm. He instructed Jonah to pray to his Elohim, so that they may not perish. At that time the sailors decided to cast lots to see on whose account the calamity has struck them. The lot fell on Jonah and the sailors demanded to know where he is from. He told them that he was a Hebrew and that he fears YHVH the Elohim of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land. This upset the sailors and they asked Jonah what they should do to him. He told them to throw him overboard. Initially they would not do that, but prayed to YHVH and told Him that they do not want to perish on account of Jonah, after which they threw Jonah overboard. We read that at that time the sailors feared YHVH greatly: They offered up a sacrifice to Him and made vows. YHVH then appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights. Jonah prayed whilst He was in the stomach of the fish recognizing in the last part of Jonah 2: 9 that: ***“Salvation is from YHVH.”*** Then YHVH commanded the fish to vomit Jonah up on dry land.

Again YHVH commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh. This time Jonah obeyed and went to the city. He walked through the city crying out that they should repent, or their city will be overthrown in forty days. The people of Nineveh believed Jonah and went on a fast, putting on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Even the king of Nineveh covered himself in sackcloth and issued a decree that all the inhabitants, both man and beast should not eat or drink. They called on YHVH and when He saw their deeds and that they repented from their sins, He relented concerning the calamity which He declared to bring upon them. However, this displeased Jonah greatly and he asked YHVH to take his life from him. When YHVH asked him about his anger, Jonah went out from the city and sat east of it. YHVH made a plant to be a shelter for Jonah and he was pleased with the plant. Then YHVH appointed a worm to attack the plant and it withered. So there was no more shade for Jonah and he became faint, saying to YHVH that death is better than life. He also said that he had good reason to be angry even to death. Then YHVH said to Jonah, that he had compassion on the plant for which he did not work, and which he did not cause to grow, which came up overnight and perished overnight. In verse 11 of Jonah 4 YHVH concluded: ***“And should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?”***

I believe that the purpose for the book of Jonah is the following: Yahshua spoke about the book of Jonah in Matthew 12 verses 39 – 41, where He told the Scribes and the Pharisees that the only sign proving that He is the Messiah, is the fact that He will be in the grave for three full nights and three full days, like Jonah was in the belly of the fish for the same amount of time. He also said to them that the men of Nineveh shall be resurrected with this generation (meaning the Jews of His day, who did not believe in Him) at the judgment, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold something greater than Jonah (Yahshua himself) was with them. The Scribes and the Pharisees saw all the miracles that Yahshua had done, and even though they knew the prophecies about Him from the Tanach, they denied Him. That is why they will be condemned, with others who disobey Him after they have come into the knowledge of the truth, to burn with the wicked, after the great white throne judgment.

The Prophecies of Micah:

The name Micah means ‘*who is like YHVH*’. As we read in Micah 1: 1, Micah came from a Judean town Moresheth and prophesied during the reign of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah kings of Judah. Micah’s prophecies were directed to the capitols of both Judah and Israel. He called all the people, including the rulers of the house of Israel to hear his prophesy. Micah foretells that YHVH will come forth from heaven and will stand upon the mountains, and the mountains will melt under Him; the valleys will be split like wax before a fire. We see that these things will occur when Yahshua returns from heaven. We see in Micah 3

that it was the heads of Jacob and the rulers of the house of Israel who are to blame for leading their people astray. We see in verse 12 of Micah 3, ***‘Therefore, on account of you (speaking about the leaders), Zion will be plowed as a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins, And the mountain of the temple will become high places of a forest.’***

We see in Micah 7 verses 12 & 13 (as we have also seen in Amos 6: 14) that YHVH will use the Assyrians and Egyptians to punish the modern day descendants of Israel, as follows: ***‘It will be a day when they will come to you From Assyria and the cities of Egypt, From Egypt even to the Euphrates, Even from sea to sea and mountain to mountain. (13) And the earth will become desolate because of her inhabitants, On account of the fruit of their deeds.’*** Micah recorded his prophecies as it was revealed to him. It did not follow in chronological order as we see in Micah 4: 1 where he is talking about what will happen after the devastation mentioned in chapter 7, as follows: ***‘And it will come about in the last days That the mountain (government) of the house of YHVH Will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it.’*** Elohim’s government will be established over all nations on the face of the earth and people will look to Him to teach them to live a way of life that brings happiness and peace (Micah 4: 2). In verses 3 to 4 of Micah 4 we read accordingly: ***‘And He will judge between many peoples And render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they train for war. (4) And each of them will sit under his vine And under his fig tree, With no one to make them afraid, For the mouth of YHVH of hosts has spoken.’***

Reading on in Micah 5: 7 -15 we see that Micah’s prophecy is for the remnant of modern day Israel. Micah describes the many blessing that the Israelites in especially the western world have been experiencing up to now. In verse 7 of Micah 5 we read: ***‘Then the remnant of Jacob Will be among many peoples like dew from YHVH, Like showers on vegetation Which do not wait for man Or delay for the sons of men.’*** Wherever the lost tribes of Israel lived, they were a blessing to the people amongst whom they resided. However, in the same chapter Micah also prophesied that at this very time, i.e. today, Elohim will cut off these blessings. In Micah 5: 10 & 11 we read: ***‘And it will be in that day, declares YHVH, “That I will cut off your horses from among you And destroy your chariots (Will this happen, when oil production is stopped by the Arabs?). (11) I will also cut off the cities of your land And tear down all your fortifications.”’***

In Micah 5: 12 - 13 we see that Elohim allows such destruction because of pagan idol worship. YHVH will punish us unless we repent before utter destruction come upon the nations, at the second coming of Yahshua Messiah. Micah’s prophecies conclude with positive news in Micah 7: 18 to 20, where he tells us how YHVH will restore Israel again to His way of life.

The Prophecies of Nahum:

Nahum wrote his prophecies about one hundred years after the house of Israel was taken captive by the Assyrians. Nahum’s prophecies were directed to Nineveh the capital of Assyria. Nahum states in the 1st part of verse 12 of Nahum 1, that YHVH will eventually punish Assyria, as follows: ***‘Thus says YHVH, “Though they are at full strength and likewise many, Even so, they will be cut off and pass away.”’*** YHVH promises His people, modern day Israel and Judah, that He will cut off their oppressor at Messiah’s return. We read in Nahum 1: 15: ***‘Behold, on the mountains the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace! Celebrate your feasts, O Judah (meaning that YHVH is pleased with the feast days kept by Judah); Pay your vows. For never again will the wicked one pass through you; He is cut off completely.’***

The prophecies of Habakkuk:

Habakkuk prophesied around 600 BCE. His prophesy open with him praying about the sins of Israel and other nations. He was upset to see what the Babylonians would soon do to Judah. He waited for Elohim’s

reply to him and in Habakkuk 2: 2, we read: ***‘Then YHVH answered me and said, “Record the vision And inscribe it on tablets, That the one who reads it may run.”’*** In verse 3 of Habakkuk 2 (in the KJV), we see that this vision was not for our ancient forefathers, but for us, as follows: ***‘For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.’*** YHVH also showed Habakkuk that He will punish all unrighteousness at the end-time, including those nations that conquered the kingdoms of Israel and Judah (as may be read in Habakkuk 2: 8, 10, and 16 & 17). We read in Habakkuk 2: 14 that YHVH will teach all nations His way of life, as follows: ***“For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of YHVH, as the waters cover the sea.”*** Habakkuk concludes his prophesy with a prayer of thanksgiving, as we read in Chapter 3: 18: ***‘Yet I will exult in YHVH, I will rejoice in the Elohim of my salvation.’***

The prophecies of Zephaniah:

Zephaniah means ‘YHVH hides’ or ‘the one whom YHVH hides’. Zephaniah’s prophesy focuses on ‘the Day of YHVH’, the period following the great tribulation. He warns that no one will escape the punishment to be meted out on ‘the Day of YHVH’. The leaders of the nations will be punished (as per Zephaniah 1: 8), The wicked merchants (in some versions of the Scriptures called Canaan) are warned about dishonesty (Zephaniah 1: 10 & 11). In Zephaniah 1: 7, Zephaniah instructs the inhabitants of the world, to: ***‘Be silent before YHVH Elohim! For the day of YHVH is near, For YHVH has prepared a sacrifice, He has consecrated His guests.’***

Zephaniah describes the Day of YHVH in verse 15 to 18 of chapter 1, as follows: ***‘A day of wrath is that day, A day of trouble and distress, A day of destruction and desolation, A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness, (16) A day of trumpet and battle cry, Against the fortified cities And the high corner towers. (17) And I will bring distress on men, So that they will walk like the blind, Because they have sinned against YHVH; And their blood will be poured out like dust, And their flesh like dung. (18) Neither their silver nor their gold Will be able to deliver them On the day of YHVH (our Elohim’s) wrath; And all the earth will be devoured In the fire of His jealousy, For He will make a complete end, Indeed a terrifying one, Of all the inhabitants of the earth.’***

In Zephaniah 2: 1- 3 YHVH calls the nations to repent and He foretells the judgment coming upon the nations who warred against Israel. In the last part of Zephaniah 3: 8, we read: ***“For all the earth will be devoured By the fire of My zeal.”*** We also see in Zephaniah 3: 9 that: ***“For then I will give to the peoples purified lips, That all of them may call on the name of YHVH, To serve Him shoulder to shoulder.”*** YHVH will not leave the people of Israel in a state of desolation and destruction, but will bring them out of this time of trouble. This will be a time of joy and happiness, as we read in Zephaniah 3: 14 & 15, ***‘Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! (15) YHVH has taken away His judgments against you, He has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, YHVH is in your midst; You will fear disaster no more.’*** Yahshua The Word of Elohim will rule over the united Israel as King of Kings, as we read in Revelation 19: 11 – 16.

The prophecies of Haggai:

Haggai was the first of the post-captivity prophets and wrote after the nation of Judah returned from captivity in Babylon. YHVH inspired Haggai to inspire the people to rebuild the Temple destroyed by the Babylonians. However, we see that after the people of Judah returned, they were more concerned about rebuilding their own houses, and stopped building the Temple. We read in Haggai 1: 2: ***“Thus says YHVH of hosts, ‘This people says, “The time has not come, even the time for the house of YHVH to be rebuilt.”’*** The people had become uninterested in rebuilding the Temple, saying the time was not right for rebuilding it. Haggai told them to reconsider, since their ways were not the way of YHVH. They were not prospering, because they neglected to put YHVH first, as we read in Haggai 1: 8 – 11. It was at that time that the Spirit of

Elohim stirred Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, and Joshua, the high priest, as well as the people, and they started rebuilding the Temple.

After they started rebuilding the Temple, YHVH inspired Haggai to prophesy about the '*Day of YHVH*' as we read in Haggai 2: 6 & 7: **"For thus says YHVH of hosts, 'Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. (7) And I will shake all the nations, and they will come with the wealth of all nations; and I will fill this house with glory,' says YHVH of hosts."** YHVH is speaking of a house, a Temple at the return of Messiah. Who or what is that Temple? How can we know? In Ephesians 2, we see that Yahshua the Messiah builds His Temple, with stones from both houses, fitly framed together. We read in verses 20 – 22 of Ephesians 2, as follows: ***'having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Messiah Yahshua Himself being the corner stone, (21) in whom the whole building being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in YHVH; (22) in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of Elohim in the Spirit.'*** Haggai was prophesying about the Temple, the ecclesia which Yahshua is even now building and preparing for His second coming. YHVH tells us through Haggai that He is going to over-throw the nations of the world and set up His Kingdom on the earth. He promises in Haggai 2: 9 that at that time there will be peace for His people.

The prophecies of Zechariah:

The prophet Zechariah also prophesied after Judah returned from their captivity in Babylon. Zechariah was commissioned by Elohim, to encourage Judah to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem. He also prophesied about Messiah's return to His spiritual Temple and the city of Jerusalem. We read accordingly in Zechariah 1: 16 ***'Therefore, thus says YHVH, "I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it," declares YHVH of hosts, "and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem."*** And also in Zechariah 2: 10 ***"Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," declares YHVH.'***

We see in Zechariah 4 that he continued with a prophecy for Zerubbabel, who was overseeing the rebuilding of the physical Temple. It was by Elohim's Spirit and not human effort that the Temple was rebuilt as we read in the last part of Zechariah 4: 6, as follows: ***"this is the word of YHVH to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says YHVH of hosts."*** YHVH will also build His Spiritual Temple by His Spirit. As we see in Zechariah 8: 3, Yahshua the Messiah will set up His Kingdom and rule from the city of Jerusalem, after His return. According to Zechariah 8: 4 & 5, people will live to a ripe old age and children will again be playing without fear, in the streets of Jerusalem, during the millennium. We read in verse 13 of Chapter 8: ***'And it will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.'***

Zechariah prophesied about the first coming of Messiah in Zechariah 9: 9, saying: ***"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey."*** He also prophesied about Messiah's second coming in Zechariah 12: 10. In Zechariah 14: 1 - 4 we see what the nations will be doing at His second coming: ***'Behold, a day is coming for YHVH when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. (2) For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. (3) Then YHVH will go forth and fight against those nations as when He fights on the day of battle. (4) And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.'*** We also see that when He comes in the last part of Zechariah 14: 5, that the first fruits will be with Him at his return, as follows: ***'Then YHVH, my Elohim, will come, and all the Set-apart ones with Him!'***

The people of United Israel will know and obey the one and only true Elohim in that day. In fact all nations alive at that time will keep the Feast Days of YHVH, as we read in Zechariah 14: 16 ***‘Then it will come about that any one who are left of all the nations that went up against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, YHVH of hosts and to celebrate the Feast of Booths.’*** Even though very few people keep the Feast Days of YHVH given in Leviticus 23 today, that will change during the millennium rule of Yahshua our Messiah.

