

Challenging questions

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Challenging questions

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 sermons that I gave over the past few weeks 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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Chapter 1: Is what we believe important to Elohim?

It is vitally important for those of us called out of the religions of the world to make sure that what we believe will eventually result in our salvation in the Kingdom of Elohim, ruled by Yahshua the Messiah on earth, when He comes again. We who believe in the Scriptures as the living word of Elohim should hold to beliefs based on His laws without compromise. We read accordingly from first John 2: 3 - 6: ***'And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. (4) The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; (5) but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of Elohim has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him; (6) the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.'***

That is indeed a mouthful, but unless we understand that Yahshua was sent specifically to teach us from the lost ten tribes to return to the original faith of the fathers in the faith; and as such came to show us how to obey YHVH as our perfect example from immersion, where we accept Him as our Passover, until one day when we will be born again into the kingdom of Elohim. In addition our beliefs determine the way we live our lives and the decisions we are required to make as a result of circumstances we are presented with on a daily basis. If we base our decisions on Torah and what our Messiah taught whilst He was on earth, we will be able to resist the pressures to conform to the standards of society, and like Messiah's prayer in John 17: 15 & 16, we follow His lead, where He pray saying: ***'I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. (16) They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.'*** Yes, even though we live in the world, we need not take part in the sins of the world! As Nazarene believers in Elohim, we should avoid breaking Elohim's commandments that often take place in the world we live in.

Elohim's commandments should control our beliefs and should accordingly also influence the decisions we make. It was for this very reason that Yahshua the Messiah said to Satan, when He was tempted by him in the wilderness in Matthew 4: 4, ***"It is written (in Torah), 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF ELOHIM.'"*** The question is: Do we truly live by every word that comes out of the mouth of YHVH? Do you believe in the Oneness of Elohim, as He said by the hand of Moses in Deuteronomy 6: 4(KJV): ***'Hear, O Israel: YHVH our Elohim is one YHVH.'*** Don't you make idols of any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth and bow down to them? Don't you use the name of YHVH your Elohim in vain, by attaching it to feast days which He did not ordain like Xmas and Easter? Do you keep Elohim's weekly Sabbath on the seventh day of the week, the day He Set-apart (or hallowed) from the beginning? These are the first four of the Ten Commandments which YHVH gave the nation of Israel to teach to the other nations of the world, at Mount Sinai, fifty days after they came out of Egypt on what He later called Shavuot or the Feast of Weeks. By keeping these commandments, we show our love and obedience towards YHVH our Elohim.

Now let's consider the last six commandments, but more specifically the sixth commandment, since this is the one commandment where we truly show fellow human beings that we love them. Yes, the other five commandments are also equally important, but when it comes down to the wire, this is really a test commandment when it comes to loving our neighbor. The sixth command consists of four words, namely: ***"You shall not murder."*** This certainly sounds uncomplicated enough, yet most religions who confess faith in Elohim (or G-d as they refer to Him) interpret this to as allowing believers in Elohim, to fight in so-called justified wars. During the first three centuries after Messiah's death, resurrection and ascension to heaven, Nazarene believers in Messiah did not believe in so-called just wars. However, this also only started in modern Christianity after Constantine the Roman Emperor converted to Roman Catholicism during 325CE. It was his idea to combine religious and civil government, and since he had an empire to defend, religious leaders of

that time assumed it their duty to fight for the church and the emperor. He was said to have had a dream during which he saw a cross formed in the sky over Christian soldiers riding on horseback on route to convert the non-Christians hordes of the world. It is Constantine who inspired the well-known Christian hymn entitled: *'Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war.'* This hymn was a major inspirational song used to motivate *'Christian soldiers'* during the crusades in the Middle Ages, during which time thousands if not millions of Jews and Muslims were killed for not wanting to convert to Christianity.

Many criticize the Muslims for doing exactly the same today, but at the same time believe that Messiah instructed them to convert all non-believers throughout the world to Christianity, when He spoke to His disciples in Matthew 28: 18 – 20, saying: ***"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples (students) of (the Israelites in) all nations (into which they were scattered because of idolatry), immersing them in the name (or salvation as per Acts 4: 12) of the Father and the Son and the Set-apart Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end to the age."*** You might think I am presumptuous to add my own comments to this section of the Scriptures, but this is essentially what Yahshua meant, if you read it in context of His instruction to His disciples the first time when He sent them out in Matthew 10: 5 – 7 , saying: ***"These twelve Yahshua sent out after instructing them, saying, "Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach (or proclaim), saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"*** He also told the Canaanite woman who asked Him to heal her demon possessed daughter this in Matthew 15: 24, saying: ***"I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*** This was basically Messiah's purpose as prophesied by Isaiah in chapter 49: 5 & 6, in this way: ***'And now says YHVH, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, in order that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of YHVH, and My Elohim is My strength), (6) He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones (Notsrim) of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'"*** Yes, the way we live should be an example to the nations around us, so that they also want to live the way we do – that is what YHVH originally intended for Israel. In addition He told His disciples in Matthew 24, when they asked Him about the signs that will precede the end of the age, saying in verse 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."*** Notice both here and in Matthew 10 He instructed His disciples to proclaim the gospel of the coming kingdom of Elohim as a witness to the world, and not to convert anybody. If they do not want to listen to us – it is not up to us to force them to believe, like Christianity did during the Middle Ages.

We should also be mindful of Messiah's words in Matthew 23, where He spoke to the religious people of His day, saying in verse 15: ***"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel about on sea and land to make one proselyte (convert); and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves."*** Most believers in Messiah believe that He spoke specifically to the Jews of His day here. However, if we understand that the Renewed Covenant was purposely written for non-Jewish Israelite believers who come from the religions of the world, to bring them back to worshipping Elohim and obey His Torah, we will understand that He was talking to potential believers in Him as witnessed in Acts 15: 5¹, where we see that there were actually Pharisees who came to believe in Him. We need to be mindful of the fact that YHVH similarly to any father corrects those whom He loves and as such reproved these Pharisees. Yahshua

¹ Acts 15: 5, ***'But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses."***

was simply telling all pious religious people who think they know everything there is to know about the Scriptures, that because of their lack of knowledge they should be the last ones to teach others, since it should never be our purpose to convert other people anyway, as that is not our calling. Yahshua said unambiguously in John 6: 44, ***“No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.”*** Yes, it is our heavenly Father who calls believers to believe in Yahshua the salvation of YHVH, and even if we believe we are able to save our own families; if YHVH does not call them at this time, they will be given an opportunity for salvation, after the second resurrection as witnessed in Isaiah 25: 7 – 9, in this way: ***‘And on this mountain (meaning in Elohim’s kingdom) 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 (this will only happen after the Great White Throne judgment in Revelation 20: 14), 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. (9) And it will be said in that day, ‘Behold, this is our Elohim for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is YHVH for whom we have waited; let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation (Yahshua).’”*** If we are truly interested in doing and furthering the work of Elohim, we will consider Messiah’s words in John 6: 29, where He said: ***“This is the work of Elohim, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”*** It is by our example that people are drawn to YHVH, not by trying to convert them.

The example that Yahshua showed us regarding war is that His coming kingdom is not of this world, therefore His followers are not fighting for anything during this age, as recorded in John 18: 33 – 36, in this way: ***‘Pilate therefore entered into the Praetorium, and summoned Yahshua, and said to Him, “Are You the King of the Jews (believers in YHVH)?” (34) Yahshua answered, “Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?” (35) Pilate answered, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You up to me; what have You done?” (36) Yahshua answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”*** Early believers in Messiah hated violence, and as Messiah showed they preferred death to resistance. After being called by YHVH and trained specifically by Yahshua to bring back believers who became lost, Rav Shaul never resisted those who persecuted him for faith as recorded in the book of Acts. In Yahshua’s sermon on the mount in Matthew 5, He magnified the sixth commandment in this way, saying in verses 43 – 45: ***“You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR, and hate your enemy.’ (44) But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you (45) in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He caused His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.”*** We see that even when they crucified Yahshua He did not resist them, but true to His word here in Matthew 5, we read His reaction in Luke 23: 33 & 34, in this way: ***‘And when they came to the place called the Skull (the summit of the Mount of Olives), there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. (34) But Yahshua was saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.’*** As per their Messiah’s example, true believers remained true to the way Yahshua interpreted this command.

In the meantime those in Christianity involved in so-called just wars by leaders of both sides, were forced to fight and kill fellow human beings from other nations, who often belonged to the same religion as they do. The Nazarene Jewish faith to which Yahshua and His original disciples belonged called for peace instead of war. True early Nazarenes were taught by the early apostles (like Rav Kepha) in first Peter 2: 11 that our warfare takes place in each individual believer’s heart and mind, in this way: ***‘Beloved, I urge you as aliens (those alienated from Torah) and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul.’*** Rav Shaul told us to put on the full armor of

Elohim in our struggles against Satan and his demons in Ephesians 6: 11 – 19, saying: ***‘Put on the full armor of Elohim, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. (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. (13) Therefore, take up the full armor of Elohim, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. (14) Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, (15) and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; (16) in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. (17) And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of Elohim. (18) With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, (19) and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel.’*** It is important for us who came out of the religions of the world to understand that we have three main enemies or obstacles to overcome if we want to make it (or rule under Yahshua) into the Kingdom of Elohim, namely our own human nature, the pulls that is in the world, and Satan, as Yahshua told Rav Yochanan in Revelation 2: 26 & 27, saying: ***‘And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds (do what Yahshua did as our example whilst He was on earth) until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; (27) AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father.’***

The second World War was started by Hitler who was a confessed Roman Catholic, and even though many in Christianity will deny that he was a Christian, he never officially denounced his faith. In the same way the Catholic Church never condemned Hitler’s Nazi regime, nor did the church leadership give members of their faith a relaxation from their so-called duty to obey the authority of the Nazi government. Both the Catholic and Lutheran Churches in Germany urged their followers to obey Hitler and fight and kill for the sake of victory. Only members of free churches remained faithful to their principles, and were also persecuted for doing so. The Jehovah Witnesses was one such group and many of their members were killed along with millions of Jews and allies who fought against Germany, or were sent to lunatic asylums. In addition to these, a few individuals of the clergy in the Christian Churches opposed the Nazi regime and they suffered either imprisonment, or execution along with those mentioned earlier. History absolutely shows that our beliefs determine our actions. It is therefore important to understand that what you believe in your heart determines your actions. If you firmly believe in Torah and hold onto what Yahshua taught whilst He was on earth, you will refuse to kill fellow human beings, let alone fellow believers in Yahshua. Yahshua’s teachings were clearly against violence against fellow human beings, and He told His disciples in Matthew 5: 9 saying: ***“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of Elohim.”*** Rav Yaa’cov tells us why people argue and bring about wars in James 4: 1 – 3, saying: ***‘What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is it 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. (3) You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.’*** David informs us how to overcome the problem of want, saying in Psalm 34: 9 – 15: ***‘O fear YHVH, you His saints; for to those who fear Him, there is no want. (10) The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; but they who seek YHVH shall not be in want of any good thing. (11) Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of YHVH. (12) Who is the man who desires life, and loves length of days that he may see good? (13) Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. (14) Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue (hunt it like a tracking dog) it. (15) The eyes of YHVH are toward the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.’***