The prophecies of Malachi:

The name Malachi means ‘messenger of YHVH’. Most of Malachi’s prophecies are aimed at the modern day descendants of Israel. However, in verse 2 - 4 of Chapter 1 we read YHVH saying: ***“‘I have loved you,” says YHVH, but you say, “How hast thou loved us?” “Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?” declares YHVH. “Yet I have loved Jacob; (3) but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation, and appointed his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness.” (4) Though Edom says, “We have been beaten down, but we will return and build up the ruins”: thus says YHVH of hosts, “They may build, but I will tear down; and men will call them the wicked territory, and the people toward whom YHVH is indignant forever.”’*** From this we see that YHVH will remain angry with Esau. It is His right to decide how He responds to His Creation.

YHVH rebukes the people of Israel for not honoring His name, in the book of Malachi. In verse 6 He says: ***“A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?” says YHVH of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name. But you say, ‘How have we despised Thy name?’*** Yes, this is talking to the many believers who today refuse to honor the name of YHVH, by using titles such as G-d and Father in place of His name. However, we notice In Malachi 1 from verse 6 on, that He says that the modern day Israelites are not honoring His name by offering defiled food upon His altar. We should at this point ask ourselves: are we giving YHVH our best at all times? Are we giving Him the first fruits of our offering of time: for Sabbath services, in Scripture studies and prayer? Or do we want it to be over as soon as it started?

In Chapter 2 YHVH again says that the priests are not honoring His name, because they refuse to keep His Feast Days at the appointed times, which Moses (or the one in Moses’ seat) shall proclaim. YHVH actually refers to it here as His ‘covenant with Levi’. Yes we read in verse 11, that Judah has also done treacherously and profaned the sanctuary of Elohim. YHVH explains in verse 16 that He hates divorce and him who covers his garment with wrong. In verse 17 He warns that we as Israel must take heed to our spirit that we do not deal treacherously, by asking how He (YHVH) can still delight in Judah, after the evil that they had done. ***How dare we?*** YHVH has the right to do what He wants, as He is our maker. Rav Shaul explains this very thing in Romans 3: 1 & 2, where he tells us that Judah have been entrusted with the Oracles of Elohim. They decide at the seasons appointed by YHVH, when we should observe the Feast Days of YHVH. In verse 3 and the first part of verse 4 of Romans 3 we read: ***‘What then? If some (of the Jews) did not believe,, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of Elohim, will it? (4) May it never be! Rather, let Elohim be found true, though every man be found a liar.’*** Belief it or not brethren, this is how many dishonors the name of YHVH.

Continuing on in chapter 3 of Malachi, Malachi prophesied of a messenger that will come to prepare the way for Messiah’s return. This refers in type to Messiah’s first coming, but primarily to His return. Messiah will suddenly come to His Spiritual Temple – those whom Elohim has called to become His spirit begotten children. In verse 2 of chapter 3 Malachi describes the Day of YHVH, as follows: ***“but who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap.”*** In Malachi 3 verses 17 and 18 we see the reward that YHVH has planned for those who fear Him. Paraphrased it says that they will be Elohim’s special possession and He will spare them as a man spares his son. Malachi speaks of the second death after the tribulation, in Malachi 4 verses 1 and 3, as follows: ***“For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze,” says YHVH of hosts, “so that it will leave them neither***

root nor branch.” (3) “And you will tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day which I am preparing,” says YHVH of hosts.’

YHVH through Malachi, admonished us in verse 4 of Chapter 4 to remember the law of Moses and the statutes and ordinances that He commanded Moses at Horeb, for all Israel. Next we read that prior to Yahshua’s return, YHVH says that the Prophet Elijah will come before the Day of YHVH and he will teach Israel saying: “My El is YHVH”, or that his Elohim is YHVH. In addition he will turn the hearts of the children to their fathers, and the hearts of the fathers to the children: meaning that this Elijah will also turn the faith (hearts) of the children (modern day Israel) back to the faith of their fathers in the faith, namely Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We see in Malachi 4: 6 that YHVH says if this is not accomplished, He will smite the land with a curse. The word curse can mean utter destruction, but also as recently explained by Rabbi Moshe Koniuchowsky, it can mean Allah. This is in effect saying that because the modern day Israelites have violated the law of Moses, the curse has been poured out upon them: the curse of Islamic terrorism started during the early 1990’s and is continuing even today.

A closing thought: We as Nazarene Israel (and some like-minded believers) are to an extent, presently fulfilling the role of Elijah that Malachi prophesied about!

Chapter 25: Parables of Yahshua.

Yahshua used parables as a method to teach his disciples. We know that a parable is an allegory used to teach important lessons. It is not to be understood literally nor does it describe actual events taking place. Yahshua used the same methods of teachings that the Jewish Rabbi's before him did. However, we know that even though Yahshua's method of teaching was similar to His first century contemporaries, it differed from them as follows:

- Yahshua taught in His own name, and not like the other Rabbis of His day, in the names of their teachers;
- His message was primarily focused on the coming kingdom of Elohim; and
- His teachings were usually accompanied by miracles which validated his claim to be one with the Father.

Yahshua taught His disciples a number of parables. One of the parables that Yahshua taught His disciples was the 'Parable of the Sower' recorded in Matthew 13: 3 – 9, paraphrased as follows: *'A sower went out to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell among the path and the birds came and ate it. Other seeds fell on rocky ground with not much soil, they sprang up immediately but withered in the sun. Others fell upon thorns and were choked when they grew up. Some however, fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.'*

It is important for those who teach to understand the meaning of this parable, so that they do not become despondent. This parable may be explained as follows:

- *The people in the world hear and see but they do not understand, because their eyes are closed to the truth and they cannot see or hear. YHVH allows Satan to blind the minds of unbelievers, so that they do not understand the good news of Messiah. We read this in 2 Corinthians 4: 3 & 4, as follows: **'And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, (4) in whose case the god of this world (Satan) has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the esteem of Messiah, who is the image of Elohim.'** Yes, when someone hears the truth and does not believe it, Satan removes it from his heart – this is essentially the seed which was sown along the path. This is also in agreement with Yahshua's explanation of the first part of the parable in Matthew 13: 18 & 19, where He said: **"Hear then the parable of the sower, (19) When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road."***
- The seed that was sown on rocky ground is about the individual who hears the truth and immediately receives it with joy. However, he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the world, immediately he falls away. When this person's family and friends reject him for his beliefs, or when keeping the Sabbath and Set-apart days, bring harassment, he shuts his heart to the truth.
- The seed that was sown among thorns, tells us about the individual who hears the truth and responds for a while. But the worries of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. This individual's life is very complicated. He belongs to all sorts of clubs and societies and is living the high life. He is physically stretched to the limit and because he is concerned about his investments and the irons that he has in many fires, he soon forgets his newly found faith.
- The seed that was sown in good soil are those who hear and understand the truth. They bear fruit and in one case bear a hundred fold, in another, sixty fold and in another, thirty fold. We are blessed because we hear and see the truth, because YHVH has opened our minds to it, through His Ruach HaKodesh, which indwells us.

Yahshua told this parable and several others to His disciples and as is recorded in Mark 4, when He was alone with His disciples and followers they questioned Him as to why He uses this method of teaching. Yahshua explained to them in Mark 4: 11 & 12 as follows: **'And He was saying to them, "To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of Elohim; but those who are outside get everything in parables, in**

order that while seeing, they may see and not perceive; and while hearing, they may hear and not understand lest they return and be forgiven.” From His explanation we understand that YHVH is not calling everyone alive during this age. He is only calling out first fruits who if they finally make it into the kingdom of Elohim, will rule as kings and priests under Yahshua, during His millennium rule and on into eternity. One example in the Scriptures where YHVH promises rulership to those who overcome and endure to the end of their lives or until Messiah returns, is found in Revelation 3: 21, as follows: **“He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”** A second witness may be found in Revelation 5: 10.

Yahshua explained about a time during which people from all generations will be judged at the same time, during the great white throne judgment in Matthew 12: 41 as follows: **‘The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.’** A second witness of this may be read in Matthew 11: 20 – 24. These people from ancient times will be resurrected after the millennium rule of Yahshua and will respond once they have had a genuine opportunity to understand the Scriptures.

We read Yahshua’s own words about the Queen of the South in Mathew 12: 42 as follows: **“The Queen of the South shall rise up with this generation at the judgment and shall condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.”** The Queen of the South will be in the second resurrection, after the millennium. She will be part of the second harvest of souls into the Kingdom of Elohim. She will repent and accept Yahshua our Messiah as her personal Savior. She will also accept and live by what is written in the books (The Scriptures) and her name will be entered into the book of life as per Revelation 20: 12. Those who are not called during this age, will have their chance in the second resurrection. The majority of people who have ever lived fall in this category and will have their first chance only then.

Yahshua gave more parables to the crowd gathered on the sea shore. Each of these parables reveal an important lesson about the kingdom of Elohim. We will now discuss each of these parables in turn:

1. In the parable of the wheat and the tares found in Matthew 13: 24 – 30: **‘He (Yahshua) presented another parable to them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. (25) But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. (26) But when the wheat sprang up and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. (27) And the slaves of the landowner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ (28) And he said to them, ‘An enemy has done this!’ And the slave said to Him, ‘Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?’ (29) But he said, ‘No; lest while you are gathering up tares, you may root up the wheat with them. (30) Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, “First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.”’** Yahshua later explained the meaning of this parable to His disciples in Matthew 13: 37 to 43, as follows: **‘And He answered and said, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, (38) and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; (39) and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. (40) Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. (41) The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, (42) and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (43) Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears let him hear.’** Yahshua was saying that believers would live in this world along with the unrighteous, until He returns at the end of this age. The wicked will eventually be burned up in the lake of fire (after the second resurrection). Faithful believers will be glorified when He returns, receiving immortal bodies when they are born into the kingdom of Elohim.

2. Both the parable of the mustard seed and the parable of the leaven in Matthew 13: 31 – 33, show that the Kingdom of Elohim has the smallest of beginnings. Only a small number of first fruits are being called now, but will eventually expand to include the whole earth and most of its people.
3. In the parable of the lamp under the bushel in Mark 4: 21 - 23, Yahshua was showing that the true Gospel, which was a mystery to the world and hidden from man's understanding, would be preached to all the world according to Matthew 24: 14. We must continue teaching the truth, without fear. In Matthew 10: 26 – 27 Yahshua assured His disciples: ***"Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. (27) What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops."***
4. In the parable of seed growing by itself in Mark 4: 26 – 29 Yahshua explains that once the seed is sown, YHVH gives the increase. We proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of Elohim, but it is YHVH who calls people to ultimately be in the Kingdom.

After Yahshua gave these parables, he sent the crowd away and privately explained the meaning of the parables to His disciples. He also continued to give His disciples four more parables, as follows:

1. In the parable of the hidden treasure in Matthew 13: 44 Yahshua said: ***"The Kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field."*** Also in the parable of the pearl of great price, in Matthew 13: 45 – 46, He said: ***"Again the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, (46) and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it."*** In both of these parables Yahshua encouraged His disciples to put their whole life and being into seeking first the kingdom of Elohim. We who are called during this age should be willing to give up everything to attain it. Even though YHVH does not expect us to give up everything we possess, He expects us to be willing to. After all any physical thing that we might have to give up is small compared to being born again into the kingdom of Elohim.
2. In the parable of the dragnet in Matthew 13: 47 – 50 Yahshua was warning His disciples, who were to become 'fishers of men', that not every person that they 'caught' would be truly called of Elohim. The good news of the coming kingdom of Elohim attracts all kinds of people, but not all are truly converted. In the end, all those not truly converted will be separated from those who are.
3. In the parable of the household, Yahshua said in Matthew 13: 52, ***"Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old."*** This parable shows that a true disciple will not only preach from the Tanach: lessons from the Torah, the writings and the prophets, but also from the Renewed Covenant, teaching new truths about the kingdom of Elohim.

Let us conclude with two additional parables that Yahshua told his disciples. The first one has to do with the two houses of Israel and the second with understanding the two resurrections explained in Revelation 20:

1. In the parable of the prodigal son found in Luke 15: 11 – 32, Yahshua told about a man who had two sons. The younger son demands his part of the inheritance and leaves his father's house. He spends his inheritance on riotous living and is soon reduced to poverty. During a famine in the land where he was living, his only way to make a living, was to feed pigs. He eventually became so hungry that he is forced to eat the pig's food. This is when the young man realizes how foolish he has been. He decides to return to his father's farm, saying to his father in verse 21: ***'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'*** His father was so glad to see him, that he welcomed

him with a celebratory homecoming. However, we see that the elder brother, who has faithfully served the father, cannot see why his brother should receive such a welcome. This parable is essentially about the two houses of Israel. Whilst our elder brother Judah remained with the Father, we the younger brother, Israel left our Father and forgot that we are Israel. We are now being called back to our Father and His Torah. We see that our return, by keeping the Sabbath, the Feast Days of YHVH, eating Kosher and obeying Torah, makes our elder brother Judah jealous. This is actually in fulfillment of the second part of Deuteronomy 32: 21, as follows: ***“So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people (we have lost our identity as Israel); I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.”***

2. In the parable of Lazarus and the rich man found in Luke 16, Lazarus is described as being in Abraham’s bosom; in close fellowship with Abraham. Many believe this to mean that Lazarus went to heaven. However, other Scriptures show that this is referring to the first resurrection, when the ‘first fruits’ will be resurrected into the kingdom of Elohim. This will be at the return of Messiah Yahshua when He comes to rule us from Jerusalem. We also see the rich man is pictured as being in a state of torment. Many people understand this to mean that the rich man is being tormented in an eternally burning hell fire. However, this cannot be true, since the Scriptures plainly show that there is no eternally burning hell fire. The word hell according to Luke 16: 23 come from the word Hades, which simply means the grave. The wicked rich man is eventually resurrected to physical life, not to be in the kingdom with Lazarus, but to be burned in the lake of fire. In this particular resurrection, this occurs after the millennium, those who refuse to obey YHVH, with full knowledge, will be cast into the lake of fire. The rich man is like the ecclesia in Laodicea, which said in Revelation 3: 17: ***“I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing.”*** Because he did not repent, he will be cast into the lake of fire. His torment is the realization that he is about to be cast into the lake of fire for refusing to repent of his sins. The parable shows a great gulf fixed between those who will be resurrected to immortality, like Lazarus, and those who will be resurrected to be cast into the lake of fire. The gulf represents a period of a thousand years and cannot be crossed. The rich man who is mortal will be burned up and die the second death. Finally, when he realizes that he was doomed and that this gulf cannot be crossed, the rich man begs Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his brothers to repent. However, Abraham told him that they would not repent, even if Lazarus was raised from the dead to warn them, since they had the writings of Moses and the Prophets, and did not repent. Yahshua taught by this parable that those Scribes and Pharisees who lived during His day, knowing Him and seeing the miracles that He performed, will die in the second death, because they refused to obey the Scriptures. Similarly if we should continue to practice sin after coming to the knowledge of the kingdom of Elohim, we will die a second death in the lake of fire. Selah: Think about it!