However, as Yahshua told Pilate, that one day when He returns with His saints (true believers in Him) to administer Elohim's Kingdom on Earth, His servants will fight against the nations of the earth who will have been deceived by Satan to fight against Him as we read from Revelation 17: 14, in this way: ***"These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Master of masters and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."*** A second witness to this comes from 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. (12) 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 one knows except Himself. (13) And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of Elohim. (14) And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. (15) 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. (16) And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND MASTER OF MASTERS."***

But against whom will they fight? Yahshua and His saints will fight against those whom Satan will have inspired to gather around Jerusalem before He returns, to fight against Him at His return, as witnessed in Revelation 16: 13 – 21, in this way: ***'And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet three unclean spirits like frogs; (14) for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of Elohim, the Almighty. (15) (Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments², lest he walk about naked and men see his shame.)' (16) And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon. (17) And the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done." (18) And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. (19) And the great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And Babylon the great was remembered before Elohim, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. (20) And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. (21) And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed Elohim because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe.'*** The Scriptures describes the believers who will stand out during the terrible events that will immerse the world before Messiah's return in Revelation 14: 12, as follows: ***'Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of Elohim and their faith in Yahshua.'*** Will you and I be part of those believers? It all depends on what we believe. Think about it!

² We keep our garment clean, by washing it in the word, as witnessed in Revelation 22: 14, in this way: ***'Blessed are those who wash their robes*** (the KJV here reads: *Blessed are they that do his commandments.*), ***that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.'***

Chapter 2: Messiah?

The word Messiah means the anointed one. In the Scriptures the term refers to kings, High Priests, and any individual who has a divine mission. What is the importance of being anointed? The Jews of Yahshua's days as well as most today absolutely understand the meaning of being anointed. In fact one of the 13 principles of the Jewish Faith is belief that the Messiah will come. Most might immediately interject here saying: But Messiah already came. Yes, He did, but Messiah's first advent was mainly as he indicated in Matthew 15: 24, saying: ***"I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*** We as well as all Jews believe when Messiah comes (again in our case) He is coming to rule the world from Jerusalem.

In fact we see that when His disciples first started following Yahshua, they referred to Him as 'the Messiah' as witnessed in John 1: 35 – 41, in this way: ***'Again the next day Yochanan (the immerser) was standing with two of His disciples, (36) and he looked upon Yahshua as He walked, and said, "Behold the Lamb of Elohim!" (37) And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Yahshua. (38) And Yahshua turned, and beheld them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" And they said to Him "Rabbi, where are You staying?" (39) He said to them, "Come, and you will see." They came therefore and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. (40) One of the two who heard Yochanan speak, and followed Him, was Andrew Simon Kepha's brother. (41) He found first his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah."*** Since these disciples were familiar with the Tanach and that it foretold His first coming and purpose in amongst other Isaiah 49: 5, saying: ***'And now says YHVH, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant. To bring Jacob back to Him, in order that Israel might be gathered to Him (for I am honored in the sight of YHVH, and My Elohim is My strength).*** Without the background of the Tanach, the title Messiah is meaningless, resulting in a shallow and distorted view of who and what Yahshua the Messiah is. The Jews who are expecting a Messiah know that in the Tanach, anointing was used in four special occasions to set someone apart for a special purpose. Each of these four teaches something about Messiah's mission and the reason He is referred to as (YHVH)'s Anointed (in for example Psalm 2: 2³).

Firstly let's consider the anointed which dedicates a person or thing for Elohim's use. The first time YHVH instructed Moses to anoint something was in Exodus 40 where He tells Moses in verses 9 - 11, saying: ***"Then you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it, and shall consecrate it and all its furnishings; and it shall be holy. (10) And you shall anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar; and the altar shall be most holy. (11) And you shall anoint the laver and its stand, and consecrate it."*** We see that the act of anointing would consecrate or set the tabernacle and its furnishings, as well as the altar of burnt offering and its utensils apart for holy use – anointing was symbolic of setting apart. But how does this apply to Yahshua the Messiah? Yahshua's whole purpose for living was to do (YHVH)'s will, as He said in John 5: 19 & 30, in this way: ***"Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. (30) I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me."*** Yahshua's motivation and source of power was to do the will of Elohim. Yahshua as Elohim's right hand is (YHVH)'s saving power as David witnessed in Psalm 98: 1 – 3, saying: ***'O sing to YHVH a new song, for He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. (2) YHVH has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. (3) He has***

³ Psalm 2: 2, ***'The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers take counsel together against YHVH and against His Anointed.'***

remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our Elohim.'

Yahshua did exactly what the Father told Him to do (like His right hand would). Yet some believe he came to overturn the Father's law and remove it as a standard for guiding the behavior of Israel and indeed all mankind – what a sorrowful denial (or contradiction) of Yahshua's own words. Messiah's entire life was in perfect agreement with Elohim's will and as (YHVH)'s perfect example, those of us called by Elohim at this time have to conform to His image, as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 8: 28 & 29, saying: ***'And we know that Elohim causes all things to work together for good to those who love Elohim, to those who are called according to His purpose. (29) For who He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born (from the dead⁴) among many brethren.'***

Secondly, let's consider Yahshua's anointing as our High Priest and mediator. After Moses dedicated and consecrated the tabernacle, Elohim further instructed him in Exodus 40: 12 – 15, to also anoint the priests for His service, saying: ***"Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting and wash them with water. (13) And you shall put the holy garments on Aaron and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister as a priest to Me. (14) And you shall bring his sons and put tunics on them; (15) and you shall anoint them even as you have anointed their father, that they may minister as priests to Me; and their anointing shall qualify them for a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations."*** Here we see that YHVH also set individuals apart to serve as priests to Elohim. But what is a priest supposed to do? In its plainest terms, a priest functioned as an intermediary between Elohim and the children of Israel. The priesthood served as Elohim's representatives to Israel, performing sacrifices and intercedes in conversation (prayer) with Elohim on behalf of the people. How does this apply to Yahshua Messiah? We read the answer from Hebrews 2: 14 – 17, in this way: ***'Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is the devil; (15) and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. (16) For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to descendants of Abraham. (17) Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to Elohim to make propitiation for the sins of the people.'*** Since Yahshua became a physical human being or the Son of Man when He was born of a woman, He knows what we go through in this life.

In addition to becoming like us, Yahshua was submissively obedient and as a result was made perfect, as witnessed in Hebrews 5: 8 - 10, as follows: ***'Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. (9) And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, (10) being designated by Elohim as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.'*** We also see that unlike human priests, who grow old and die, Yahshua will never need to be replaced, as we read from Hebrews 7: 23 - 25, in this way: ***'And the former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater number, because they were prevented by death from continuing, (24) but He, on the other hand, because He abides forever, holds His priesthood permanently. (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.'*** So we see that Yahshua will always be there to save those who come to Elohim forever – even after the second resurrection. Continuing in verses 26 & 27, we read: ***'For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; (27) who does***

⁴ Colossians 1: 18, ***'He is also head of the body, the congregation; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.'***

not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.'

Through Messiah's function as High Priest, He purifies us through His sacrifice as we continue to read from Hebrews 9: 13 – 15, in this way: ***'For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, (14) how much more will the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to Elohim, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim? (15) And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant (or priesthood), those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.'*** Having been cleansed by the blood of Messiah, we can now be reconciled to Elohim and come before Him confidently, as witnessed further in Hebrews 10: 19 – 23, as follows: ***'Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Yahshua, (20) by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is His flesh, (21) and since we have a great priest over the house of Elohim, (22) let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (23) Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.'*** This gives us a perfect example of Messiah's sacrifice and function as High Priest and how He reconciles us to Elohim. It is also for this reason that we are able to come boldly before Elohim, confident and full of faith that we are forgiven for our past sins and stand purified before Him in His sight.

Thirdly, we need to consider Messiah's anointing as a Set-apart Prophet of Elohim. We find an example of Elisha's anointing by Elijah as Elohim's prophet in first Kings 19: 15 & 16, ***'And YHVH said to him, "Go return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when you have arrived, you shall anoint Hazael king over Aram; (16) and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place.'*** What significance has this in Messiah's life? In Deuteronomy 18: 18 & 19 YHVH told Moses, saying: ***'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. (19) And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I myself will require it of him.'*** Yahshua in fact confirmed what YHVH told Moses in John 14: 24, saying: ***"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.'*** A second witness comes from John 12: 49 & 50, in this way: ***"For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak. (50) And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."*** Yahshua also referred to Himself in Luke 13: 33, saying: ***"Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem."***

As a prophet Yahshua clearly predicted the future when He told His disciples as recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, what will happen at the end of the age when He will return to come and rule the world from Jerusalem. Yahshua also predicted these same events to Yochanan in the book of Revelation, where He also foretold the second resurrection, during which time all knees will bow before Him, and finally after the destruction of the earth by fire, the New Jerusalem will come down from heaven when Elohim will come and dwell with His people. Yahshua taught and revealed Elohim's plan and purpose for all mankind to those of us whom the Father has called. We read from Luke 10: 21 – 24 that He revealed the Father to us whom He has called from the world, in this way: ***'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 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 Him⁵.” (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.” To confirm who He truly is He said in John 12: 44 & 45, *“He who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him who sent Me. (45) And he who beholds Me behold the One who sent Me.”* Continuing in John 14: 9, saying to Philip: *“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?’”* Yahshua our Messiah was revealing Elohim who is incorporeal (invisible) to us. He showed us that YHVH is a loving Father who loves and cares for those who follow Him as His children. The Father that Yahshua revealed was an Elohim who wants a close relationship with His people. He wants to share His creation with us, offering us forgiveness and healing, but also eternal life in His everlasting Kingdom on earth. Yahshua revealed the Father's love for us, by willingly dying for the sins of the world, thus reconciling us back to the Father. We see therefore that Yahshua our Messiah was anointed to be a prophet, not only to foretell the future, but also to reveal Elohim's will and purpose to us.

Finally, let's consider Yahshua's anointing to be a King. In first Samuel 16 YHVH tells Samuel His prophet that He had rejected Saul as king over Israel, because of his disobedience, and that He had chosen David to take over Saul's throne. He tells Samuel to anoint David as king in Saul's place as recorded in verses 12 & 13, in this way: *‘So he sent and brought him (David) in. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. And YHVH said, “Arise, anoint him; for this is he.” (13) Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of YHVH came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.’* We see from this that anointing showed that Elohim had chosen the person for rulership. To be (YHVH)'s anointed was a title of respect and reverence, acknowledging that Elohim had placed the person in that position. But how does this apply to Messiah? A few hours before His execution the Roman governor Pilate asked Yahshua in John 18: 33, saying: *“Are You the King of the Jews?”* After a short discussion between them, Yahshua answered Pilate in verse 36, saying: *“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered to the Jews; but as it is My kingdom is not of this realm.* In verse 37 we see that Pilate said to Yahshua by means of a rhetorical question: *“So You are a king?”* Upon which Yahshua answered in the same verse, saying: *“You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. (That I am coming back one day to rule the world from Jerusalem.) Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”* Meaning everyone who is called and chosen understands that Yahshua is returning to come and rule the world in the coming kingdom of Elohim, and as a result reject the myth that good people go to heaven after death⁶.

⁵ *Yahshua the right arm but also the power and wisdom of Elohim (as per first Corinthians 1: 24) was only revealed to those considered to be babes at this time as is also confirmed in first Corinthians 1: 26 - 29. The reason why the Jews of Messiah's day were blinded to His identity by YHVH, is so that the rulers of the time could crucify Him, as recorded in first Corinthians 2: 7 & 8, as follows: ‘But we speak Elohim's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which Elohim predestined before the ages to our glory (as per Proverbs 8: 22 & 23); 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.’* If they had not crucified Messiah, the Set-apart Spirit could not come, and we would still be in our sin.

⁶ *Yahshua Himself said in Matthew 5:5, “Blessed are the gentle; for they shall inherit the earth.”*

The message that Yahshua brought was about the coming kingdom of Elohim, as witnessed in Mark 1: 14 & 15, in this way: ***'And after Yochanan 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."*** We read further from Luke 8: 1, ***'And it came about soon afterwards, that He began going about from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of Elohim; and the twelve were with Him.'*** That coming kingdom is prophesied in both the Tanach and the Renewed Covenant. We read accordingly from Daniel 7: 13 & 14, in this way: ***"I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. (14) And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed."*** Messiah's coming kingdom will replace the governments of this world, and He will rule supreme, as witnessed in Revelation 11: 15, as follows: ***"And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Master and His Messiah; and He will reign forever and ever."*** Messiah's followers who will be resurrected to eternal life at His return, will assist Him in administering His soon coming kingdom, as witnessed in Revelation 20: 4 & 6, in this way: ***'And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Yahshua and because of the word of Elohim, and those who had not worshipped the beast or his image⁷, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Messiah for a thousand years. (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 priest of Elohim and of Messiah and will reign with Him for a thousand years."*** We see from Isaiah 9: 6 & 7, that there will be no end to peace under Messiah's government, as follows: ***'For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Elohim, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. (7) There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forever more. The zeal of YHVH of hosts will accomplish this.'***

Even so, If Yahshua is coming back to rule the world from Jerusalem, do we whom YHVH has called out of the world, already recognize Him as Master and King in our lives? Rav Shaul wrote accordingly in Ephesians 1: 18 – 23, saying: ***'I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints (believers), (19) and what is the surpassing greatness of His power towards us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might (20) which He brought about in Messiah, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, (21) far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. (22) And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the congregation, (23) which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.'*** Rav Shaul shows us here that Yahshua the Messiah is over everything; over all the angels; He is above all the powers of the universe. He is over all power and authority both at this time and in the age to come. Yes, Yahshua is truly the Messiah the one anointed to be both our High Priest and supreme King in the world to come. He is the One Set-apart,

⁷ Since it is believed that the mark of the beast, has to do with the false messiah and Sunday worship, very few Jews (if at all), will receive this mark, meaning after they will have accepted Yahshua as the Messiah at His return (as per Zechariah 12: 7 – 14), causing the dead in Messiah to be raised (as per Romans 11: 15), they will also be priests of Elohim and reign with Messiah as part of the united Israel and His bride (as per Jeremiah 33: 31 – 33) during the millennium and beyond.

since He has devoted His physical life as our perfect example and sacrifice. He is our High Priest who reconciled us to YHVH giving us a better understanding of Elohim's will and way for us. He is the Set-apart prophet foretelling us about the soon coming Kingdom, during which He will reign as King of kings, and Master of masters, as He witnessed in Revelation 17: 14, saying: ***"These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Master of masters and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."***

The question is: will those of us whom YHVH has called and whom Yahshua has chosen, through the correct immersion in His Set-apart name, remain faithful to YHVH and His Messiah until He returns one day in the near future. Have we already made Him King in our lives, by only doing His will and way and not ours? Think about it!

Chapter 3: What are the principles behind clean and unclean meats?

When Elohim began working with ancient Israel, He was not formulating and giving His Torah for the first time; He was simply reaffirming it for an assembly of people who had spent hundreds of years as slaves in Egypt. By that time most of them had forgotten Elohim's law, much less obey it. We read for example about Noah in Genesis 6: 9, in this way: ***'These are the records of the generations of Noah, Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with Elohim.'*** But how do we know that someone is righteous?

To find the answer we read from first John 3: 7, as follows: ***'Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He (meaning YHVH) is righteous.'*** But what is righteousness? We read a Scriptural answer from Psalm 119: 172, in this way: ***'Let my tongue sing of Thy word, for all Thy commandments are righteousness.'*** We see further from first John 3: 4, that: ***'Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.'*** This tells us clearly that those who practices sin also practices lawlessness and those who conversely keep Elohim's commandments practices righteousness and is righteous. But how could Noah, who lived many years before the ancient nation of Israel were led out of Egypt by YHVH, know Elohim's commandments, if like many in Christianity believe YHVH only gave His Torah the first time in Exodus 20, fifty days after this event? We've already read from Genesis 6 that Noah walked with Elohim; it is therefore clear that whilst walking with Elohim, Elohim must have given Noah His laws verbally, and by obeying these commandments he is recorded to be having been a righteous man. We read accordingly from Genesis 7 that even before YHVH gave Noah meat to eat (in Genesis 9: 3), Noah knew the distinction between which animals are clean and which are unclean, since YHVH told him in verse 2 (KJV), saying: ***'Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female.'*** In a similar way, Elohim must have given Abraham His laws verbally, as He said to Isaac in Genesis 26: 4 & 5 (KJV): ***'And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; (5) because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.'*** Despite this written record, a few years ago now a young Christian minister from a church in our city tried convincing my wife and I that Abraham did not know the Ten Commandment.

The way Elohim's law regulated human relationships in Genesis prior to codifying it in Exodus, remains consistent with Rav Shaul's description thereof in the first part of Roman 7: 14, where he wrote: ***'For we know that the law is spiritual.'*** This means that the Law is similar to Elohim, spiritual and therefore eternal as witnessed in the first part of Deuteronomy 33: 27, as follows: ***"The eternal Elohim is a dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms."*** A second witness to Elohim's omnipresence is where He was asked by Moses in Exodus 3: 13, in this way: ***"Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I shall say to them, 'The Elohim of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?"*** Elohim answered Moses in verse 14, saying: ***"I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"*** The footnote in the NASB read: I AM is related to the name of G-d (Elohim), YHWH, and rendered LORD, which is derived from the verb HAYAH, to be. This means that YHVH has and will always be, as He is the eternal. Elohim's laws are based on His unchanging character and are not dependent on events and attitudes existing throughout human history. The fact that at a certain point in time we become aware of Elohim's law, does not mean it has not been in existence before we got to know about it.

The Scriptures is a book containing laws governing our relationship with our Creator as well as with fellow human beings from the beginning to the end. Even so, it is not written as a legal book per se. In fact the Hebrew word transliterated as *'Torah'* does not mean law, but it conveys the idea of

Elohim's teachings or instructions in the way of Elohim that will ultimately lead to eternal life. In other words it is as Elohim stated throughout the first five books of the Scriptures, one example being in Deuteronomy 10: 12 & 13, in this way: ***"And now, Israel, what does YHVH your Elohim require from you, but to fear YHVH your Elohim, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul, (13) and to keep (YHVH)'s commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?"*** The Scriptures is a book containing history of how people in the past related to Elohim, and how we should relate to Him, after we have studied the history of our forefathers, as Rav Shaul explained in first Corinthians 10: 1 – 6, saying: ***'For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; (2) and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; (3) and all ate the same spiritual food; (4) and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Messiah. (5) Nevertheless, with most of them Elohim was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. (6) Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved.'*** Elohim's word the Scriptures provides us with instructions and guidelines for developing a relationship with Him that will lead to eternal life as Yahshua Himself said in His prayer recorded in John 17 and specifically in verse 3, saying: ***"And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true Elohim and Yahshua Messiah whom Thou has sent."***

In spite of this, keeping the commandments does not save us; it is our faith which Elohim grants us that gives us the ability to have a relationship with Him, as Rav Shaul wrote in Ephesians 2: 8, saying: ***'For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of Elohim.'*** A second witness to this come from Romans 12 where Rav Shaul wrote in verse 3: ***'For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as Elohim has allotted to each a measure of faith.'*** As our relationship with Elohim develops over time, we get to know more about what He expects from us when we begin to be guided by His Set-apart Spirit ensuring that our thoughts and actions are acceptable within the scope of His Torah. This was essentially the message that Rav Shaul was trying to get across in Galatians 5, stressing that even though Messiah has set us free from sin, the Set-apart Spirit is the necessary agent for enabling righteousness. It is in the nature of man to always look for loopholes in any law, whether it is Elohim's law or manmade laws. Many legal battles are waged in law courts throughout the world, where cunning attorneys defend criminals by finding loopholes in the statutes and laws of the land. However, when we get to know the spiritual principles that form the basis of Elohim's laws, we don't look for loopholes to avoid what He commands. The point is: When we enjoy a loving relationship with YHVH as our heavenly Father, we keep His commandments, as Rav Yochanan wrote in first John 5: 2 & 3, saying: ***'By this we know that we love the children of Elohim, when we love Elohim and observe His commandments. (3) For this is the love of Elohim, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.'*** After all, how can something that is for our own good be burdensome. It is like crossing the road; if you do not look to your right and then left before crossing the road (depending on which side of the road cars drive in your country), you could be run over – it is that simple!