Chapter 26: The training of Messiah's disciples.

Now that we have studied Messiah's life to get to know Him better and have discussed some of the parables that He gave His disciples, let us have a look at how He trained His disciples. We have learnt before that the word disciple simply means a student. Like the original twelve disciples, we who are studying Messiah's life and teachings, His modern day disciples, are learning how to imitate our Master. Like with His original disciples, He wants us to play strictly by the rules, both literally and according to the intent. To do that, we must know the Torah of YHVH as well as the spiritual application of it in our lives.

In order to become perfect like Elohim we must come to know Him well. We must know what He is like, how He thinks, what are His likes and dislikes and what He does. We must learn who and what He is. How can we get to know YHVH our Elohim? How did you get to know your wife? You talked to her telling her about yourself and she in turn told you about herself. That is also the way that we get to know YHVH our Elohim. We talk to YHVH through prayer, and He talks to us through His written word, the Scriptures. It is for this reason that prior to giving His disciples a pattern for their prayers He gave them two broad teachings about how to pray. We read these instructions in Matthew 6: 5 to 8, as follows: ***'And when you pray, you are not to be as hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners, in order to be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. (6) But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will repay you. (7) And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. (8) Therefore do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need, before you ask Him.'*** Yahshua was saying that we should not pray just to be heard by others, so that they are impressed by our 'righteousness.' That is what hypocrites do. Rather, we should pray because we really want to talk to YHVH, and that is actually done in private. Yahshua also taught that we should not use vain repetition in our prayers, by saying words or His Name over and over again. YHVH is more interested in the quality of our prayers than in the quantity of our words. He wants us to pray from the heart.

Yahshua proceeded to teach His disciples and us a pattern for our prayers, in the so-called "Lord's Prayer" in Matthew 6: 9 – 13, as follows: ***"Pray then in this way: 'Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. (10) Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. (11) Give us this day our daily bread. (12) And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. (13) And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the esteem, forever. Amen.'"***

In Yahshua's sample prayer He was showing His disciples and us important concepts to incorporate into our daily prayers. Let us now examine His sample prayer in detail to understand it fully. We should commence our prayers by acknowledging that YHVH is our heavenly Father. By doing that, we show that we understand that we are His children and have the potential to ultimately become part of His spiritual family, ruling as kings and priests under Yahshua. We should thank Him for giving us the knowledge of our awesome potential to becoming immortal spiritual beings. We should also ask Him to help us achieve that awesome potential, to one day become perfect in character, like He has always been. We should hallow (Set-apart) the Name of YHVH by keeping the Third Commandment. We should not use His Name by cursing, swearing or using His Name in a repetitious manner.

Those of us, who are using the Name of YHVH, should ask ourselves the question: Am I using His Name or am I honoring it, by being obedient to His word? Attaching His Name to Feast Days which are not His, according to His word, are definitely not honoring His Name. Yes, we cannot attach the name of YHVH to pagan feast days such as Xmas and Easter. However, if we are keeping our feasts at a different times to those that YHVH commanded Moses (or whoever is sitting in his seat) to proclaim in Leviticus 23, then we are also not honoring His Name. We read this in Malachi 2: 1 – 8 ***"And now, this commandment is for you, O***

Priests. (2) If you do not listen, and if you do not take it to heart to give honor to My Name,” says YHVH of hosts, “then I will send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; and indeed, I have cursed them already, because you are not taking it to heart. (3) Behold, I am going to rebuke your offspring, and I will spread refuse on your faces, the refuse of your feasts; and you will be taken away with it. (4) Then you will know that I have sent this commandment to you, that My covenant may continue with Levi,” says YHVH of hosts.’ (5) “My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave them to him as an object of reverence; so he revered Me, and stood in awe of My name. (6) True instruction was in his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found on his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and turned many back from iniquity. (7) For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of YHVH of Hosts. (8) But as for you, you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to stumble by the instruction; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi.” said YHVH of Hosts.’ Our prayer should always be that YHVH will help us not to bring reproach upon His Set-apart Name by setting the wrong examples.

We should on a regular basis pray; “Thy Kingdom come”, asking YHVH to let Yahshua return to establish the kingdom of Elohim on earth. Only by Elohim’s direct intervention in our affairs, can peace and prosperity be established. However, prior to that happening, Yahshua said in Matthew 24: 14 **“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.”** Note that this is not saying to convert people, but to witness to them. Our prayers should include this special request on a regular basis. We should also remember to pray for YHVH our Elohim’s will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. This involves praying for the kingdom of Elohim to be established on earth. Then and only then will mankind as a whole be doing His will.

Whilst YHVH does not want the main emphasis of our prayers to be on physical things, He expects us to ask Him to provide in our physical needs. We should not be overly concerned about our needs for tomorrow, next month or next year; He wants us to ask Him for our daily needs, such as food, clothing and shelter. We all sin, even if we try not to. It is therefore very important that we confess our sins in prayer and ask Him to forgive us of those sins, as recorded in 1 John 1: 8 & 9, as follows: **‘If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (9) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’** As you ask our Father for forgiveness, recall which of Elohim’s commandments you might have broken during the day. Ask YHVH to forgive you those sins, and as we will see shortly, be sure that you have forgiven others who may have sinned against you.

We should ask our Father not to lead us into temptation but to deliver us from the evil one. This includes asking to resist peer pressures and to avoid things that could be harmful to us, like drugs and unclean foods, etc. We should conclude our prayers, acknowledging that all power and esteem belongs to YHVH our Elohim. To close, we need to remember what Yahshua taught His disciples in John 14: 13 & 14, as follows: **“And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (14) If you ask Me anything in My name I will do it.”**

Yahshua also taught some more important lessons in the verses after the sample prayer saying in Matthew 6: 14 to 18, that: **“For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. (15) But if you do not forgive men, your Father will not forgive your transgressions. (16) And whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance in order to be seen fasting by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. (17) But you when you fast anoint your head and wash your face, (18) so that you may not be seen fasting by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.”** These are important lessons to remember and are pretty much self-explanatory. We need to be mindful of this if we want to be forgiven our sins. In addition it tells us that we may wash our faces and anoint our heads with oil on the Day of Atonement, or any other day when we fast, so that we do not appear distressed simply for people to see that we are fasting.

In the next section Yahshua reminded His disciples that many things would compete for their time on a daily basis: Such things as making a living, buying food and clothing, desire for entertainment, pleasure and recreation, as well as prayer, Scripture studies, helping and serving others. Yahshua emphasized that spiritual matters should get first priority, because these are the things that help us develop lasting character, as we read in Matthew 6: 19 – 21, as follows: ***“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. (20) But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; (21) for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”*** Food is consumed; clothing lasts a little longer, but could easily be ruined by moths, fire, sunlight or sharp objects. Cars, lawnmowers and bicycles wear out and is affected by rust. TV sets, CD Players and computers break and may easily be stolen. However, this is not to say that we should not do what we can to provide food, clothing and shelter for our loved ones. But Yahshua was saying that we should not put all our effort into getting these physical things. Yahshua promised that if we put spiritual matters first in our lives, all these physical things shall be added unto us.

Yahshua also warned His disciples in Matthew 6: 24 that they cannot serve both YHVH and mammon. That is to say that they cannot devote all their time and energy acquiring material things and serving Him. These are essentially two opposites. Serving one automatically abolishes the other. Yahshua urged His disciples and by implication us, to put spiritual things first. By so doing we will develop character that will endure even beyond the grave.

We as Yahshua’s team have to work together, to cooperate and support each other in order to succeed. His next instruction to His disciples dealt with condemnation of others. We read this in Matthew 7: 1 - 5, as follows: ***“Do not judge lest you be judged. (2) For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. (3) And why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? (4) Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, the log is in your own eye? (5) You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”*** The word judge here implies harsh negative criticism of another’s character and motives of which is condemning. It doesn’t mean that you cannot determine (judge or say) whether an action was or was not wrong or a mistake. So long as we don’t say that it was a stupid mistake, or adding other derogatory remarks to it. As team players we need to support and encourage one another, nevertheless, positive uplifting criticism is necessary at times.

In concluding His instructions to His disciples in Matthew 7, Yahshua reminded them that the way of life that they are to follow, is not easy. It is a narrow and lonely road, which will require a lot of effort on their and our part. We read His words in this regard in Matthew 7: 13 to 23, as follows: ***“Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. (14) For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it. (15) Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. (16) You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles are they? (17) Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit. (18) A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. (19) Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. (20) So then, you will know them by their fruits. (21) Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Master, Master,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. (22) Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Master, Master, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast our demons, and in Your name performed many miracles?’ (23) And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME YOU WHO PRACTICED LAWLESSNESS.”***

Many will try to make the team, but will not succeed. Others will make the team, but will drop out later. Only those willing to be disciplined, will grow in spiritual knowledge and skills, and stick to the team until the end. Yahshua also warned about many false prophets, who would claim to be sent by Him. They will try and deceive the disciples to take an easier route. Messiah admonished His disciples to check the results of the ways of these false prophets. If their ways did not produce peace, cooperation and unity, they were not sent by Yahshua. If they do not uphold the same rules or laws of Elohim, they were not sent by Yahshua. If they did not support the will of Elohim, and did not do what He wanted done, they were not sent by Yahshua.

Yahshua completed His instructions to His disciples with the analogy found in Matthew 7: 24 – 27, as follows: ***“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock (Messiah Himself). (25) And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. (26) And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. (27) And the rain descended, and the floods came and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall.”*** In these verses Yahshua was saying that if the disciples obeyed and practiced what He taught them, they will be able to endure the storms of life, similar to the house that was built on the rock. As Yahshua’s modern day disciples this also applies to us. Baruch HaShem YHVH.

Chapter 27: The last weeks of Messiah's teachings.

In this sermon we will examine the final weeks of Messiah's life and teachings. We will consider His last teaching to the public as well as many of the principles that He continued to show His disciples. We will also look at the events that led to His arrest and impalement.

We commence looking at the miracle where Yahshua resurrected Lazarus in John 11. Lazarus lived in Bethany with His sisters Martha and Mary. Lazarus became very ill and was near death, when His sisters sent for Messiah, to come and heal him. Messiah was about two days travel away from Bethany and did not respond immediately. We read in verse 4 of John 11: ***'But when Yahshua heard it, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of Elohim, that the Son of Elohim may be glorified by it."***¹⁸ We see that Yahshua tarried two more days before He told His disciples to go with Him to Judea. But, His disciples reminded Him that the Jews were only days ago seeking to stone Him in Judea, and now He wants to go back there. Yahshua informed His disciples that there was no need to fear; that Lazarus has fallen asleep and that He intends to wake him up. The disciples did not understand what He was saying, so He said to them plainly in verse 14 of John 11, that ***"Lazarus is dead."*** The dead is often referred to as being asleep, awaiting resurrection, in the Renewed Covenant. We notice in 1 Thessalonians 4: 13 & 14, talking about the resurrection, as follows: ***"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. (14) For if we believe that Yahshua died and rose again, even so Elohim will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Yahshua."***

Upon arrival in Bethany, Yahshua and His disciples found that Lazarus had been dead for four days and many from Bethany came and offered their condolences to Mary and Martha. When Martha heard that Yahshua was coming, she went outside their house to meet Him. She tearfully told Yahshua that her brother died and if He arrived sooner, Lazarus would still be alive. Then Yahshua said to her in John 11: 25 & 26: ***"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, (26) and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"*** Yahshua was telling Martha that He can restore life to the dead and that those who believe in and obey Him, even though they may die, will one day be resurrected to eternal life? In addition we know that the portion of the Set-apart Spirit of YHVH, given us the first fruits at immersion and united with our spirits, goes back to the Father when we die, where it is perfected (according to Hebrews 12: 23) in heaven, until Messiah's return.

Here after Yahshua asked where they buried Lazarus, and as he followed them to the grave, He saw Mary and the mourners who followed her, and he wept as we see in verse 35 of John 11. But He wept not out of sorrow for Lazarus, but because of the sorrow of these people. When they arrived at the tomb, Yahshua ordered that the stone be rolled from the entrance, despite Martha's protest that the body has already begun to decay. Yahshua said a short prayer and called for Lazarus to come out. Next they saw Lazarus coming out, still bound hand and foot, and Yahshua told them to unbind him. This miracle was seen by many, which infuriated the religious leaders, when they were told about it. They immediately called a meeting to decide what to do about Yahshua. These leaders were worried that the people will acclaim Yahshua as the Messiah and feared that He would then lead them in rebellion against the Roman rulers. They also feared that this will result in a severe attack by the Roman authorities upon the nation and the loss of their positions. As a result we see Caiaphas the high priest saying in the last part of John 11: 49 and 50: ***"You know nothing at all (50) nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish."*** Caiaphas did not realize that he was in fact prophesying about Messiah's sacrifice, not only for the Jewish nation, but also for the nation of Israel scattered abroad, as we read in verse 52.

¹⁸ In John 10: 37 & 38 Yahshua said to the Jews: ***'If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.'***

Yahshua left Bethany and went to stay with His disciples in Ephraim, which is located near the desert. Because it was near the time of the Passover, the Jews from Judea and the surrounding areas started getting together in Jerusalem. We see in verse one of John 12, that Yahshua returned to Bethany six days before the Passover, to have supper with Lazarus and his sisters. The next day Yahshua went up to Jerusalem. He told His disciples to go ahead and fetch a donkey at a village nearby. He made his entry into Jerusalem riding upon this donkey. We see again that Yahshua wept, this time He wept, because He knew that in a few short years (40), Jerusalem would be destroyed and its inhabitants killed. When the people of Jerusalem heard that Yahshua is on His way to Jerusalem, they ran to greet Him, because they heard of the miracles that He performed. We see according to Matthew 21: 9 that many recognized Him as Messiah, saying: ***'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF YHVH; Hosanna in the highest!'*** This absolutely enraged the scribes and Pharisees.

During the final days of Messiah's life, He lodged in Bethany and journeyed to Jerusalem in the mornings. Whilst walking to Jerusalem, on one of these mornings, He became hungry and walked to a fig tree next to the road, to eat some fruit. However, the fig tree bore no fruit and Yahshua cursed it. The next day His disciples were amazed to see that the tree had completely withered. In response Yahshua said in verses 21 & 22 of Matthew 21: ***'Truly I say to you, if you have faith, and do not doubt, you shall not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, "Be taken up and cast into the sea," it shall happen. (22) And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.'*** Yahshua was showing His disciples that Elohim will answer the prayers of those who have faith. If we strive to obey YHVH with the best of our ability and study His Scriptures to find out what His will is for us, we can pray with complete confidence, asking YHVH to supply our needs.

Thousands of people came to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices at the Temple during the Passover season. We see that in the Temple courtyard there were merchants selling doves and other animals to these people, to offer them as sacrifices to Elohim. The people crowded around the tables of the moneychangers with coins from all over the Roman empire in exchange for the special Temple coinage. These moneychangers knew that the people had to exchange their money in order to give offerings. They took advantage of the people charging unfair rates to gain excessive profits for themselves. When Yahshua entered the Temple courtyard He cast out all those who were buying and selling in the Temple, and also overturned the tables of the moneychangers, saying in Matthew 21: 13, ***"It is written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER'; but you are making it a ROBBERS DEN."*** This teaches us that we should be respectful toward Elohim during Sabbath services, remembering that we are coming into His presence to worship Him, and to hear His words expounded to us from the Scriptures.

We read in Luke 19: 47 & 48 that Messiah taught daily in the Temple, and that the chief priests and the scribes and the leading men among the people were trying to destroy Him. But they could not find anything that they might do, for all the people were hanging upon His words. Messiah knew that His life on earth will soon come to an end. He told the people who gathered around Him in John 12: 23 & 24, that: ***"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. (24) Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."*** Yahshua used this analogy to explain that through His death and resurrection, all who ever lived will have an opportunity to receive eternal life. Yahshua next told His disciples in John 12: 25 that, ***"He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal."*** He was showing that anyone, whose sole purpose is to preserve his life, will lose it. However, if anyone gives his life in service and obedience to YHVH, practicing the give way of life instead of the get way, Elohim will give him the gift of eternal life, in the end.

In John 12: 27 we see that Yahshua was troubled by the nearness of His death and He wished that Elohim would spare Him from a painful and humiliating death. However, He knew that He came for this very purpose – to die for the sins of the world. In verse 28 of John 12, we see Yahshua asking: ***"Father, glorify Thy name."*** ***There came therefore a voice out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it***

again.” Those nearby who heard the voice were amazed. They were saying that it was thunder; others were saying, **“An angel has spoken to Him.”** But, Yahshua told them that the voice did not come for His sake, but for theirs, witnessing that He was sent by Elohim.

Nevertheless, because the people expected the Messiah to be a conquering hero to deliver them from Rome, they did not believe His messages. This is in line with the prophesy about Him in Isaiah 53: 3. Yahshua was fully aware that the people did not understand who and what He was. He understood that they were blinded as we read in John 12: 39 & 40, **‘For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, (40) “HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES, AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART; LEST THEY SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED, AND I HEAL THEM.”’** But many Jewish rulers did understand who Messiah was and believed Him. However, we read in verses 42 & 43 of John 10, **‘Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; (43) for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of Elohim.’**

The religious leaders wanted to kill Yahshua and during the last days of His ministry, continued to question Him in order to discredit Him. They wanted to turn the crowds against Him, so that they might arrest Him without opposition. The chief priests and elders came to Yahshua whilst He was preaching in the Temple, asking who gave Him authority to teach and do miracles. Messiah told them that He would answer them, if they answered a question from Him first. He asked them if they believed that John the Immerser received his authority to immerse people from men or from Elohim. They reasoned among themselves, saying: **“If we say, ‘From heaven’, He will say to us, ‘Then why did you not believe him?’ ‘But if we say, ‘From men,’ we fear the multitudes; for they all hold John to be a prophet.”** They therefore answered Yahshua, saying: **“We do not know.”** Yahshua said to them in the last part Matthew 21: 27: **“neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”**

Yahshua proceeded to give two parables to show the difference between those who believed John the Immerser, and those who rejected him. The first parable in Matthew 21: 28 – 32 was about two sons, asked by their father to work in his vineyard. The first son told his dad that he will not, but repented later and did as his father requested. The second son, in turn said that he will do as his father asked, but did not do so. Messiah was showing that the people who believed John the Immerser repented of their sins and would as a result enter the kingdom of Elohim. They would do so in place of those who said that they would do Elohim’s will, but who made a show of being righteous and in reality did not obey Him. Even though Messiah aimed this parable at the religious leaders of His day, it is very important for us to remember the covenant we entered into with Elohim at immersion, and do what we promised, if we want to be in the kingdom.

The second parable (in Matthew 21: 33 - 40) was about the owner of a vineyard who entrusted the vineyard to certain caretakers and went off into a far country. At harvest time the owner sent servants to the caretakers to receive the produce from the vineyard. But the caretakers mistreated the servants, beating one, killing another and stoned a third. A second time the owners sent servants, but they were treated equally bad. Then the owner sent his son, thinking that the caretakers would at least respect his son, but instead they killed him. In Matthew 21: 40 Messiah asked them: **“Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?”** The religious leaders answered in verse 41: **“He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers, who will pay him proceeds at the proper season.”** Yahshua was showing these religious leaders that they had time after time rejected the prophets sent by Elohim. In the end, Elohim sent His own Son to preach to them, but instead of listening to Him, they killed Him. Yahshua next told them that because of their iniquity Elohim will give the opportunity of entering the kingdom of Elohim, to those who would repent and bring forth fruit of obedience. At this point in time the religious leaders realized that the parables were about them. When they therefore sought to arrest Him, they feared the multitudes, because they held Yahshua to be a prophet.

Hereafter Yahshua told another parable, comparing the kingdom of Elohim, to a wedding celebration (see Matthew 22: 1- 4). In this parable, a king prepared a wedding celebration for his son. But, the invited guests refused to come to the wedding. In fact some even killed the servants who brought them the invitations. The king therefore asked his servants to find other guests to attend the wedding. The scribes and the Pharisees, who were originally invited to receive the kingdom of Elohim, rejected Messiah and His message, and eventually had Him killed¹⁹. In their place Elohim called ordinary people like us to become members of His ecclesia. They would have a chance to attend the wedding at the second coming of Messiah, provided they wore their 'wedding garments'. We see in the second part of Revelation 7: 14 how to prepare our garments for the wedding: ***'and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'*** Notice also in Revelation 19: 8 that the proper clothing is symbolic of righteousness: ***'And it was given her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.'*** So only those who prepare themselves, by being immersed in Yahshua's name, growing in grace and knowledge by studying and obeying Elohim, will be allowed to one day marry Yahshua our Messiah.

At that stage the Pharisees became desperate. They held a meeting devising a plan which they hoped will entangle Yahshua. They send a group of clever men to question Yahshua. In Matthew 22: 17 these men asked Yahshua: ***"Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?"*** Yahshua asked them why they are questioning Him, and requested that they show Him a coin. He took the coin that they brought and asked them in verse 20 (of Matthew 22): ***"Whose likeness and inscription is this?"*** coin. They answered: "Caesar's" after which He said to them in verse 21: ***"Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to Elohim the things that are Elohim's."*** After hearing this they marveled and went away.

A little while later the Sadducees, a group who did not believe in the resurrection, came up to Yahshua. They wanted to make a fool out of Yahshua, asking him questions which they thought He could not answer. They started questioning Yahshua in Matthew 22: 24 – 28, telling Him that according to Moses (meaning Torah), If a man dies childless, his brother as next of kin shall marry his wife to raise offspring for him. They told Yahshua that there were seven brothers, and each one in turn married the wife, after the brothers died one after the other, but not one of them left their brother offspring. Eventually the wife also died. Their question following the story is recorded in Matthew 22: 28: ***'In the resurrection therefore whose wife of the seven shall she be? For they all had her.'*** We read in Matthew 22: 29 & 30: ***'But Yahshua answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures, or the power of Elohim. (30) For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven."'*** It is important to remember Yahshua's answer, as it shows that when we are resurrected one day, we will be like angels, and neither angels nor demons (fallen angels) have marital relations.

Yahshua continued to tell the Sadducees that YHVH said He is the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – He is the Elohim of the living and not the dead. He clearly meant that for Elohim to be the Elohim of the living Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, they will have to be brought to life again – at the resurrection of the dead. This silenced the Sadducees and they were unable to continue reasoning with Yahshua. When the Pharisees heard that he silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them a lawyer, asked Yahshua, which is the great commandment of the law. Once again Yahshua gave the correct answer, which greatly upset His critics. Yahshua then proceeded asking the Pharisees a question which they could not answer. In Matthew 22: 42 - 46 we read accordingly: ***"What do you think about the Messiah, whose son is He?" They said to Him, "The son of David."*** (43) ***He said to them, "Then how does David in the Spirit call Him 'YHVH (MarYah),' saying, (44) 'YHVH said to My YHVH (MarYah), "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I PUT THINE ENEMIES BENEATH THY FEET"?' (45) "If David then called Him 'YHVH' (MarYah), how is He his son?" (46)***

¹⁹ We should however never say or think that the Jews killed Yahshua, as He came to die for the sins of the world – the scribes and Pharisees of His day where only a means of achieving this objective. We are therefore all directly responsible for His death. In addition we should remember His own words in John 10 verse 17 and the 1st part of verse 18, where He said: ***"For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative."***

And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question.”

As the leaders of the community, the scribes and the Pharisees were respected because they gave the appearance of being extremely righteous. They kept very difficult schedules of religious activities. They prayed in public for everyone to see; they fasted at least twice a week and tithed on everything they received, even on the herbs from their gardens. In addition they observed very strict rules regarding the Sabbath. However, Messiah recognizes a major character flaw in all their show of righteousness. It was because of their hypocrisy that Yahshua level cutting attacks at the Pharisees. The Pharisees wanted everyone to look up to them. They wore longer tzitzit than anyone else. They traveled long distances on land and sea, to bring converts into their brand of Judaism. Despite all their hypocrisy, Yahshua recognized the authority of the scribes and Pharisees saying they ***“sit in Moses seat”*** (in Matthew 23: 2) - Meaning that we should follow their instructions regarding Torah observance, as they are Elohim’s Lawgiver (see Psalm 60: 7 and Genesis 49: 10). However, we should not do according to their deeds; for they say things, and do not do them.

In Matthew 23: 23 we see Yahshua’s stern indictment against the scribes and Pharisees, saying: ***‘Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.’*** Yahshua knew that while the Pharisees were putting on an outward show of righteousness, they sinned with full knowledge, even plotting to kill Him. In verse 28 of Matthew 23, He said: ***‘Even so you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.’***

After rebuking the religious leaders, Yahshua was filled with sadness over the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying in Matthew 23: 37 – 39: ***“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks, under her wings, and you were not willing. (38) Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! (39) For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF YHVH!’”*** This was Yahshua’s final public address. In the next sermon we will consider His Olivet prophesy where He addressed His disciples privately.

Chapter 28: Yahshua's Olivet prophesy.

Yahshua gave some very important teachings during the final few weeks of His life. In the previous sermon we studied His last teaching to the public as well as many of His confrontations with the religious leaders of His day. We will now study Messiah's Olivet prophesy where He addressed His disciples in private in Matthew 24.

After Yahshua and His disciples left the Temple, one of His disciples commented on the superb structure of the Temple. This is when He, with great sorrow told His disciples about the soon-coming destruction of the Temple, as we read in Matthew 24: 2, ***"Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down."*** Messiah spoke of a time 40 years into the future, when both the Temple and the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Roman army. As He was sitting down on the Mount of Olives, His disciples asked Him to tell them when the Temple will be destroyed and what will be the sign of His coming, and the end of the age.