All Elohim's commandments were given for our good, including the food laws given in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. Elohim who created both mankind as well as what kind of foods are suitable for human consumption, knows that certain foodstuffs are harmful for us, as much as the manufacturer of any motor vehicle, specifies the fuel required to make such vehicle run optimally. However, since the very beginning Satan as the adversary as Rav Kepha identifies him in first Peter 5: 8, has been deceiving the whole world to do just the opposite of what Elohim requires of us. By convincing one of the biggest religious groups who confess faith in Yahshua (the one they call J*e*s*u*s*), that Torah is not applicable to them any longer and that the same J*e*s*u*s* has made

all foods clean, he has ensured that their followers and their children remain cursed, under the laws of cause and effect given in Deuteronomy 28, despite the fact that Yahshua redeemed us from the curse of the law in respect of our past sins. Since Elohim's Torah is spiritual and cannot disappear, what Messiah has done for us can be compared to when a friend pays a traffic fine for us for speeding in a built up area. The fact that our debt in respect of our traffic offense has been paid, does not abolish the traffic ordinance against exceeding a certain speed in a built up area – similarly did Messiah's death pay for our past sins, but if we continue to sin, we either have to repent by asking YHVH to again forgive us our sins in Yahshua's name and stop breaking His commandments, or eventually be consumed in fire that will leave us neither with root or branch (as per Malachi 4: 1).

Abraham, who was called a friend of Elohim in James 2: 23, was one who understood and kept Elohim's law. He is known as our father in the faith as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 4: 11, saying: ***'And he received the sign of circumcision. A seal of the righteousness of faith which he had while uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be reckoned to him.'*** Abraham's attitude was one of trust coupled with heartfelt obedience. Abraham who lived a few hundred years before YHVH entered into a covenant relationship with his offspring the children of Israel, will receive eternal life in the Promised Land or the kingdom of Elohim on earth one day, as a reward of those who diligently seek Him, as recorded in Hebrews 11: 6, 8 – 13 and 39 & 40, as follows: ***'And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to Elohim must believe that He is (exists), and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. (8) By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. (9) By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents*** (temporary dwellings representative of our Feast of Tabernacles dwellings – to show how temporary our existence as flesh and blood human beings are) ***with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; (10) for he was looking for the city which has foundations*** (meaning: permanence as in the New Jerusalem shown in Revelation 21: 1 - 3), ***whose architect and builder is Elohim. (11) By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised; (12) therefore, also, there was born of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE, (13) all these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on earth. (39) And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, (40) because Elohim had provided something better for us so that apart from us they should not be made perfect.'***

When the Israelites left Egypt, Elohim started instructing them about His Set-apart Days in Exodus 5: 1 and specifically about His Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread in Exodus 12: 1 – 51. As they continued on their journey to Mount Sinai, Elohim taught them to rest on His weekly Sabbath in Exodus 16: 23 - 26, when He said through Moses: ***'This is what YHVH meant: Tomorrow is a Sabbath observance, a holy Sabbath to YHVH. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and keep all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning.'*** (24) ***So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered, and it did not become foul, nor was there any worm in it. (25) And Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to YHVH; today you will not find it in the field. (26) Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will be none."*** (27) ***And it came about on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather, but they found none.'*** YHVH then again spoke to Moses in verse 28, saying: ***"How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions?"*** It is important to understand that this was before Elohim told the Israelites to observe His weekly Sabbath as one of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai, fifty days later. After Elohim gave them the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20, He also gave them His

statutes – meaning how the Ten Commandments are applied in their lives and His judgments – how they will be punished for breaking the commandments; as well as additional instructions regarding His weekly Sabbath and Set-apart Days in Exodus 21 – 23. All of these constituted the ‘*marriage*’ covenant that YHVH made with the nation of Israel. He promised to care for them, to protect them physically by removing sickness and providing them with security in the Promised Land, provided they remain faithful to Him by obeying His commandments.

The question is: Why did Elohim make distinctions between clean and unclean foods? Because many people in society enjoy eating pork and other unclean meats and at the same time experience no immediate ill effects, not many have looked for scientific evidence as to find reasons why Elohim forbid the eating of certain foods. Some believe that Elohim forbid the ancient nation of Israel to eat pork, was because they did not have refrigerators, and researchers had not until then warned consumers of pork meat to cook it thoroughly in order to kill any dormant disease-carrying organisms. Even so, research has convinced a few medical doctors to recommend that some of their patients with particular allergic conditions should avoid eating pork and shellfish, but not as a rule for everyone else. Theologians from especially Christianity have simply assumed that the laws of clean and unclean foods given in the Tanach (or the ‘*Old Testament*’ as they refer to it), came to an end with the establishment of the so-called ‘*New Testament*’. Many believe that Rav Shaul confirmed this move towards abolishing the clean and unclean food laws of the Tanach when he wrote in Romans 14: 14, saying: ***‘I know and am convinced in the Master Yahshua that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.’*** But, does this mean that he abandoned the laws of clean and unclean foods discussed in Torah? We know that Rav Shaul did not change or abandoned any command given by YHVH in the Torah, and to explain this particular verse from the Scriptures, we need to familiarize ourselves with the various Greek words used in the Renewed Covenant, to fully understand what Rav Shaul was actually saying regarding food in Romans 14. In addition we need to be ever mindful of the principle, to let the Scriptures interpret the Scriptures.

It is also important to understand that there were two concepts of ‘unclean’ referred to in the Renewed Covenant, with different Greek words to communicate these concepts. Firstly, ‘unclean’ could talk about animals not fit for human consumption, as listed in Leviticus 11 & Deuteronomy 14, but could also refer to something which is ceremonially or ritually unclean. The Greek word used by Rav Shaul in Romans 14, was ‘*koinos*’ meaning common or ordinary. The word ‘*koinos*’ is also used in Acts 2: 44 (***‘And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common.’***), Acts 4: 32, Titus 1: 4; and Jude 3 (***‘Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation...’***). The same word was also used for things considered polluted or defiled – where it came in touch with for example dead bodies. This word is also used in its form as a verb, namely ‘*koinoo*’ in Mark 7: 2, as follows: ***‘and had seen some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed.’*** These two words (‘*koinos*’ and ‘*koinoo*’) are in fact used throughout the Renewed Covenant to refer to ceremonially uncleanness, and not to unclean meats or animals. Consequently, something could be considered common or ceremonial unclean, yet be in the prescribed list of ‘*Kosher*’ foods given in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. The very same word used in the Septuagint version of the Torah, namely ‘*akatharos*’ is also used in the Greek translation of the Renewed Covenant for unclean meats. In Acts 10 both the words ‘*koinos*’ and ‘*akatharos*’ describe Rav Kepha’s vision of the sheet filled with all kinds of animals of the earth. Rav Kepha distinguished between the two concepts of unclean by using both words in verse 14 of Acts 10. Most translations of the Scriptures distinguish between the meanings of the two words used here. Rav Kepha used the same terminology in verse 28 and Acts 11: 8 (KJV) in discussion of his vision, saying: ***“But I said, ‘Not so, Master: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.’”***

Where Rav Shaul said in Roman 14: 14, ***'I Know and am convinced by the Master Yahshua that nothing is unclean in itself'***, he was in fact making the same point as he did in 1 Corinthians 8: 4, where he explained that even if clean meat was offered to idols, the so-called pagan god had no influence on whether the meat was suitable to be eaten or not, saying (in the last part): ***'we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no Elohim but one.'*** But the question is: What was Rav Shaul's point in Romans 14? He was essentially saying that depending upon their consciences, early believers in Messiah had several options open to them whilst traveling or living in certain communities. If they did not want to eat meat that had been sacrificed to idols, they could choose to eat only vegetables (as may be seen from verse 2). Nevertheless, if there was not a regular source of kosher meat available, believers could eat meat slaughtered by Moslem butchers, since they also know how to bleed the animal, in the prescribed way, even though they offer such meat up to their Deity. Romans 14 is all about a person's conscience within the context of the Torah. Rav Shaul was not discussing Scriptural kosher laws in this section, but as we see from verse 20 where the word clean is *'katharos'*, meaning free from impure mixture, or spotless: The word *'katharos'* is used in the Scriptures to describe all kinds of cleanliness, including clean dishes (Matthew 23: 26), clothing (Revelation 15: 6; 19: 8 & 14), and pure religion (James 1: 27). We need to understand that in both verses 14 and 20 of Romans 14, the word food or meat was not in the original wording. In fact no specific entity is mentioned relative to clean or uncleanness. These verses are simply stating that ***'nothing is unclean*** (*'koinos'* – common/ceremonially unclean) ***in itself*** and ***'all is clean*** (*'katharos'* – without blemish/spot). Rav Shaul was essentially saying that any association of food with idolatrous activity had no influence on whether the food was suitable for eating.

In both Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, we find the same reason for Elohim's teaching on clean and unclean meats. In Leviticus 11: 43 - 45 Elohim said: ***'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. (44) For I am YHVH your Elohim. Consecrate 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 Deuteronomy 14: 3, YHVH said: ***"You shall not eat any detestable thing."*** In verse 21 He said: ***"You shall not eat anything which dies of itself. You may give it to the alien who is in your town, so that he may eat it, or you may sell it to the foreigner, for you are a holy people to YHVH your Elohim. You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk."*** To be holy, means that we should be consecrated for holy use by YHVH. But, you might ask: How are we consecrated? We read from James 1: 18, in this way: ***'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.'*** We read about what is going to happen to first fruit grain offerings in the latter days, as witnessed in Isaiah 66: 20 & 21, as follows: ***"Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as a grain offering to YHVH, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules, and on camels, to My holy mountain (meaning Elohim's government) Jerusalem," says YHVH, "just as the sons of Israel bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of YHVH. (21) I will also take some of them for priests and for Levites," says YHVH'***

However we also read from first Peter 2: 9, ***'But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR ELOHIM'S OWN POSSESSION, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.'*** So we see that since YHVH has called us to come out of the religions of the peoples of the world, He has already made us to be priests, as is also confirmed in Revelation 1: 5 & 6, in this way: ***'And from Yahshua Messiah, the faithful witness, the first-born 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.’ As a royal priesthood, we are set-apart by YHVH for holy use by Him. It is therefore important for us not to defile ourselves with unclean food not sanctified by the Scriptures or word of Elohim. Even though the context of both Leviticus and Deuteronomy includes health and hygiene issues, the specific reason Elohim gave for us to avoid unclean meats is Set-apartness. Elohim gave His Torah to physical human beings who are blessed when they follow these laws, but are cursed if they don’t. We read that similar to the ancient nation of Israel YHVH has at this time chosen us to be a holy people as Rav Shaul wrote in Ephesians 1: 3 & 4, saying: ***‘Blessed be the Elohim and Father of our Master Yahshua Messiah, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Messiah, (4) just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love.’***

Rav Kepha also tells us in first Peter 1: 14 – 16 , saying: ***‘As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, (15) but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; (16) because it is written, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.”’*** It is clear from this that Rav Kepha had far more in mind than only refraining from unclean meats. Similarly did Rav Shaul when he wrote in 2 Corinthians 6: 17 & 18, saying: ***“Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,” says YHVH “AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; and I will welcome you. (18) “And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me,” says YHVH Almighty’*** We should not feel uncomfortable for being different to the rest of society, but we should always use wisdom in how we tell family and friends about these Scriptural practices, especially in view of the fact that it is known that the recent outbreak of Ebola in Africa is as the result of the consumption of fruit bats. In addition since YHVH has not called everyone alive at this time, we need not force others to do as we do. However, as we apply Elohim’s laws in our lives, we get to think like He thinks. By keeping Elohim’s Sabbaths (weekly and annual) we get to better understand our use of time. Obedience to Elohim’s laws of clean and unclean meats changes our views and values of everything we allow to enter our bodies. The knowledge of Elohim’s laws define clean and unclean and remains an identifying sign of the set-apartness of us as His people. Think about it!

Chapter 4: Kabbalah?

When you dare to even mention the word Kabbalah in some circles most people in the audience will give you a disapproving glance. The reason for doing so is because of their misconception that Kabbalah has to do with magic at best and witchcraft at worst. *'Kabbalah'* is transliterated from the Hebrew word (קבלה) simply meaning *'received'*. Jewish Kabbalah is the kabbalah of Orthodox Judaism, Hasidic Jews and Chabad Lubavitch Jews and as Torah observant Jews they are definitely not involved in black magic or witchcraft. Jewish Kabbalah if properly understood can enlighten ones understanding of the Infinite One, but if misunderstood may be perverted into polytheism. It is believed that because of misunderstanding of Jewish Kabbalah that the early Christian Church fathers came up with the idea of the so-called Trinity. This is why Jewish Rabbis hold that one should only study Kabbalah after you have been solidly grounded in Torah – having at least forty years Torah study behind you.

Even though I touched on the subject of Jewish Kabbalah before, when I discussed the image of Elohim as it is found throughout the Scriptures, from Genesis 1: 26 where we were created in the image of Elohim, namely Yahshua as witnessed in Colossians 1: 15, to Deuteronomy 33: 27⁸ where we read about the nature of Elohim, and then on to Ephesians 6 where Rav Shaul describes the full armor of Elohim to protect the image of Elohim in which we were created from the schemes of the devil, we will for this study concentrate mainly on the meaning of the word, namely to receive. However, before so doing, let's review the lesson regarding the full armor of Elohim in Ephesians 6: 11 – 19. Starting at the top with the head, we protect our minds from Satan's accusations by putting on the Helmet of Salvation – meaning faith in the salvation of YHVH namely Yahshua (verse 17). According to Revelation 12: 10 Satan accuses us day and night. The breastplate of righteousness mentioned in verse 14 protects us from Satan's tactic of pride and temptation; we put the Breastplate of Righteousness on by doing righteous deeds, such as observing Elohim's weekly and annual Sabbaths, eating only kosher food, but also by caring for the poor amongst our own families and brethren. We gird our loins with the belt of Truth by studying and obeying Torah. The belt of truth also discussed in verse 14, protects us against Satan's tactic of deception. If we know Torah, Satan and his agents will not be able to deceive us so easily, as Yahshua showed when He overcame Satan's temptation in Matthew 4: 10, by quoting from Torah saying: ***"Begone, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP YHVH YOUR ELOHIM, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"*** In addition it will make us free from the false doctrines of the religions of the world, as Yahshua so aptly told those Jews who came to believe in Him in John 8: 32, saying: ***"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*** Finally we put on the shoes of peace against Satan's tactic of oppression as Rav Shaul put it in verse 15 of Ephesians 6: saying: ***'And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.'*** Shalom means more than peace, it also means to be united, whole or complete and to be at peace. The shoes correspond to the feet which represents Kingdom. During the 1000 year rule of Yahshua we will have complete peace. The gospel of the coming kingdom of Elohim gives us peace, knowing that all the evil of the present age will come to an end.

Back to the true meaning of the word *'Kabbalah'*: This past Pentecost was according to our Jewish Brothers the 3,326th anniversary of the day on which YHVH transmitted His Torah to us, by the hand of Moses. The Torah given to the entire Israelite nation was a gift from YHVH to His people as our precious inheritance. If since YHVH our Elohim is our Almighty Father and Creator we as Israelites received (Kabbalah) His Torah without question. The Jewish sages hold that although YHVH wanted to give His Torah teachings to the entire world, the other nations of the world simply would not

⁸ Deuteronomy 33: 27, ***"The eternal Elohim is a dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and He drove out the enemies from before you, and said, 'Destroy!'"***

accept His gift. It is for this reason that we read from Deuteronomy 4: 1 – 7, in this way: ***“And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which YHVH, the Elohim of your fathers, is giving you. (2) You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of YHVH your Elohim which I command you. (3) Your eyes have seen what YHVH has done in the case of Baal-peor, for all the men who followed Baal-peor, YHVH your Elohim has destroyed them from among you. (4) But you who held fast to YHVH your Elohim are alive today, every one of you. (5) See I have taught you statutes and judgments just as YHVH my Elohim commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. (6) So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of these peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ (7) For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is YHVH our Elohim whenever we call on Him?”*”**

When Elohim revealed His Torah and gave it to the nation of Israel, He also revealed it to all the nations. According to the Jewish sages, he went to the children of Esau first. When He asked them if they wish to accept the Torah, they said to Him, ‘What is written in it?’ Elohim answered, “Do not murder.” So they answered saying: ‘Master of the universe, the essence of our father was to murder, as it’s written: “the hands are the hands of Esau” (in Genesis 27: 22), and he was promised by his father Isaac in Genesis 27: 40, saying: “By your sword you shall live!” So they would not accept Torah. Elohim then went to the children of Ammon and Moab. He said to them: ‘Do you wish to accept the Torah?’ They too asked: “What is written in it?” Elohim answered: “Do not commit sexual immorality.” They responded: ‘Master of the universe, our very existence is because of incestuous relations!’ These two nations are descended from the daughters of Lot, also happened to have been fathered by Lot himself. So they would not accept the Torah. Elohim next went to the children of Ishmael. He said to them: “Do you wish to accept the Torah?” They too asked: ‘What is written in it?’ Elohim Answered: “Do not steal.” They responded: ‘Master of the universe, the essence of our father was to be a bandit (in Genesis 16: 12), as it’s written, ‘and he will be a man of the wild; his hand will be in everything’ So they too would not accept the Torah.

When I started working years ago, I was appointed as procedural auditor because of my field of study, but also audited monthly income and financial statements of various concerns, which included performing stock taking, as well as counting damaged bank notes and signing the same off, before it was destroyed in a furnace. My work at the time, took me from doing audits and stock taking in liquor stores, checking income and expenditure in theaters, art galleries, golf clubs and holiday resorts to checking fairly difficult financial calculations to determine whether pension fund payouts were computed correctly. As auditors, our conduct had to be exemplary and we were expected to be law abiding citizens. The reason why I mention this is, at the time one of my colleagues, a fellow auditor asked me after one of our audits, saying: “How, do you know right from wrong, Jim?” My answer was immediate and unwavering when knowing that he was a Christian, I said to Him: ‘It is simple – keep the Ten Commandments; that is how you will know what is right.’ I recall how as a Roman Catholic, it was not easy for him to grasp. He wanted to insert a number of why’s to which I replied: “Because G-d said so.” I remember this clearly; even though it happened many years ago.

When Elohim first transmitted the Torah to us through Moses, the nation of Israel accepted it willingly. But, since the house of Israel were taken captive by the Assyrians during the years 721 – 718 BCE, we have lost our identity and believe that we are simply Gentiles. Many Israelites have therefore become like Gentiles who always want to know the reason for keeping Torah, before they are prepared to do it. This is not a problem with our Jewish Brothers, since if you should ask them

why they obey certain commandments, they will simply reply, *‘because HaShem said so!’* So you see – it is all a matter of attitude. Ask yourself, do you accept things because it is in the Scriptures, or do you need lengthy explanations as to why you should do it! As a potential son or daughter of Elohim, we from the lost ten tribes, need a paradigm shift in our thinking – a change of mind; we need to become like our Jewish brother, else we will always look for loopholes in order not to obey Torah fully. The point is, as Israelites we originally like our Jewish Brothers had no objections to keeping all of Torah – our United response at that time was: *‘Na’aseh v’nishma’* which is the transliterated Hebrew for: *‘We will do and we will listen’* as per Exodus 24: 7. When the Creator of the universes comes knocking at your door to give you a gift, do you need to make inquiries as to what it is before deciding to accept it; to consider whether it is good. It is similar to when you purchase a new motor car. Do you check the owner’s manual before driving off, or do you first familiarize yourself with what is required to make sure your new motor car run optimally?

Even though I am an Israelite, I also have Jewish blood running through my veins, but so do many of those whom Elohim has called at this time. I do not know if this has bearing on how we act in response to our faith in Elohim. I have found that some, whom YHVH calls out of the world, sometimes find it very difficult to accept certain Torah commands. One such command being not to cook or eat meat and milk products together. The reason for having a problem with it is because the commentaries in some Christian Bibles gave the ridiculous reason that it was necessary for Elohim to introduce this command for not so doing, because of a Canaanite fertility rite, which does not appear anywhere in the Scriptures. In addition now during the last century Medical doctors discovered that eating meat and milk together result in cholesterol problems for their patients. Others do not want to wear head coverings during worship services and prayer, because they do not believe that Yahshua has already made us priests in this life, and as priests we wear head coverings as witnessed in Exodus 28: 40 & 29: 9 – despite two witnesses; one in first Peter 2: 9 and one in Revelation 1: 5 & 6. We need to remember that YHVH our Elohim does nothing without a very good reason, and we need not question Him for doing so! But, it does not really matter, since after we accept Elohim’s call to return (or turn) to His way, we are given a portion of the Set-apart Spirit at immersion in Yahshua’s name, which enables us to start obeying His Torah from the heart.