Messiah and His disciples walked through the Kidron Valley and hiked up the Mount of Olives, from where they could see the city of Jerusalem. In verse 3 of Matthew 24, His disciples asked Him, ***"Tell, us when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"*** The disciples asked three questions in one and expected Messiah to return in their lifetime. They did not realize that He will only return in about two thousand years into the future. Nevertheless, Messiah warned His disciples about many religious teachers who will come in His name, saying that He is the Messiah, but who will lead many astray. Yes, Yahshua was talking about people who claim to be Christian that will lead people astray by preaching a false gospel about His person, rather than the gospel about the coming kingdom of Elohim, which He came to proclaim. Yahshua said it is necessary to believe the true gospel to be saved. Yet, millions of professing Christians today do not know what the gospel is. In Mark 16, we read Messiah's parting commission to His apostles, sending them out into the world as teachers to put together His ecclesia, in verses 15 & 16, saying: ***"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. (16) He who has believed and has been immersed shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."***

Yahshua emphasized the importance of believing the gospel of the coming kingdom of Elohim; that it is necessary to believe it, to be saved. Yes, believing and proclaiming the gospel of the coming kingdom of Elohim, will save us, not trying to establish our own place of safety or Utopia here on earth; there is something that all believers can look forward to. The kingdom of Elohim shall be established on earth, and until then He will protect us wherever we are, provided we obey Him fully. We see in Mark 1: 14 & 15 that the true gospel was preached by Yahshua, as follows: ***'And after John had been taken into custody, Yahshua came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of Elohim, (15) and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of Elohim is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*** Yahshua's gospel is not the one that Christianity teaches about His person; resulting in millions believing on Him (or *Christ* as they call Him), but do not believe His message about the coming kingdom of Elohim.

Yahshua warned that many false preachers would come, deceiving and misleading many. This started immediately after Yahshua's resurrection and will continue until He returns one day. Rav Shaul warned in 2 Corinthians 11: 4, ***'For if one comes and preaches another Yahshua whom we have not preached*** (one who does away with His Father's Torah), ***or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.'*** Proceeding on in verse 13 we read, ***'For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Messiah.'*** We see that this same religious deception is also symbolized by the rider on the white horse in Revelation 6: 2, ***'And I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer.'*** Many have falsely believed that the rider of the white horse of Revelation 6 is Messiah and have equated it with the white horse in Revelation 19. The rider of the white horse in Revelation 19 carries a sword and not a bow. The sword (of the spirit) is the word of Elohim

as we have seen in Scriptures like Ephesians 6: 17. In addition the time setting of Revelation 6 is different from that in Revelation 19. Revelation 6 describes false Messiah's and false gospels deceiving the world before the true Messiah's return and Revelation 19 describes the actual return of Messiah.

Yahshua continued telling His disciples about the end time events, by speaking about wars and rumors of war. He said continuing in the second part verse 6 in Matthew 24, ***"see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not the end."*** In fact the world has known wars for the past 6,000 years. However in verse 7 we see that this is different to the wars waged since the beginning of time; this refers to the end time wars where nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. In addition there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. During the past century the world suffered through two world wars, killing millions of people. However the previous two world wars did not escalate into a nuclear war. But the war that is coming; that Messiah was talking about in Matthew 24: 22 will possibly annihilate all of mankind, unless Yahshua came to shorten the time of the tribulation at the end of this age.

This is the first time that mankind has the potential to totally annihilate all human life on earth. We know that, as mankind has always used the weapons that were available to them, they will eventually also use the nuclear weapons available in their arsenal. Whereas the rider of the white horse in Revelation 6: 2 rides forth to conquer in the name of false religion, the red horse and its rider in Revelation 6: 4, symbolizes the condition of world-wide war. The nations that will be punished at this time are the modern day descendants of the house of Israel and the house of Judah. There are currently power blocks being formed that will eventually result in the most gigantic battles in human history.

Famine will result quickly, as wars escalate and because of crop damages, contaminated water, destroyed livestock and excessive food demands to sustain the large armies. Yahshua referred to more than one famine in verse 7 of Matthew 24. The famines that will occur during the time of the end will in addition to war be as a result of overpopulation and a shortage of food supplies in developed nations. Even though the world's food production keeps pace with the increasing population, in many cases political and economic problems prevent the richer nations from delivering food where it is needed the most. The black horse spoken about in Revelation 6: 5 & 6 represents the scourge of famine. In the end famine will spread throughout the world, until human kind turns to Elohim. Only after we have learnt our lesson, during the millennial rule of Yahshua our Messiah, will Elohim again bless mankind.

Disease epidemics on a world-wide scale will in the end overlap the famines prophesied by Messiah. Millions of people will die, even though they might have survived the initial nuclear blasts and following famines. We read about the pale horse representing these disease epidemics in Revelation 6: 7 & 8, ***'And when He broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "come." (8) 'And I looked, and behold an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades (the grave) was following with him. And authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.'*** The catastrophic events prophesied by Yahshua in Matthew 24: 4 – 7 have yet to make its final impact on earth. This will only reach a climax in what is called the great tribulation in verse 21 of Matthew 24.

Let your mind go for a moment. We are only at the very beginning of the troubles that are facing all of mankind. Our country is facing loss of productivity in the mining industry and elsewhere, because of a shortage of power supply, mainly due to miss-management and the lack of maintenance of the national electricity supply. It is losing the country millions of Rand on a daily basis. During the last two weeks a number of trains were destroyed in Pretoria, because there was no electricity to run them. However the problem was not the fault of the national power supplier, but due to cable theft. This is only the beginning of our problems. Imagine the destruction and carnage, when eventually all the systems fail due to theft, miss-management and a lack of maintenance. We will not even need other nations to attack us; we will cause most of the destruction ourselves, because of lawlessness.

Notice how Yahshua explained this time of tribulation to His disciples in Matthew 24: 9 – 13, ***“Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name (Yahshua not J*e*s*u*s). (10) And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another. (11) And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many. (12) And because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. (13) But the one who endures to the end will be saved.”*** We will need a lot of endurance and patience, because we will be pushed to the very limit as we see in verse 21 of Matthew 24, as follows: ***“for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall be.”*** We see that if we remain close to YHVH that He will intervene for us at that time, as we read in verse 22 of Matthew 24, ***“And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect (those of us called by YHVH at this time to be first fruits) those days shall be cut short.”*** Many believers however, misunderstand when these end-time events will occur. They often confuse the Great Tribulation with the ‘Day of YHVH’ and the heavenly signs. From the Scriptures we see that the Great Tribulation is the time when Satan will vent his anger on the world. He will be responsible for the affliction of the ones not found worthy to escape these terrible events.

Yahshua interrupted His discussion about this time of trouble to come upon the world, saying that prior to the end, the real gospel would be preached in all nations as we read in verse 14 of Matthew 24: ***“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all nations, and then the end shall come.”*** It is therefore important that we send this and other similar messages to as many people that we know, throughout the world. We should do this not to convert people, since YHVH does the calling, but to witness to the millions of despondent people out there, that there is a better way of life coming²⁰. Yahshua showed His disciples that for most of Elohim’s people, there is a way to escape these times of trouble. We read about this in Luke 21: 36, as follows: ***“But keep on the alert at all times praying in order that you may escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”*** We should watch world events on TV, radio and in newspapers. This will help us to see these end-time prophecies being fulfilled.

Immediately after the tribulation we will witness the surprising events recorded in Luke 21: 25 & 26, ***“And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, (26) men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of heaven will be shaken.”*** In Joel 2: 31 Joel describes the very same thing, calling it the great and awesome Day of YHVH. Yes, this is the time when YHVH will directly intervene in world affairs. The Day of YHVH is the time when He will punish the rebellious nations of this world. We have seen in Zephaniah 1: 17 how YHVH will deal with the defiant sinful people of the world, as follows: ***‘And I will bring distress on men, So that they will walk like the blind, Because they have sinned against YHVH; And their blood will be poured out like dust, And their flesh like dung.’***

Messiah will return to the earth in power and esteem, to rule the earth and to usher in peace, as we read in Matthew 24: 30: ***“and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.”*** Ever since Messiah’s resurrection and ascension to heaven, Satan has sent false prophets to deceive people to expect the return of Messiah. This resulted in many people becoming doubtful about Messiah’s return. Events will soon be further confused when a powerful religious leader will dominate the

²⁰ ***I have also written three books containing most of the sermons that I wrote since my early retirement in June 2006. If you would like me to send you e-mail copies for further distribution, I will do so gladly. I am not currently in a position to print hard copies, but will hopefully do so later as monies become available. These books are for educational purposes only and are not to be sold.***

world scene. Messiah warned in Matthew 24: 24 that this great false prophet will hold sway during the Great Tribulation and will perform great miracles trying to, if possible deceive the elect.

Messiah will return to the earth as the seventh trumpet sounds. The seven trumpets will begin to sound during the Day of YHVH. We read about this in Matthew 24: 31, ***“And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”*** We do not have to build our own places of safety; YHVH will gather us from all over the earth. Rav Shaul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4: 15 – 17 that those who are dead will be resurrected. As Messiah returns at the sound of the trumpet, those who are alive, along with those who have qualified, died and are resurrected, will all be caught up in the air to join Yahshua in the clouds. They will descend with Messiah to take over the rulership of the earth.

However, Yahshua did not tell His disciples the exact day and time of His return. In verse 36 of Matthew 24, we read accordingly: ***“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.”*** However Yahshua said that it will be possible to know when His return is near. He explained in the parable of the fig tree that we know that summer is near when the fig tree puts forth leaves. In the same way we will know that the return of Messiah is near, when we observe world conditions. By watching world events we are able to see enough evidence of end time conditions. We need to be in a constant state of readiness for Messiah’s return. Yahshua warned us to be ready in the last few verses of Matthew 24, as well as in Matthew 25. He exhorts us to prepare spiritually and obey His Torah; We should be a living example of Him. We should be doing the work of proclaiming the good news of the coming kingdom of Elohim, until the day He returns, as we read in Matthew 24: 46 & 47: ***“Blessed is the slave whom His master finds so doing when he comes. (47) Truly I say to you, that he will put him in charge of all his possessions.”*** Praise the Name of YHVH.

Chapter 29: Clean and Unclean Food.

Obedience to the Scriptural 'kosher' laws is considered to be an unusual practice by those outside the Jewish and Nazarene Israelite faiths. Christians in general will quote a passage or two in the Renewed Covenant in an effort to state that true believers are no longer obliged to keep the "Old Testament" laws.

However, ask yourself: How important are the clean food laws given in the Torah, to true worship? Are these laws only for our health, or are there more to them? Believe it or not, it was the breaking of a 'kosher' law that caused Adam and Eve to commit the original sin. YHVH endorses certain foods as acceptable and other foods as unacceptable for human consumption. It was that way at the creation of man and remains so even today. YHVH told our original parents which food was right and acceptable and which was not. It is only by obedience to Him, that we will succeed and prosper, i.e. it is for our good! We read in Malachi 3: 6 that neither He nor His standards ever change, as follows: ***"For I, YHVH, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob are not consumed."***

The laws pertaining to clean and unclean animals, fish, birds, insects, and even dead creatures, are found in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. As with the Ten Commandments, these 'kosher' laws were in operation long before they were repeated to Moses for use by the nation of Israel. We also see that they are still in force today, as Yahshua said that He did not come to abolish the law or the prophets in Matt 5: 17 & 18. Yahshua is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, according to Heb.13: 8. He did not change His mind after His impalement. The only part of the law that He fulfilled, was doing away with the requirement to sacrifice the blood of animals every time we transgress the law. He laid down his life for His people and became a sacrifice for our past lawlessness. The law of clean and unclean food is still applicable. So are the laws prohibiting, the eating of fat or blood, incest and other sexual offenses, still in force today.

Consider for example edible plants. In Genesis 1:29 we read: ***"Then Elohim said, "Behold I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you.""*** In His covenant with Noah, Elohim stipulates that the green plant is given for food (Gen. 9:3). Elohim limited edible plants to those that are green and are propagated by seeds. Mushrooms as we know are fungi; definitely not green yielding seed, may be full of parasites and therefore not fit for human consumption. All plants lacking either chlorophyll or seeds are called into question.

Another example where we see the 'kosher' food laws in operation long before Mount Sinai is in Elohim's instructions to Noah. In Genesis 7: 2, YHVH told Noah that clean animals were to go into the ark by seven pairs, but that the unclean animals were limited to only one pair. Clearly Noah knew the difference between clean and unclean animals by then. Before the flood, mankind only ate plants, but in Genesis 9: 3 YHVH said to Noah: ***"Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you (obviously only the clean animals already specified); I give all to you, as I gave the green plant"*** (in Genesis 1: 29). The laws of clean and unclean food are like the law of gravity and the moral laws — they were in effect since the very creation of man. We may therefore not brush them aside with the argument that they were "Old Testament" laws given to the ancient nation of Israel, only. As I stated in a previous sermon, besides the health benefits to be had by not eating 'un-kosher' food, we need to be mindful of what is written in Deuteronomy 23: 14 ***"Since YHVH your Elohim walks in the midst of your camp to deliver you and to defeat your enemies before you, therefore your camp must be holy; and He must not see anything indecent among you lest He turn away from you."*** If we do not clean up our lives we cannot expect YHVH to be amongst us and protect us. Like with the Sabbath and the Set-apart Days of YHVH we should not compromise — as He does not!

Christian believers often remind us that we are living in the age of grace, today. To them it means that their savior has done away with the harsh laws of his father. But the question is: What is this 'grace' that they are talking about? We read about it in 1 Peter 1: 13 to 16, as follows: ***"Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of***

Yahshua Messiah. (14) *As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance,* (15) *but like the Holy (Set-apart) One who called you, be holy (set-apart) yourselves also in all your behavior;* (16) *because it is written, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.”* This quote comes directly from Leviticus 11 verse 45. We know that Leviticus 11 is dealing with the Torah of clean and unclean meats. It is therefore clear that even under ‘grace’ – the fact that Yahshua redeemed those of us who believe in Him, from the curse of the law (Galatians 3: 13), we still need to keep the law to receive the blessings of the law, and to conform to Elohim’s standard.