When Elohim wanted to share His Torah with the world, we were the only ones willing to accept it. But accepting the Torah is not enough. We need to transmit it as well. When Moses received the Torah at Mount Sinai, he transmitted it to the nation of Israel, but later also to Joshua his student. The transmission of Torah from Rabbi to Talmid (or teacher to disciple or student) started by Moses and Joshua; and was continued by Yahshua and his disciples, as it did with Yochanan the Immerser and his disciples before Yahshua. This was then also the commission he gave us His modern day disciples in Matthew 28: 18 – 20. In explaining this to His disciples in a parable in Luke 6: 39 & 40, saying: ***“A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit? (40) A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.”*** It took Messiah’s disciples three and a half years with Him teaching them for 7 days a week, whilst they walked and lived with Him, from the time He first called them, until the night before His impalement, during which they partook of his last Passover before His death, resurrection and ascension to heaven. After His resurrection He spent forty days more with them, during which He also opened the Scriptures to their understanding, as witnessed in Luke 24: 44 & 45, as follows: ***‘Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” (45) Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.’***

After a fairly extensive period of training under a Torah teacher who has gone through the same discipleship program before, a disciple becomes like his teacher. The commission that Yahshua gave

His disciples in Matthew 28, specifically includes immersion by a Torah teacher who will be able to teach his own disciples what Yahshua taught His own disciples, when He was on earth. This is in line with what Rav Shaul taught in Ephesians 4: 10 – 15, in this way: ***‘He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things. (11) And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, (12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Messiah; (13) until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of Elohim, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Messiah. (14) As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; (15) but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Messiah.’*** Rav Shaul continues to give us the qualifications of Torah teachers in first Timothy 3: 1 – 7, as follows: ***‘It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. (2) An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, (3) not addicted to wine or pugnacious (confrontational), but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money. (4) He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (5) (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the congregation of Elohim?); (6) and not a new convert, lest he become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. (7) And he must have a good reputation with those outside the congregation, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.’*** Both Rav Kepha and Rav Yaa’cov had something to add to Rav Shaul’s teachings.

Rav Kepha wrote in first Peter 5: 1 – 8, saying: ***‘Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Messiah, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, (2) shepherd the flock of Elohim among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of Elohim; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; (3) nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. (4) And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. (5) You younger men, likewise be subject to your elders, and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for ELOHIM IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE. (6) Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of Elohim, that He may exalt you at the proper time, (7) casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you. (8) Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.’*** Rav Yaa’cov simply warned in James 3: 1, saying: ***‘Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment.’*** To this end Messiah also taught in Matthew 24: 44 – 47, saying: ***“For this reason you be ready too; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not think He will. (45) Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? (46) Blessed is that 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.”***

So the Torah is about kabbalah and Mesorah – it is about receiving and transmitting. In other words, it’s not enough for any of us to just accept this gift only for ourselves; we have to also pass it on to our children and encourage them to accept it as well. However, we only have our children for a period of eighteen years, during which time we are supposed to teach them as their parents. If we did so whilst our children were in our care, we have done our duty. However, once our children left home to start a family of their own, we should refrain from trying to teach them, especially if they elected not to walk in the way we taught them. They will then be responsible to train their own children and our interference should be limited to being examples to them and their children only.

Torah is about what we do, and nothing says more to our children and grandchildren than our actions. How serious do we take our relationship with YHVH and His Torah? Do we do it half-heartedly, or with all our heart, soul and might? We from the lost ten tribes are more responsible to teach the new believers whom YHVH is still busy calling at this time. We have Messiah's own example in this regard, when someone said to Him in Matthew 12: 47: ***"Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You."*** Yahshua answered the one who was telling Him in verses 48 – 50 saying: ***"Who is My mother and who are My brothers?"*** (49) ***And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Behold, My mother and My brothers! (50) For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother."***

If the people who come to us to be taught understand that they have to remain with their teacher until He is happy to let them go on their own, to teach their own disciples, they will certainly be on par with their teacher. At that time they themselves will be able to teach new believers whom YHVH is calling from the religions of the world, but more specifically from Christianity. That is essentially how the congregation of Elohim will be perpetuated until Messiah's return. If however, these students leave on their own accord, they sever the relationship with their teacher before they are fully trained and should not be allowed to teach others since they could only lead such new believers astray. It was for this reason that Yahshua said in the second part of Luke 18: 8, saying: ***"However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth."*** We who are called out of the world by YHVH at this time should make sure that when Yahshua returns one day He will find faith on earth, by sticking to teachers who teach the things Yahshua taught His disciples whilst He was on earth. Eventually after a number of years YHVH Himself will give us the opportunity to teach our own students, when we are fully trained, even if it will be during His coming kingdom, where we are aiming to become kings and priests under Yahshua our Messiah.

We conclude with this prayer: Almighty Father our Elohim may we all merit to be included on the great list of transmission (Mesorah) that You Yourself keep. May it say that each one of us in our generation, and all the generations to follow receive Torah from those who came before us, and in turn transmit it to those who comes after us. Amein and Amein!

Chapter 5: What we need to know about the Kingdom of Elohim.

More than a billion people have at this time been taught that the ‘*gospel*’ is the account of Messiah’s life, birth, death, resurrection and ascension to heaven. The reason for this major misunderstanding is as a result of how Christianity interpreted first Corinthians 15: 1 – 4 where Rav Shaul wrote: **‘Now I make known to you brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, (2) by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. (3) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Messiah died for our sins according to the Scriptures, (4) and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.’** However, is this the full meaning of the gospel that Messiah preached, whilst He was on earth?

Messiah’s gospel includes more than merely the account of His life and death that leads to our salvation, it also includes what salvation truly means and how Elohim is planning to save the human race from all our present problems, but also about our glorious future in the coming Kingdom of Elohim on earth. To commence with let’s consider the gospel message that Messiah Himself proclaimed in Mark 1: 14 & 15, in this way: **‘And after Yochanan (the Immerser) 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 our Messiah said the gospel of Elohim is the good news about the coming Kingdom of Elohim, and that is the gospel we are to believe in! Yahshua further in teaching His disciples the prayer to model their prayers after in part of His sermon on the mount in Matthew 6: 9 & 10, said: **“Pray, then, is 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.”** This tells us that Elohim’s Kingdom is currently in heaven, where YHVH and the angels reside, but that it will come to earth and will eventually include the entire universe.

We need to understand that Satan has presently deceived most people who claim to believe in G-d, to believe in a different gospel, to the one Messiah and His disciples proclaimed whilst they were on earth. He is at this time the ruler of the earth and does not want human beings to know that Yahshua our Messiah is eventually coming to rule the earth from Jerusalem. To this end He also keeps most people from getting to know the true gospel as Yahshua told His disciples in Matthew 13: 11, 12 and the first part of verse 19, saying: **“To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. (12) For whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. (19) When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and it does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart.”** Rav Shaul in agreement with what Yahshua taught His other disciples explained this in 2 Corinthians 4: 3 & 4, saying: **‘And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing (at this time), (4) 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 glory of Messiah, who is the image of Elohim.’**

Notice that I added ‘at this time’ after the word perishing. The reason for so doing is that even though those who are blinded to the true gospel will die without knowing it at this time, they will one day after the thousand year rule of Messiah be resurrected during the second resurrection as described in Revelation 20: 12⁹, when the books of the Scriptures will be opened to their minds in a similar way that Yahshua opened the minds of His disciples after His resurrection in Luke 24: 44 &

⁹ Revelation 20: 12, **‘And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books (of the Scriptures) 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.’**

45¹⁰. We read about this time from Isaiah 25: 7 – 9, in this way: ***‘And on this mountain (meaning in Elohim’s government) 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 (this tells us when this will happen – and as confirmed in Revelation 20: 14, we see that it will only occur after those resurrected during the second resurrection, will have made an informed decision as to whether they want to follow the way of Elohim, or not. Those who at that time decide against Elohim’s way, will not be changed into spiritual children of Elohim, and will be burnt up as confirmed in verse 15 and also in Malachi 4: 1¹¹), 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. (9) And it will be said in that day, ‘Behold, this is our Elohim for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is YHVH for whom we have waited; let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation (Yahshua).’***”It will be after the second resurrection that people who lived throughout the ages will again be given an opportunity to make YHVH King in their lives. They will be resurrected as flesh and blood human beings and will be given a period of a hundred years to follow the way of Elohim, as Isaiah also witnessed about the time beyond the millennium in Isaiah 65: 17 – 20, saying: ***‘For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. (18) But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing, and her people for gladness. (19) I will also rejoice in Jerusalem, and be glad in My people; and there will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the sound of crying. (20) 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.’***

Yahshua spoke about the time during the second resurrection, when all those who lived in the past and at this time, without ever knowing the truth will be resurrected, together with those who died knowing the truth, but who rejected it in the past. However, these will only be resurrected, to be condemned with the ones who will reject it after learning the truth during the Great White Throne judgment. We read Yahshua’s words in this regard from Matthew 11: 21 – 24, saying: ***“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Betsaida! 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. (23) 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.”*** We know that Tyre and Sidon were gentile cities on the Mediterranean coast. Even though Tyre was destroyed many years ago in accordance with the prophecy in Ezekiel 26, Sidon still exists. We are also aware that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed in the days of Abraham and Lot. However, all these people will be resurrected to be given the opportunity to bow the knee before Yahshua the Messiah as King David testified in Psalm 22: 27 – 29, saying: ***‘All The ends of the earth will remember and turn to YHVH, and all the families of the nations will worship before Thee. (28) For the kingdom is (YHVH)’s, and He rules over the nations. (29) All the prosperous of the earth will eat and worship. All those who go down to the dust will bow before Him, even he who cannot keep his soul alive.’***

¹⁰ Luke 24: 44 & 45, ***‘Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.’***

¹¹ Malachi 4: 1, ***“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.”***

Satan has in fact deceived the whole world to believe a false gospel about the life and death of Yahshua (the one the churches of the world call J*e*s*u*s*), and has through His agents (Babylon the Great) deceived people to reject Elohim's true Sabbath for Sunday, and His true annual Feast Days for Easter and Xmas with all their pagan paraphernalia, such as Xmas trees, Easter eggs and hot cross buns, etc. Satan not only deceived the churches about the only name by which we must be saved, namely Yahshua The Messiah as Rav Kepha said in Acts 4: 11 & 12¹² and made sure that it was changed to J*e*s*u*s* the C*h*r*i*s*t*, to prevent most to be saved at this time. Rav Shaul wrote about the beginning of this deception in Galatians 1: 6 – 8, saying: ***'I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Messiah, for a different gospel; (7) which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Messiah. (8) But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.'***

The gospel of Messiah, is the gospel which He preached after His immersion and temptation by Satan in the wilderness, as also recorded in Matthew 4: 17, as follows: ***'From that time Yahshua began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."'*** Luke continues telling us about Messiah's gospel in Luke 8: 1, saying: ***'And it came about soon afterwards, that He began going about from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of Elohim; and the twelve were with Him.'*** Later as recorded in Matthew 10: 5 – 8, Yahshua send out His disciples to preach the same gospel, saying to them: ***"Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; (6) but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (7) And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'*** (8) ***Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons; freely you received, freely give.'*** Rav Shaul who only later became an apostle sent out by Yahshua to proclaim the gospel, describes his own preaching in Ephesus in Acts 19: 8, saying: ***'And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of Elohim.'*** But what is the Kingdom of Elohim? Firstly, let's find a dictionary definition of what a Kingdom entails. The Webster's dictionary defines a kingdom as: The power or authority of a king; the territory or country subject to the king; and the subjects of the king living in the territory or country ruled over by the king, by means of the laws and bylaws applicable in that territory. These definitions are standard in political science, which identifies the four characteristics of a kingdom: It must have a ruler, territory, subjects and laws. We see from the following Scriptural references that this is also true for the coming Kingdom of Elohim, as follows:

- Matthew 6: 10, ***'Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.'***
- Luke 1: 26 – 33, ***'Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from Elohim to the city in Galilee, called Nazareth, (27) to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Yoseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Miriam (28) And coming in, he said to her, "Hail, favored one! YHVH is with you." (29) But she was greatly troubled at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might be. (30) And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Miriam; for you have found favor with Elohim. (31) And behold you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Yahshua. (32) He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and YHVH Elohim will give Him the throne of His father David; (33) and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end.'***

¹² 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 under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."***

- Revelation 11: 15, *'And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Master, and of His Messiah; and He will reign forever and ever."'*
- Revelation 19: 11 – 16, *'And I saw heaven opened: and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. (12) 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 one knows except Himself. (13) And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of Elohim. (14) And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. (15) 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. (16) And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND MASTER OF MASTERS."*

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The phrase 'Kingdom of Elohim' clearly identifies the Ruler and a number of Scriptures defines Messiah's role as the One administering the Kingdom. The subjects of the Kingdom of Elohim are mentioned in the following Scriptures:

- Isaiah 2: 2 – 4, *'Now it will come about that in the last days, the mountain (government) 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.'*
- Jeremiah 3: 17, *"At that time they shall call Jerusalem 'The Throne of YHVH,' and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of YHVH; nor shall they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart."*
- Daniel 7: 13 & 14, *"I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of days and was presented before Him. (14) And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed,"*

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We see further that the laws applicable in Elohim's Kingdom, will be as the author of the book of Hebrews wrote in Hebrews 8: 7 – 12, (where he quoted from Jeremiah 31: 31 – 34), saying: *'For if the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. (8) For finding fault with them (not the covenant), He says, "BEHOLD DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS YHVH, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH; (meaning He will remarry both houses again as He did with their ancient forefathers at Mount Sinai) (9) NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS YHVH. (10) FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS YHVH: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM UPON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR ELOHIM, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. (11) AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW YHVH,' FOR ALL*

SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. (12) FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE." The territory that Yahshua will reign over as King of Kings and Master of Masters will include the whole earth, as illustrated by Daniel in Daniel 2: 34 & 35, saying: **"You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statute (which king Nebuchadnezzar dreamt about) on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them. (35) Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."**

We see that once Elohim's rule is established over all the nations of the earth, the new world capital will be Jerusalem, as recorded in Micah 4: 2, in this way: **'And many nations will come and say, "Come ad let us go up to the mountain of YHVH and to the house of the Elohim of Jacob, that He may teach us about His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion will go forth the law, even the word of YHVH from Jerusalem.'**" This clearly shows that Elohim's government will be administered from Jerusalem and as we've seen from Isaiah 2: 1 – 4 (quoted before) the armies of the world will disappear and their arms will be transformed into farming implements. We learn further from Isaiah 11: 6 – 9, that the animal kingdom will also experience major changes during Messiah's rule, as follows: **'And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them. (7) Also the cow and the bear will graze; their young will lie down together; and the lion will eat straw like the ox. (8) And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. (9) They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of YHVH as the waters cover the sea.'** In fact we see from Isaiah 35: 1 – 10 how far Elohim's healing will extend, in this way: **'The wilderness and the desert will be glad, and the Arabah will rejoice and blossom; like the crocus. (2) It will blossom profusely and rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of YHVH, the majesty of our Elohim. (3) Encourage the exhausted and strengthen the feeble. (4) Say to those with anxious heart, "Take courage, fear not. Behold, your Elohim will come with vengeance; the recompense of Elohim will come. But He will save you." (5) Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. (6) Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the Arabah. (7) And the scorched land will become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of Jackals, its resting place, grass becomes reeds and rushes. (8) And a highway will be there, a roadway, and it will be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, but it will be for him who walks that way, and fools will not wander on it. (9) No lion will be there, nor will any vicious beast go up on it; these will not be found there. But the redeemed will walk there, (10) and the ransomed of YHVH will return, and come with joyful shouting to Zion, with everlasting joy upon their heads. They will find gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.'**

We read additionally from Acts 3: 19 – 21, where Rav Kepha tells us what is included in the restoration process that will be brought about by Messiah's return, as follows: **"Repent therefore and return (only those who once knew Torah are able to return to obeying it), 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 holy prophets from ancient time."** Even though this all sounds absolutely wonderful, it will only last for one thousand years, as we read from Revelation 20: 4 – 6, as follows: **'And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw souls of those who had been beheaded**

because of the testimony of Yahshua and because of the word of Elohim, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Messiah for a thousand years. (5) The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. (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 Elohim, and of Messiah and will reign with Him for a thousand years. During the thousand year rule of Messiah and His saints, Satan will be bound for a thousand years as witnessed in Revelation 20: 1 – 3, in this way: ***‘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.’***

However, Elohim’s Kingdom on earth will never end, as Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 9: 7, saying: ***‘There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forever more. The zeal of YHVH of hosts will accomplish this.’*** But what are we to do at this time, whilst waiting for our Master to return? Obviously when Yahshua first preached the gospel of the kingdom, He commanded that we believe in the gospel. If we truly believe what He said two thousand years ago and we want to make it into His coming kingdom, we need to believe in the reality of that future Kingdom, like Abraham did, and make YHVH King in our lives, by obeying His Torah fully, right now. We also need to proclaim the gospel about the coming kingdom of Elohim as a witness into the entire world, and then the end shall come, as Yahshua prophesied in Matthew 24: 14. In addition we need to show the world by our example how to live and act under Messiah’s rulership, at this time as well as after His return. This is essentially what Rav Shaul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5: 17 – 21, saying: ***‘Therefore if any man is in Messiah, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (18) Now all these things are from Elohim, who reconciled us to Himself through Messiah, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, (19) namely that Elohim was in Messiah reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. (20) Therefore, we are ambassadors for Messiah, as though Elohim were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Messiah, be reconciled to Elohim. (21) He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of Elohim in Him.’*** It is as Yahshua taught in Matthew 6: 33, saying: ***“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things will be added to you.”*** Think about It!

Chapter 6: Does the thought of death make you nervous?

Even though most of us do not want to contemplate the thought of death, it is by far more certain than life. It is estimated that a newly conceived baby has a one in five chance of never being born. Then again there is no chance that once a baby is born, that he or she will not eventually die. Yes, it is for that reason that death is not a pleasant subject to be talking about and why so many are uninformed about it. However, refusing to think or talk about death will not let it go away.

Most of us are aware of the saying: *'The only sure thing in life is death and taxes'* attributed to Benjamin Franklin a US statesman who helped to draft the US Constitution. Yes, the governments of most nations levy taxes on their citizens who earn incomes from whatever economic activity they are involved in. Everything we earn and use are taxed; from our personal income, consumable goods, airline tickets, and fuel and even accommodations. Even though the taxes we are required to pay may vary, death does not change. Sooner or later all of us must face our own mortality. The way we die might not always be the same, but the end result will always be the same. Death happens to all human beings, it does not matter from which nationality, religious affiliation, or financial background they are, and no one is exempt. In addition, death can happen at any age and in many different ways. When death comes early in a person's life, his/her hopes and dreams come to a sudden end. Whereas those who are very ill or old and fragile might welcome death, the death of a young person is devastating. Death is an enemy and most people fight it with a soldier's forcefulness. What should our reactions be when a death occurs? Is it wrong to be relieved when someone who suffered for an extended period of time dies? Is it wrong to be angry when someone's life comes to a sudden end? Should we be totally destroyed at the death of a loved one? May we mourn openly and unapologetically, or should we cry behind closed doors, not showing any grief in public? And for what period are we allowed to mourn?

We will try to answer most of these questions, but also get to understand a bit more about death. What defines death or more specifically when does death occur? Only in this modern age in which we live has there been a need for such a question. Does death occur when one stops breathing, when the heart stops to function or when all brain activity comes to an end? Jewish (Halachic) authorities do not agree on whether a person who has no brain and breathing functions, but whose heart and other organs are functioning, is considered dead or alive. Halachic consequences of this debate are endless, among them implications of organ donations. Our bodies can be kept functioning artificially for an extended period of time by heart and lung life support systems, long after the time of potential recovery and consciousness. In a number of cases pregnant mothers have been kept alive for a number of weeks, to allow their babies to develop fully before they are born. This also results in endless debates as to the medical and religious ethics of such procedures, without ever answering everyone's questions satisfactorily.

But what happens at death? Let's turn to Elohim's handbook for us (namely the Scriptures), to find a suitable answer to this question. The first time the word death is mentioned in the Scriptures, is after YHWH created man in His image and likeness as in Genesis 2: 15 – 17, as follows: ***'Then YHWH Elohim took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. (16) And YHWH Elohim commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; (17) but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die."*** Part of the instruction or knowledge that Elohim gave Adam and Eve was the curse of death, provided they obey His teachings and do not take of what He prohibits them to take. However as the account of Adam and Eve unfolds, we see that even though Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden tree, they did not die – at least not immediately. Because YHWH said ***'in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die'***, and one day to Him is a thousand years (as recorded in Psalm 90: 4 and 2 Peter 3: 8), despite the fact that Abel was murdered by Cain before his death, true

to Elohim's word in Genesis 5: 5, ***'(So) all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.'*** Death entered the world because of Adam's disobedience to YHVH, as is stated plainly in Romans 5: 12, in this way: ***'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.'***

Death came upon all the offspring of Adam, because of his actions at the beginning of human life on earth. However, because of Elohim's plan of salvation for all mankind, together with the guarantee of death, came an even greater promise of the opportunity of eternal life, as Rav Shaul aptly wrote in Romans 6: 23, saying: ***'For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of Elohim is eternal life in Messiah Yahshua our Master.'*** Even so, there remains one proviso, as we read from John 3: 36, in this way: ***"He who believes in the Son has eternal life: but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of Elohim abides on him."*** It is as we read from Habakkuk 2: 4, ***"Behold, as for the proud one, his soul is not right within him; but the righteous will live by his faith."*** Adam was responsible for his own, as well as the death of all mankind, but Satan caused him to make the wrong decision. Death is one of Satan's weapons against mankind, to try and frustrate Elohim's purpose for us. Satan inspires mankind to excessively desire to have what do not belong to them, and to threaten and even kill to obtain what they want. He uses mankind's emotions of hatred, fear and jealousy to make the lives of others very difficult. Satan absolutely enjoys seeing people in the pain that eventually causes death.