YHVH expects His present and future priests to make a difference between what is set-apart and what is not set-apart, and between what is clean and unclean, as we read in Leviticus 10: 10. Kosher laws help to maintain us as a set-apart people. Whereas, circumcision is a private matter, the kosher food laws make our faith a public matter. The English word ‘kosher’ is a transliteration of the Hebrew word ‘kashrut.’ Most of the basic laws of kashrut are derived from the Torah’s books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. The laws of kashrut are numerous and complex, but the main principles are as follows:

- Only meat from particular species is permissible.
- Mammals and fowls must be slaughtered in a specific way: slaughtering is done by a trained individual, using a special method of slaughtering, called shechita (see Deuteronomy 12: 23 & 24). Shechita slaughter severs the jugular vein, carotid artery, esophagus and trachea in a single continuous cutting movement, with a sharp un-serrated knife, essentially avoiding unnecessary pain to the animal. If one of these criteria is not attained, the meat is rendered unsuitable. Prior to slaughtering the animal must be checked to ensure that the animal does not have a medical condition or defect that would have caused it to die within a year, which would make its meat un-suitable. The lungs of slaughtered animals should also be examined, to see that they are free of adhesions – so as to prevent the consumption of animals infected with tuberculosis. Sick and diseased animals are not clean. Animals which die naturally or are torn by beasts are also not fit for human consumption (see Leviticus 17: 15). In addition we are commanded not to eat a limb removed from a living beast as per Deuteronomy 12: 23.
- Blood must be removed as much as possible as per Leviticus 3: 17 and Leviticus 17: 10. This is done during the koshering process, by soaking and salting the meat.
- Meat and milk (or derivatives) cannot be mixed – i.e. meat and dairy products are not served at the same meal, or cooked together in a meal (Exodus 23: 19; 34: 26 & Deuteronomy 14: 21) There are many Nazarene/Messianic Israelites who insist that this does not apply to them, since it had to do with a forbidden pagan Canaanite fertility right, which they do not practice, today. However, the Scriptures do not mention this pagan right at all. In addition those who dispute this command quote Genesis 18: 8 where Abraham gave curds and milk together with the meat of a calf to his three visitors. Reading the entire chapter, reveal that the three visitors were two angels and YHVH himself. These were not human visitors who could harm their health by eating meat and milk products together, they were spirit beings. This is a health law which if contravened, will result in increasing cholesterol levels for human beings. Spirit beings do not need food and do not have digestive systems like ours. For example, whereas we read in Leviticus 3: 17 that we should not eat fat or blood, in verse 16 we read that **‘all fat is Elohim’s.’** The command not to boil a kid in its mother’s milk appears three times in the Scriptures for a good reason. Disobeying it could result in a cholesterol problem, but also like with Adam and Eve, it shows that we are disobedient to YHVH our Elohim. Do we try and reason away certain Torah commands? Do we have a smorgasbord religion where we may pick which Torah commands we want to obey or not?
- The sinew of the hip which is in the socket of the thigh of an animal must be removed and cannot be eaten (see Genesis 32: 32).
- Fruit from trees which are less than four years old must not be eaten.
- Most vegetables, particularly leafy vegetables must be checked thoroughly for insect infestation.
- YHVH instructed the children of Israel regarding the law of clean and unclean beasts, which could be eaten and which could not be eaten as per Leviticus 11. Starting in verse 1 of Leviticus 11, we read:

‘Then YHVH spoke again to Moses and to Aaron, saying to them, (2) “Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘These are the creatures which you may eat from all the animals that are on the earth. (3) Whatever divides a hoof, thus making split hoofs, and chews the cud, among the animals, that you may eat.’” Animals that have split hoofs and chew the cud, such as cattle, sheep, deer, antelope and the like, are ‘kosher’. We may eat their meat; provided they are slaughtered according to the method described above and did not die of natural causes.

We continue in Verses 4 to 8 of Leviticus 11, where we see which animals are unclean to us: ***“Nevertheless, you are not to eat of these, among those which chew the cud, or among those which divide the hoof: the camel, for though it chews cud, it does not divide the hoof, it is unclean to you. (5) Likewise, the rock badger, for though it chews cud, it does not divide the hoof, it is unclean to you; (6) the rabbit also, for though it chews cud, it does not divide the hoof, it is unclean to you; (7) and the pig, for though it divides the hoof, thus making a split hoof, it does not chew cud, it is unclean to you. (8) You shall not eat of their flesh nor touch their carcasses; they are unclean to you.”*** We have listed here the camel, the rock badger, the rabbit and the pig. They only have one of the two attributes that clean animals should have. They are unclean to us, but there are numerous other animals, without a single attribute that clean animals possess, such as cats, dogs, lions, hyena, monkeys, hippopotamus, etc. Most of these are carnivorous and some are scavengers. They are definitely unclean and not fit for human consumption.

In verse 9 of Leviticus 11, we see the criteria used to establish which water creatures are ‘kosher’ for us, as follows: ***“These you may eat, whatever is in the water: all that have fins and scales, those in the water, in the seas or in the rivers, you may eat.”*** Continuing in verses 10 – 12 of Leviticus 11, we see which water creatures are unclean to us. ***“But whatever is in the seas and in the rivers, that do not have fins and scales among all the teeming life of the water, and among all the living creatures that are in the water, they are detestable things to you, (11) and they shall be abhorrent to you; you may not eat of their flesh, and their carcasses you shall detest. (12) Whatever in the water does not have fins and scales is abhorrent to you.”*** Fish such as sharks and swordfish do not have scales and are considered scavengers; shrimps, lobsters, oysters, mussels, clams, crabs, octopus or calamari are also considered scavengers and or filter feeders and consume foods that are harmful to human beings; they may accumulate harmful parasites or toxins and if consumed could be deadly to humans.

In Leviticus 11: 13 – 19 we see the bird life that is unclean to us, as follows: ***“These, moreover, you shall detest among the birds; they are abhorrent, not to be eaten: the eagle and the vulture and the buzzard, (14) and the kite and the falcon in its kind, (15) every raven in its kind, (16) and the ostrich and the owl and the sea gull and the hawk in its kind, (17) and the little owl and the cormorant and the great owl, (18) and the white owl and the pelican and the carrion vulture, (19) and the stork, the heron in its kinds, and the hoopoe, and the bat.”*** Edible or kosher birds are chicken, turkey, quails, pheasant, grouse and the like.

In Leviticus 11: 20 we see that ***“All the winged insects that walk on all fours are detestable to you.”*** In verses 21 & 22 of Leviticus 11 are the insects which we may eat: ***“Yet these you may eat among all the winged insects which walk on all fours: those which have above their feet joined legs with which to jump on the earth. (22) These of them you may eat: the locust in its kinds, and the devastating locust in its kinds, and the cricket in its kinds, and the grasshopper in its kinds.”*** This is the type of food that John (Yochanan) the Immerser ate with honey, whilst he lived in the Judean desert. If things begin to go bad for us in the near future, we might have to revert to eating locust as well – at least we know they are kosher. In verses 23 - 43 of Leviticus 11, we read about the unclean things that crawl on its belly, walk on all fours, have many feet and every swarming thing that swarms, as follows: ***“But all other winged insects which are four-footed are detestable to you. (24) By these, moreover, you will be made unclean: whoever touches their carcasses becomes unclean until evening, (25) and whoever picks up any of their carcasses shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.”***

- (26) *Concerning all the animals which divide the hoof, but do not make a split hoof, or which do not chew cud, they are unclean to you: whoever touches them becomes unclean.*
- (27) *Also whatever walks on its paws, among all the creatures that walk on all fours, are unclean to you: whoever touches their carcasses becomes unclean until evening, (28) and the one who picks up their carcasses shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening; they are unclean to you.*
- (29) *Now these are to you the unclean among the swarming things which swarm on the earth: the mole, and the mouse, and the great lizard in its kinds, (30) and the gecko, and the crocodile, and the lizard, and the sand reptile, and the chameleon.*
- (31) *These are to you the unclean among all the swarming things; whoever touches them when they are dead becomes unclean until evening.*
- (32) *Also anything on which one of them may fall when they are dead, becomes unclean, including any wooden article, or clothing, or a skin, or a sack – any article of which use is made – it shall be put in the water and be unclean until evening, then it becomes clean.*
- (33) *As for any earthenware vessel into which one of them may fall, whatever is in it becomes unclean and you shall break the vessel.*
- (34) *Any of the food which may be eaten, on which water comes, shall become unclean; and any liquid which may be drunk in every vessel shall become unclean.*
- (35) *Everything, moreover, on which part of their carcass may fall becomes unclean; an oven or a stove shall be smashed; they are unclean and shall continue as unclean to you.*
- (36) *Nevertheless a spring or a cistern collecting water shall be clean, though the one who touches their carcass shall be unclean. (37) And if a part of their carcass falls on any seed for sowing which is to be sown, it is clean.*
- (38) *Though if water is put on the seed, and a part of their carcass falls on it, it is unclean to you.*
- (39) *Also if one of the animals dies which you have for food, the one who touches its carcass becomes unclean until evening.*
- (40) *He too, who eats some of its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening; and the one who picks up its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.*
- (41) *Now every swarming thing that swarms on the earth is detestable, not to be eaten.*
- (42) *Whatever crawls on its belly, and whatever walks on all fours, whatever has many feet, in respect to every swarming thing that swarms on the earth, you shall not eat them, for they are detestable.*
- (43) *Do not render yourselves detestable through any of the swarming things that swarm; and you shall not make yourselves unclean with them so that you become unclean.”*

Verses 44 & 45 of Leviticus 11 get us back to the section quoted in 1 Peter 1: 16, where YHVH tells us the reason for not eating un-kosher meats, as follows: ***“For I am YHVH your Elohim. Consecrate (set yourselves apart) yourselves therefore, and be holy; for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm on the earth. (45) For I am YHVH, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, to be your Elohim; thus you shall be holy for I am holy.”*** In the final two verses of Leviticus 11, we see that this is the law of the clean and unclean beasts, fowl and living creatures that move in the waters and everything that swarms on the earth; to make a distinction between the edible and creatures which may not to be eaten.

We read in Ezekiel 22: 26, why our Father has poured out His righteous anger upon us, as the lost house of Israel: ***“Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane, and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they hide their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.”*** The question is: Are we at this stage prepared to accept the Scriptures as the authority, as to what we may or may not eat? As much as the Hebrew language, the Sabbath and Set-apart Days of YHVH were preserved for us by the Jews, so were some of these kosher laws preserved for us, by them? Even though we are not told how to remove all the blood from meat in the Scriptures, Brother Judah preserved it for us in the oral Torah.

For those who do not believe in the oral Torah, please tell me, how did Yahshua's disciples know how far a Sabbath day's journey is, as mentioned in the Renewed Covenant in Acts 1: 12?

Chapter 30: Esther – A brave Hebrew woman.

The legend of Esther, as recorded in the book of Esther, took place during the time of the Persian Empire. The Persian Empire succeeded the Babylonian Empire. It was during the reign of Cyrus the king of Persia that a royal decree was issued allowing the Jews who were taken into captivity into Babylon, to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple. The decree was issued 70 years after the Jews were taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon. However, some of the Jewish families living in Babylon and other parts of the Persian Empire chose to remain there.

As we see in verse 1 of the book of Esther Chapter 1, Esther lived in Persia during the reign of king Ahasuerus. His kingdom stretched from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces. We read in verse 2 that king Ahasuerus sat on his throne which was in the city of Susa (Shushan). In the third year of his reign king Ahasuerus gave a special banquet for all the high ranking officials in his kingdom. The banquet was to last for seven days ending with a six month display of all the kings' riches and the splendor of his majesty. The guests feasted in the courtyard of the palace for seven days. There were hangings of fine white and violet linen held by cords of fine purple linen on silver rings and marble columns, and couches of gold and silver on the mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and precious stones. Drinks were served in golden vessels of various kinds, and the royal wine was plentiful and the guests could drink as they desired.

At the same time queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the palaces of king Ahasuerus. On the seventh day of the king's banquet, when the king's heart was merry with wine, he commanded his servants to bring queen Vashti to him that he might show her beauty to the people. But, queen Vashti refused to come before the king and his guests. King Ahasuerus was absolutely furious to hear that. He called his council of wise men together for advice on how to handle the situation with the queen. One of the king's top advisors, named Memucan, answered as we read in Esther 1: 16 - 19 as follows: ***"Queen Vashti has wronged not only the king but also all the princes and all the people who are in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus. (17) For the queen's conduct will become known to all the women causing them to look with contempt on their husbands by saying, 'King Ahasuerus commanded queen Vashti to be brought in his presence, but she did not come.'*** (18) ***And this day the ladies of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's conduct will speak in the same way to all the king's princes, and there will be plenty of contempt and anger. (19) If it pleases the king, let a royal edict be issued by him and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media so that it cannot be repealed, that Vashti should come no more into the presence of king Ahasuerus, and let the king give her royal position to another who is more worthy than she."***

Memucan's advice pleased the king and the princes. The king therefore wrote a decree to all his provinces informing them that queen Vashti was dethroned. The decree also stated that every man should rule his own house. After a while king Ahasuerus remembered what he had done to the queen and he became lonely. King Ahasuerus' servants gave him a plan. They advised that he appoint officers in every province, to gather together the most beautiful young virgins. They were to be assembled at the palace in Susa where the king would select a new queen, from one of them.

We read in Esther 2: 5 that there was a Jew called Mordecai, who lived in Susa. He was the great-grandson of Kish who was one of many captives that Nebuchadnezzar carried away when he conquered Jerusalem. When Mordecai's uncle died He took his uncle's daughter and reared her as his own. The girl's name was Hadassah (in Hebrew). But, she was also known as Esther. Esther grew up to be a beautiful young woman and was one of the young women, taken by king Ahasuerus' servants to present herself before the king in the palace at Susa. Prior to leaving, her uncle warned her not to reveal her nationality to anyone. Esther was put under the care of Hegai who took custody of all the women. Hegai liked Esther and gave her seven maids to serve her. In addition he gave her the best apartment in the women's quarters.

Each of the young woman spent twelve months preparing herself to meet with the king. They purified themselves with costly ointments and when the time came for the woman to meet with the king they took with them whatever they thought might impress the king. When it was Esther's turn to appear before the king, she did not request anything, except what Hegai suggested she takes with her. She took his advice and went in to meet the king. Esther obtained favor with king Ahasuerus and he was delighted to crown her as his new queen. The king prepared a special feast to celebrate his marriage and Queen Esther's coronation and gave away many royal gifts. Esther was a loyal queen, but even after she became queen, she kept her nationality secret, as her uncle Mordegai told her to do. Whilst Mordegai was sitting in the king's gate in those days, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's officials of those who guarded the gate, became angry and wanted to lay hands on the king. Mordegai overheard their plot and informed Queen Esther, who in turn informed the king. The king had the plot investigated and when it was found to be true, these men were both hanged. The fact that Mordegai saved the king's life was duly recorded in the court diary, which was kept in the king's court.

After these events King Ahasuerus appointed Haman above all the other princes of the court. All the king's servant bowed before Haman, except for Mordegai. The other servants did not understand why Mordegai refused to bow before Haman, as the king commanded. These servants told Haman about it and Haman started watching Mordegai, to see if the report was true. Haman asked the king's servants more questions about Mordegai and so found out that he was a Jew. Haman was so angry that he sought to destroy Mordegai and all Jews. However, he was careful naming the Jews, when he told the king about them in Esther 3: 8 & 9, saying: ***"There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from those of all other people, and they do not observe the king's laws, so it is not in the king's interest to let them remain. (9) If it is pleasing to the king, let it be decreed that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who carry on the king's business to put into the king's treasuries."*** The king agreed to this and told Haman to do whatever he wanted with the people and their wealth. A decree was soon written and sealed with the king's signet ring to make it official. The decree was sent out to all parts of the empire on the thirteenth day of the first month. The decree stated that the Jews would be killed on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month; a date determined by the casting of lots.

When Mordegai learnt about the decree he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes and went into the city wailing loudly and bitterly. Jews throughout the empire mourned and fasted when they heard the news. Esther was totally unaware of the decree, until she learnt about it from one of her servants. She immediately sent out one of her servants to Mordegai, to learn more about the decree. Mordegai sent a copy of the decree to Esther. He also told Esther's servant to tell her to go before the king to plead for her people's lives. Esther was afraid to go before the king and she told her servant to inform Mordegai, reminding him of the Persian law; that is strictly enforced. We read in Esther 4: 11 that this law states that anyone who goes before the king, without being called, will be killed immediately, unless the king holds out his golden scepter. Esther asked: ***'And I have not been summoned to come to the king for these thirty days.'*** When Mordegai heard her answer, he reminded her that she will not escape this decree, even though she is the queen. He also encouraged her saying in verse 14 of Esther 4: ***"For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?"***

When Esther heard Mordegai's words, she decided to risk her life to save her people. We read what Esther told Mordegai in verse 16 of chapter 4, as follows: ***"Go assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa, and fast for me; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens also will fast in the same way. And thus I will go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish."*** This showed that Esther loved her uncle and her people to the point where she was willing to risk her life to save them. We read what Yahshua said about this type of love in John 15: 13, ***"Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."*** The people fasted for three days, after which Esther put on her

royal robe and went before the king. She stood in the inner court of the king's palace from where he could see her. The king was very pleased to see Esther and immediately held out the golden scepter to her. Esther was relieved, for this meant that she found favor in the king's sight.

We read in Esther 5: 3, ***'Then the king said to her, "What is troubling you Queen Esther? And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it will be given to you."*** Esther immediately put her plan into action and said to the king in verse 4 of chapter 5: ***"If it please the king, may the king and Haman come this day to the banquet that I have prepared for him."*** The king wishing to please his queen, agreed to come to the banquet and send for Haman to attend with him. It was during the banquet that king Ahasuerus again told Esther that she could have whatever she desired. Queen Esther replied that she would be happy if the king and Haman would attend another private banquet the next day. She politely added that she will make her request known to the king at this banquet. Haman went out with a glad heart, but when he saw Mordegai he was filled with anger. That evening Haman bragged to his family and friends about the honor he received to be invited to two private royal banquets. He also told his family and friends that even though he is happy with these invites, it does not satisfy him, because every time he sees Mordegai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.

Haman's wife Zeresh and friends, in trying to console him said in verse 14 of Esther 5, ***"Have a gallows fifty cubits high made and in the morning ask the king to have Mordegai hanged on it, then go joyfully with the king to the banquet."*** And the advice pleased Haman, so he had the gallows made.' During this same night king Ahasuerus could not sleep, so he ordered his servants to read to him from the royal diary. When his servants came to the account where Mordegai saved the king's life, the king wanted to know if Mordegai had been honored for this deed. When his servants told the king that nothing has been done for Mordegai, he asked them for suggestions as to what can be done to honor Mordegai. Next we see Haman who arrived early standing outside the king's court. The king's servant told the king to let Haman come before him. Haman came in and the king said to him as is recorded in Esther 6: 6 - 9: ***"What is to be done for the man whom the king desires to honor?" And Haman said to himself, "Whom would the king like to honor more than me?" (7) Then Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king desires to honor, (8) let them bring a royal robe which the king has worn, and the horse on which the king has ridden, and on whose head a royal crown has been placed; (9) and let the robe and the horse be handed over to one of the king's most noble princes and let them array the man whom the king desires to honor and lead him on horseback through the city square, and proclaim before him, 'Thus it shall be done to the man whom the king desires to honor.'"***

The king then told Haman to take his robe and crown and to get the king's personal horse and put it on Mordegai, and lead him through the city square. Haman was absolutely shocked, when he realized that the king was talking about Mordegai and not him. Haman had no choice but to obey the king's order. After Mordegai was honored and returned to his duties, Haman rushed home. He felt shamed and was absolutely disgusted. He mourned and also shaved his head. We read in Proverb 16: 18 what happened to Haman: ***"Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling."*** As Haman, his wife and friends were talking about the unexpected turn of events, the king's servant came to escort him to attend Esther's second banquet.

King Ahasuerus again asked Queen Esther at the second banquet, what she wanted as a gift from him. We read Esther's answer in verses 3 & 4 of chapter 7: ***"If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me as my petition, and my people as my request; (4) for we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed and to be annihilated. Now if we had only been sold as slaves, men and women, I would have remained silent, for the trouble would not be commensurate with the annoyance to the king."*** The king immediately asked Queen Esther in verse 5 of Esther 7: ***"Who is he, and where is he, who would presume to do thus."*** In verse 6 of chapter 7 Esther said: ***"A foe and an enemy, is this wicked Haman!"*** The king was absolutely furious and stormed out into the garden. Haman, fearing for

his life fell beside the queen and pleaded for his life. This is when the king returned from the garden. Haman's closeness to the queen made him even more furious and he said in verse 8: ***"Will he even assault the queen with me in the house?"*** We read that as the king's words left him the servants arrested Haman. One of the servants suggested that he be hung on the large gallows built at his own house. Next the king commanded in verse 9: ***"Hang him on it."*** And they hanged Haman on the gallows that he prepared for Mordegai.

In addition the king commanded that Haman's house and possessions be confiscated and given to Queen Esther. Esther then set her uncle Mordegai over Haman's property. Mordegai was promoted to a very high position in the Empire and the king gave him the royal ring. However, because of the law of the Persians, Haman's decree against the Jews was still in force. But, Esther asked the king to reverse the law. Ahasuerus could not repeal the law, since no law of the Medes and the Persians could ever be changed. Nevertheless, the king told Mordegai to write another law, permitting the Jews to fight back against those who tried to kill them. The new law sealed with the king's ring, was drawn up on the 23 day of the 3rd month, and sent throughout the empire.

When finally the day that Haman chose to have the Jews killed arrived, the Jews were all armed and ready to defend themselves. They killed all those who tried to harm them. They killed hundreds of enemies in Susa alone, as well as the 10 sons of Haman. Haman and those who sought to kill the Jews ended up being killed themselves. The triumph of the Jews was so great that a two day feast was proclaimed. They decided to celebrate this occasion every year to commemorate deliverance from their enemies. This celebration is known as the Feast of Esther or Purim. The word Purim is derived from the Hebrew word *'pur'*, which means *'lot'*. This name was used because Haman had cast lots to determine the day the Jews were to be killed.

To conclude we read in Esther 9: 27 that those of us who are not Jewish, but who allied ourselves with them, should also celebrate these two days at the appointed time, as follows: ***'the Jews established and made a custom for themselves, and for their descendants, and for all those who allied themselves with them, so that they should not fail to celebrate these two days according to their regulation, and according to their appointed time annually.'***

Chapter 31: Pentecost/Shavuot

YHVH established His annual Set-apart Days around the harvest seasons in Israel. As much as the people in the Middle East harvested their crops around the three festival seasons, Elohim's Set-apart Days show us how He is harvesting people for eternal life in His Kingdom. Elohim's Set-apart Days build progressively upon each other, thus revealing Elohim's plan of salvation to mankind.

We know for example that Passover symbolized Messiah's giving of Himself for the sins of the world, including ours. The Days of Unleavened Bread which follows immediately after Passover teach us that we must remove and avoid sin, as much as we remove and avoid leaven from our lives, during these Set-apart Days. We start counting the Omer during the Passover season, showing that we are consciously busy toning down our human instinctual drives through the working of the Set-apart Spirit in us, in obedience to YHVH. We read in Leviticus 23: 15 & 16 (Jewish Bible - JPS 1917): ***'And you shall count unto you from the morrow after the day of rest, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the waving; seven weeks shall there be complete; (16) even unto the morrow after the seventh week shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall present a new meal-offering unto HaShem.'*** There are three months involved in this counting. We start counting on the 16th of Aviv, which is during Spring (in the Northern Hemisphere). This is the time Israel came out of Egypt. Next we have Iyar the second month, after which the children of Israel left the land of Egypt. This is followed by Sivan, the third month since the children of Israel had gone forth out of Egypt and arrived at Mount Sinai, where Moses received the Torah from Elohim's hand.

All three months are mentioned because they form an integral part of the redemption of the nation of Israel. Passover is linked to eating unleavened bread. The Omer has a measure of barley and Shavuot or Pentecost has a special offering of two loaves, of fine flour baked with leaven. During the Passover season we are forbidden to eat leaven products, as leaven symbolizes man's inclination to pride and the self. As leaven raises dough, so pride and the self inflates a man to become arrogant.

By the end of their enslavement, the Israelites were integrated into the pagan ways of the Egyptians. They like us, the modern day Israelites, were not worthy of redemption. They had to be drawn out of their captivity by Elohim. They did not leave their captors willingly and were taken hold of by Elohim, rather than coming out of their own. It was as if they responded spiritually, but not physically. This is much like us, as believers. The intention of a believer's life in a physical world is to bring his/her human nature into subjection to Elohim, as we are commanded in Deuteronomy 6: 5, ***"And you shall love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."*** This elevates the physical side of man, but also his spiritual life, by adding to it the drive and energy of physical passion. The physical or instinctual drives of man, if not controlled are like animal instinct, very dangerous. As believers we need to be constantly aware of our physical instinctual drives and control it with the Set-apart Spirit in us, in obedience to Torah. This is why the Omer was of barley, an animal food.

At Pentecost there is a special offering of two loaves, made with fine wheat flour baked with leaven. The two loaves made with fine wheat flour is considered human food. The purpose of this is to show, that from Passover, the time when we were saved (i.e. immersed in Yahshua's name and forgiven our past sins), from our enslavement to sin, until the time we get to Pentecost (when we become first fruits), we need to have transformed our uncontrolled animal instinct, to become human beings, controlled by the Set-apart Spirit in us obedient to YHVH and His Torah. We have all, once we are converted become part of the Israel of Elohim. We have become part of what was symbolized by the loaves with leaven i.e. First Fruits from the two houses of Israel. The fact that we are human and we are still full of sin is pictured by the leaven.

Pentecost/Shavuot is the third annual Sabbath, a holy convocation, counted from the morrow after the day of rest, from the day you brought the sheaf of the waving, i.e. the day after the First Day of Unleavened Bread. Seven complete weeks are counted; even unto the morrow after the seventh week shall you number

fifty days. We kept the Passover as per Yahshua's example as we are told by Rav Shaul in 1 Corinthians 11: 1, 23 – 26, in this way: ***'Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Messiah. (23) For I received from the Master that which I also delivered to you, that the Master Yahshua in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; (24) and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."***(25) ***In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me."***" The word remembrance indicates that the Passover is a memorial of Messiah's death: A memorial is an annual event, which we commemorate once a year at the same time on which the original event occurred. Yahshua kept the Passover 'in the night during which He was betrayed', the evening of the 14th Aviv at dusk, after sunset on the 13th Aviv. The First Day of Unleavened Bread begins in the evening of the 15th Aviv and we start counting towards Pentecost, from the day after the First Day of Unleavened Bread in the evening of the 16th Aviv. How do we know that we are correct in doing so?

Let's turn to Leviticus 23: 9 – 11 (Jewish Bible - JPS 1917), where we read: ***'And HaShem spoke unto Moses saying: Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: When ye are come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring the sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before HaShem, to be accepted for you; on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.***' The sabbath here refers to the first annual sabbath or Set-apart Day, as we saw in the Leviticus 23: 15 & 16 quoted from the same Bible earlier (on page 245). This was the same Set-apart Day many years later, before which Yahshua was impaled, as we read in John 19: 31, as follows: ***'The Jews therefore, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the sabbath (for that sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.'*** To confirm that we count the Omer from the correct date, we therefore need to look at what happened when the Israelites arrived in land of Canaan. We see in Joshua 5: 3 - 5 (Jewish Bible – JPS 1917), that Joshua had to circumcise the sons of Israel before they could partake of the Passover, like this: ***'So Joshua made himself flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haarloth. And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, died in the wilderness along the way, after they came out of Egypt. For all the people who came out were circumcised, but all the people who were born in the wilderness along the way as they came out of Egypt had not been circumcised'***²¹. Continuing in Joshua 5: 10 – 12, we read: ***'And***

²¹Similarly when some of us came out of our personal Egypt or sin, we were uncircumcised as we entered the wilderness. However, uncircumcised new (male) believers are eventually required to be circumcised, to partake of the Passover and if they want to serve as priests in the kingdom of Elohim, as we read in a prophesy in Ezekiel 44:7 - 9, ***'When you brought in foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to profane it, even My house, when you offered My food, the fat and the blood; for they made My covenant void – this in addition to all your abominations. And you have not kept charge of My Set-apart things yourselves, but you have set foreigners to keep charge of My sanctuary.'*** ***'Thus says YHVH Elohim, "No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the sons of Israel, shall enter My sanctuary.'*** This is confirmed in the discussion in Acts 15 regarding circumcision, which concludes with the decision by Rav Yaakov (James) in verses 19 - 21, as follows: ***"Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning (or returning) to Elohim from among the Gentiles, but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood. For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him (Moses), since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath."*** This is telling us that when new male believers come into the faith, we should not demand that they be circumcised as soon as they come to believe on Yahshua. But after they came to believe that Yahshua is their personal Savior, they should be immersed in His Saving Name for the forgiveness of their sins. Repentance is a lifelong process, in that, as we walk with YHVH according to the way Yahshua conducted His life, we will learn to obey YHVH more fully as we learn more and beginning to apply His Torah teachings including circumcision, in our lives. We also know that Yahshua was both circumcised and immersed; if we truly follow Him we will do likewise.

the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal; and they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the produce of the land on the morrow after the Passover (15th), unleavened cakes and parched corn in the selfsame day. And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the produce of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more (manna ceased on the 16th); but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.' They were not to eat of the new crop until they had offered the first-fruits on the morrow after the day of rest, i.e. the 15th Aviv. Pentecost is also known as the Feast of Weeks (not the Feast of Sabbaths), as we see in Deuteronomy 16: 9 & 10, like this: ***"You shall count seven weeks for yourself; you shall begin to count seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain. (10) Then you shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks to YHVH your Elohim with a tribute of a freewill offering of your hand, which you shall give just as YHVH your Elohim blesses you.'***

When celebrating Pentecost our Jewish brothers recall one of the greatest events in history: Elohim's giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai; However, Pentecost does not only picture the giving of the Law; it also shows - through a miracle of the giving of the Set-apart Spirit which occurred on the first Pentecost after Yahshua's death - how to keep the spiritual intent of (YHVH)'s laws (instructions). We read in Acts 2:1 - 4: ***"And when the Day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. (2) And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. (3) And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. (4) And they were all filled with the Set-apart Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance"*** The miracle was not so much in the speaking of the various languages, but with each visitor hearing the speech of the disciples in his own native language as we see Acts 2: 8. The people of Jerusalem, who witnessed this miracle, were astonished and some attributed it to drunkenness. Peter soon told the onlookers that the miracle was not as a result of drunkenness, but as a result of the pouring out of the Set-apart Spirit on believers in Yahshua. Peter filled with the Set-apart Spirit, explained the event to the crowd as a fulfillment of the prophecy in Joel 2: 28: ***"And it shall come to pass in the last days, says Elohim that I will pour out MY Spirit on all flesh."*** When the listeners asked Peter what they should do to receive the Set-apart Spirit, Peter answered as is recorded in Acts 2: 38, as follows: ***"Repent and let each of you be immersed in the name of Yahshua Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Set-apart-Spirit."***

YHVH used this miracle and the preaching of Peter to add about 3,000 people to His ecclesia of called out believers in one day. These believers were all immersed and received a portion of the Set-apart Spirit as we read in Acts 2: 41. From this point on, Elohim's Set-apart Spirit has been available to all who truly repent and are immersed in Yahshua's saving name. The day of Pentecost is an annual reminder that Elohim poured out His Set-apart Spirit on His ecclesia, who is led by the same Spirit. As human beings, no matter how hard we try, we still sin. We know that the Law does not enable us to stop sinning or think like Elohim, but that we are only able to obey YHVH, when we have His Set-apart Spirit residing in us. We only receive the Set-apart Spirit when we repent from breaking the commandments of YHVH and are immersed in Yahshua's saving name.

First-fruits are the first agricultural products to ripen. Elohim uses the analogy of the harvest and particularly of Pentecost, to illustrate aspects of His plan of salvation. Ancient Israel observed this day in the late spring after the barley and wheat harvest. As mentioned before, a special wave-sheaf offering of green ears of barley is waved during the Days of Unleavened Bread, marking the beginning of these harvests, which continued during the next 50 days and led to Pentecost. Pentecost or Shavuot points to the initial harvest of souls, a kind of first fruits unto YHVH. Romans 8: 29 speaks of Yahshua Messiah as the ***"firstborn of many brethren"***. We who are called now are also considered to be a type of first fruits as we read in James 1: 18, as follows: ***"Having purposed it, He brought us forth by the Word of truth, for us to be a kind of first fruits of His creatures."*** The significance of the Scriptures calling these people (us) first fruits becomes evident

when we consider John 14: 6, where Yahshua said: ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."***

How many people throughout the ages, have really accepted and practiced the way Yahshua taught? Few people today know and understand that YHVH follows a plan depicted by his Set-apart Days, to save most of humanity by offering them eternal life in His Kingdom. We are at this juncture only at the beginning or foundation of the harvest for Elohim's kingdom to come. Rav Shaul understood this and wrote in 1 Corinthians 15: 20, 22 – 23, as follows: ***'But now Messiah has been raised from the dead, the first fruit of those who are asleep. (22) For as in Adam all die, so also in Messiah all shall be made alive. (23) But each in his own order; Messiah the first fruit(s), after that those who are messiah's at His coming.'*** Anyone called and chosen by Elohim during this age is included with Messiah as Elohim's first fruits. But we are reminded of Yahshua's own words in John 6: 44, that: ***"No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day."*** From this it is clear that Elohim does the calling: YHVH controls the timing of His harvest. The coming of the Set-apart Spirit dramatically changed the lives of early believers. The transformation was so evident that those who did not receive the Set-apart Spirit accused believers saying in the last part of Acts 17: 6 (KJV), ***'These that have turned the world upside down.'***

The Set-apart Spirit is the divine nature of YHVH working in our lives, allowing us to be led by Him. The same divine nature that transformed early believers is also working in messianic believers today. We read in 2 Peter 1: 2 – 4 ***'Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of Elohim and Yahshua Messiah our Master; (3) seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own esteem and excellence. (4) For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.***

Pentecost is a yearly reminder that YHVH still works miracles in our lives, granting His Set-apart Spirit to the first fruits of His spiritual harvest, giving us a portion of His power to carry out His work in this world. However, we have to follow the precise steps given to the apostles before we can receive the Set-apart Spirit of YHVH. The people who are called during this dispensation who overcome Satan, the world and self, will be given power to rule over nations (Revelation 2: 26). An analogy of us being first fruits can be found in every family of humankind on the earth. If you are the firstborn son or daughter in your family and are part of a family comprising a number of children, then you will recall that your parents were much stricter; in the way they reared you. You were corrected more often. Once your brothers and or sisters arrived on the scene, you felt that your siblings were spoilt. However, you as the firstborn became responsible for the well-being of your siblings, when your parents were away for some reason. You had to take care of them when your parents went shopping, etc. You taught them their first word and showed them the ropes in life in general. As the first fruits of YHVH we will have a similar role to play, with our brethren who live during the Millennium and thereafter. We will be kings and priests during the Millennium and beyond, teaching our younger siblings – those who live during the Millennium and beyond – about (YHVH)'s teachings and the way of Elohim (Revelation 5: 10).

We as human beings are made up of body, soul and spirit, according to 1 Thessalonians 5: 23. When we repent and are immersed into Yahshua's saving name, essentially accepting that His death removed the record of our transgressions, YHVH gives us a portion of His Set-apart Spirit. The Set-apart Spirit combines with the spirit in us and we are begotten anew. This gives us the opportunity to like YAHSHUA, be resurrected at His return. We read accordingly in Romans 8: 11, ***But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yahshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Messiah Yahshua from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.*** We read further in Ephesians 1: 13 & 14, that: ***'In Him (Messiah), you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of salvation – having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Set-apart Spirit of promise, (14) who is given as a pledge (or deposit) of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of Elohim's own possession, to the praise of His glory.'***

When we as believers die our spirits goes back to the Father who gave it, during which time it is perfected in Heaven, as we read in Hebrews 12: 23. When Yahshua returns He will bring back our perfected spirits and will resurrect our bodies and souls. At that time our bodies and souls will again unite with our perfected spirits from heaven, and we will become kings and priests under Yahshua, during His Millennial rule. We read further in 1 Thessalonians 4: 13 – 18, ***‘But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those (believers) who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. (14) For if we believe that Yahshua died and rose again, even so Elohim will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Yahshua. (15) For this we say to you by the word of YHVH, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of Master, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. (16) For the Master Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of Elohim; and the dead in Messiah shall rise first. (17) Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Master in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Master. (18) Therefore comfort one another with these words.’***

May our Father bless us with more of His Set-apart Spirit during this Pentecost, so that the Set-apart Spirit may truly lead us into all truth. Baruch HaShem YHVH!

Chapter 32: Contact details of the Publisher.

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Statement of our Beliefs.

As Nazarene Jews/Israelites, we believe:

- That there is only one Elohim, who is Almighty - יהוה - written as four vowels IAUE (in English) and pronounced Yah-oo-e, or in its short form Yahweh/YHVH. This is confirmed in the first part of the Sh'ma in Deuteronomy 6: 4, as follows: **"Hear, O Israel – YHVH is your Elohim – YHVH is ONE (ECHAD)."** In Deuteronomy 32: 39 YHVH says: **"See now that I am HE, AND there is no Elohim besides Me"**
- That YHVH reveals Himself in many ways, characteristics and personalities, which includes, but are not limited to the Heavenly Father, Yahshua the Son, the Word, the Messiah, the Angel or Messenger of YHVH and the Set-apart Spirit (Ruakh HaKodesh). That Yahshua is part of YHVH and is the visible Image of the Invisible Elohim²². He is the Messiah who died for the sins of the world and rose from the dead to give assurance of both the forgiveness of our sins and everlasting life. Yahshua said In John 8: 24, **"I said therefore to you, that you shall die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am HE, you shall die in your sins.** He further stated in John 10: 30 saying: **"I and the Father are one".** In addition we read from 1 Tim 3:16, **"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: Elohim was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory".** This is also in agreement with (YHVH)'s statement through Isaiah in Isaiah 43: 10 & 11, in this way: **"You are my witnesses," declares YHVH, "And My servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no Elohim formed, and there will be none after Me. (11) I, even I, am YHVH; and there is no savior besides Me."**
- That Yahshua was born of a virgin lived a sinless life in accordance with the (Torah) Commandments of Elohim. He was crucified for the atonement of His people and was resurrected on the third day, ascended to heaven from where He will return to usher in the Kingdom of Elohim, and rule the world from Jerusalem.
- That the Scriptures, which include both the Tanach and the Renewed Covenant, is the divinely inspired and literal Word of Elohim as originally written.
- That the Law, which includes the 613 laws stipulated in the first five books of the Bible, should be observed by all those who want to worship YHVH our Elohim. The Ten Commandments being part and parcel of these 613 laws. The Law being the teachings of Elohim is the rules according to which we 'live our lives'. Keeping of the Law cannot bring us salvation, as we know that salvation is the free gift of YHVH our Elohim, given to those that love and obey Him. We show our love and obedience to YHVH by keeping His Commandments. These laws regulate moral precepts; dietary regulations; agricultural science; financial success; sexual behavior and religious practice.
- That, as part of the commandments we keep the biblical Sabbath, being the seventh day of the week or Saturday according to the Gregorian calendar in use today. We also keep the biblical Holy (Set-apart) Days, ordained by YHVH in Leviticus 23. These Holy Days depict (YHVH)'s plan of salvation for all mankind and are commanded to be kept forever. We also obey the Commandments regarding clean and unclean meats as specified by YHVH in Leviticus 11. We do this to show our obedience to

²² Gen. 1:26, **"Then Elohim Said, "Let Us make man in Our Image, according to Our likeness.""** Yahshua is the Image/likeness of Elohim – as confirmed in both 2 Corinthians 4: 4 & Col. 1: 15.

YHVH and to remain set apart or holy, as YHVH stated in Leviticus 11:45 ***"You shall be Holy for I am Holy"***.

- That we should be proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of YHVH as a witness to all nations and the return of Yahshua the Messiah to the earth to come and rule His people from Jerusalem for a thousand years. Those who believe and practice what Yahshua taught and who overcome, will rule with Yahshua for a thousand years.
- That we as Nazarenes are watchmen over the people of Israel and specifically over Judah. As watchman we must let the light of Yahshua shine through us. We need to watch over the souls bestowed to us by YHVH and should always praise Him and make intercession for His people, asking Him to save the remnant of Israel.
- That the key given to those who wish to enter the Kingdom of Elohim is encapsulated in the following Scriptural witnesses: We read from Acts 4: 12: ***"There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other Name under heaven, given among men by which we must be saved."*** In support of this Yahshua said in John 10: 9, ***"I am the Door; if anyone enters by Me, he will be saved."*** In addition we need to be mindful of Yahshua's own words in John 14: 26, as follows: ***"But the Helper, the Holy (or Set-apart) Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."*** Rav Kepha knew what the keys were, when Yahshua said to him in Matt 16: 19, ***"I will give you the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven."*** When therefore, those whom he taught believed that Elohim made Yahshua both Master and Messiah, they enquired as to what they should do. Rav Kepha's answer is recorded in Acts 2: 38, in this way: ***"Repent, and be immersed every one of you in the name of Yahshua Messiah for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Set Apart Spirit."*** Rav Shaul validating the same wrote in Romans 8: 11, ***'But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yahshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Messiah Yahshua from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.'*** Halleluyah!

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