Life comes to an end in three different ways, namely naturally, accidentally and intentionally. When a person dies of natural causes, it basically means that he or she died from a heart attack or stroke, or from a prolonged illness like cancer or other life threatening diseases. Accidental death is the least expected, and can happen at any age, where a person is involved in an accident resulting in his/her immediate death or after a period in a hospital. Intentional deaths include murder, suicide, and loss of life on the battlefield in a war. Somehow, people frequently end up blaming Elohim for not stopping someone's death. But mankind made from the dust of the ground is in no way different to animals, as Solomon explained in Ecclesiastes 3: 19 & 20, in this way: ***'For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of beasts is the same. As one dies so dies the other; indeed, they all have the same breath and there is no advantage for a man over beast, for all is vanity. (20) All go to the same place. All came from the dust and all return to the dust.'*** Yes, man is no different from plants and animals. Each one of us should make preparations for our deaths. We are able to control our affairs whilst we are alive, and should make it easier for our loved ones when we die. A first step that you might want to take is to face the reality of your own mortality. When we die, the greatest value is not the money that your spouse and children inherit, but how content you were in your life. Rav Shaul put it like this in first Timothy 6: 6 & 7, saying: ***'But Godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment. (7) For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.'***

The Scriptures are full of examples where our fathers in the faith, prepared for death. They bought burial grounds for their families and themselves. They also prepared in other ways, as witnessed in the first part Proverbs 13: 22, as follows: ***'A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children.'*** Even though we are not all able to leave our children with sizable inheritances, we should all make sure that there are enough funds available to pay for our burial costs, etc., so that we do not leave our families with huge amounts of debt. We should also ensure that we have the necessary wills so as to ensure that our families get what is rightfully theirs. Not having a will in some countries could result in the government of the day walking away with most of what you accumulated during your lives. In spite of advances in medicine and technology, the life span of most people is as mentioned in the first part of Psalm 90: 10, in this way: ***'As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, or if due to strength, eighty years.'*** When death occurs, we need to understand that grief is natural, and should therefore be allowed to express the same. Sorrow is a

personal thing and there is nothing wrong with feeling and expressing it. Yes a certain amount of sorrow is a good thing and most people need time to express their feelings. We also need to realize that friends who lost loved ones may need to talk about their loss. We need to be understanding and sympathetic with those who recently lost loved ones – time will eventually heal.

However there is hope for those of us who are waiting for Messiah's return as witnessed in Hebrews 9: 27 & 28, in this way: ***'And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, (28) so Messiah also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for Salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him*** (to come and rule us from Jerusalem).' At death the body ceases to function and the life (or soul) of the person comes to an end. The person's body is buried and over time returns to the dust from which we were all made. However, since we know that man consist of body, soul (or life) and spirit, what happens to that spirit? The spirit in man consists mainly of the breath of life given to the person at birth, but also of the brain-power, memory and the character that each person develops over the duration of their lifetimes. Even though both the spirits (or memories and characters) of believers and unbelievers go back to the father at death as witnessed in Ecclesiastes 12: 7¹³, two different scenarios follow for them: If the person dies without believing in the coming kingdom of Elohim, and are not immersed into Yahshua the Messiah's saving name, for the forgiveness of their sins and to receive a portion of Elohim's Set-apart Spirit at the laying on of the hands by an elder of the congregation, such a person will only be raised in the second resurrection, to live again as a flesh and blood human being. This will be the time during which the books of the Scriptures will be opened to their understanding (as per Revelation 20: 12, in this way: ***"And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books (meaning the Scriptures) were opened (to their understanding); 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."*** A second more explanatory witness comes from Isaiah 25: 7 – 9, as follows: ***'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. (9) And it will be said in that day, 'Behold, this is our Elohim for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is YHVH for whom we have waited; let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.'"***

These people will be given a period of time during which they will be able to make an informed decision (based on understanding the Scriptures correctly), as to whether they want to follow the way of Elohim or not as witnessed in Isaiah 65: 17 – 20, in this way: ***'For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. (18) But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing, and her people for gladness. (19) I will also rejoice in Jerusalem, and be glad in My people; and there will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the sound of crying. (20) No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not lived 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.'*** If they ultimately accept Messiah as their Passover, they will also be changed into spiritual children of Elohim. This will be when everybody who ever lived will live again. They will rise to a life much better than the one they have known in the past, since Satan will be out of the way, and will not be able to influence anybody any longer.

¹³ Ecclesiastes 12: 7, ***'Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to Elohim who gave it.'***

Those believers who have been called during this life to become first fruits (as per James 1: 18¹⁴), who accepted Yahshua the Messiah as their personal Passover, and were suitably immersed in His saving name, will if they qualify by overcoming those sins which so beset us in this life, be resurrected at Messiah's return on the Feast of Trumpets one year in the near future. They will become spiritual children of Elohim to serve as kings and priest under Messiah during His millennial rule and beyond, as witnessed in first Corinthians 15: 50 - 52, in this way: ***'Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of Elohim; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (51) Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep (be dead), but we shall all be changed, (52) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we (who are still alive at that time) shall be changed (from flesh and blood human beings to Spiritual children of Elohim; essentially meaning that our physical lives will also come to an end when we are changed).'*** We find a second witness to both resurrections in Revelation 20: 4 – 6, as follows: ***'And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Yahshua and because of the word of Elohim, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Messiah for a thousand years. (5) The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. (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 Elohim and of Messiah and will reign with Him for a thousand years.'***

But we need to understand that only YHVH Elohim has immortality! Even though the spirits of all men returns to the Father at death, they are similar to recordings of music, simply recordings of the memories and characters of the people who died. Such spirits are not conscience of anything, as we read from Ecclesiastes 9: 5, in this way: ***'For the living know they will die; but the dead do not know anything, nor have they any longer a reward, for their memory is forgotten.'*** However, the spirits of those who died in Messiah will be perfected whilst they are with Elohim, as witnessed in Hebrews 12: 23, as follows: ***'To the general assembly and congregation of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to Elohim the judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect.'*** The end result will be when Messiah returns as Rav Shaul wrote to the Thessalonians in first Thessalonians 5: 23, saying: ***'Now may the Elohim of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete without blame at the coming of our Master Yahshua Messiah.'*** This tells us as believers that when Yahshua returns one day, He will bring back our perfected spirits from heaven and resurrect our bodies to eternal life. It is for this very reason that he told the brethren in Thessalonica in first Thessalonians 4: 13 - 18, saying: ***'But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep (meaning those who died), 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 the Master, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the 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 an 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 (on earth, where He will have established the Kingdom of Elohim). (18) Therefore comfort one another with these words.'***

¹⁴ 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.'***

However, those who ultimately refuse to accept Yahshua Messiah as their savior and to live the way of Elohim, during the period of hundred years, as well as those who continue to live in sin after coming to the knowledge of the truth in this life, will simply be burnt to ashes as witnessed in Revelation 20: 15, in this way: ***'And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.'*** A second witness to this is recorded in Malachi 4: 1, as follows: ***"For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evil doer 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."*** A third more descriptive witness about those who are irredeemable after the Great White Throne judgment or after being given the truth at this time comes from Isaiah 26: 14, in this way: ***'The dead will not live, the departed spirits will not rise; therefore Thou hast punished and destroyed them, and Thou hast wiped out all remembrance of them.'*** This is essentially talking about the second death described in Revelation 20: 14, as follows: ***'And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.'*** Note that the lake of fire is not a place where the souls of men are tormented for ever and ever – no it is the second death! Those who have been given the Set-apart Spirit after immersion in the name of Yahshua the Messiah and the laying on of hands (as per Acts 8: 12 – 17¹⁵) have been given the Spirit in our hearts as a down payment of eternal life (as per 2 Corinthians 1: 22¹⁶) and as a result, we will be resurrected at Messiah's return, provided they remain faithful, as is confirmed in Romans 8: 11, as follows: ***'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 (eternal) life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.'*** In the end mankind's greatest enemy will cease to exist as witnessed in Isaiah 25: 8 (quoted earlier) and Revelation 21: 4, in this way: ***"And He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."*** Death will be no more, and those of mankind who accepted Messiah as their personal Passover, will have eternal life!

We need to look forward to that day like Abraham did, as we read from Hebrews 11: 10, in this way: ***'For he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is Elohim.'*** This is the New Jerusalem as described 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.'*** This is truly the gospel or good news for each and every one of us alive, but also to those who died before. Halleluyah!

¹⁵ Acts 8: 12 – 17, ***'But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of Elohim and the name of Yahshua Messiah they were being immersed, men and women alike. And even Simon himself believed; and after being immersed he continued on with Philip; and as he observed signs and great miracles taking place, he was constantly amazed. Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of Elohim, they sent them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Set-apart Spirit. For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been immersed in the name of the Master Yahshua. Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Set-apart Spirit.'***

¹⁶ 2 Corinthians 1: 22, ***'Who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge (down payment).'***

Chapter 7: Does Scriptural prophecy reveal when Messiah will return?

Messiah warned His disciples a number of times that prophecy is a subject to be handled with great care, since it will be used to deceive many well-meaning people, especially during these last days. When Messiah's disciples questioned Him about the signs that would mark the time of His return, He told them in Luke 21: 8, saying: ***"See to it that you be not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time is at hand; do not go after them.'"*** Even though Yahshua told His followers that they would not know the exact time of His return in Mark 13: 32 & 33¹⁷, He told them the specific signs at His imminent return would be unmistakable. He explained by means of an allegory in Mark 13: 28 & 29, saying: ***"Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. (29) Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door."*** Yahshua told them that similar to when a fig tree begins to bud, a sure sign is that summer is on its way, so will His coming be near, when the things He described in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 happens.

Yahshua gave another sure sign which many religious groups misinterpreted in the recent past, saying in verse 30 of Mark 13: ***"Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place."*** Many has misinterpreted this prophecy to mean some of the generation of people who lived during World War 1 or 2, would still be alive at the time of His return, but He was actually referring to the Jewish race who would remain alive even after His return, as may be seen from the footnote against the word ***'generation'*** in this verse in the New American Standard Bible, which reads: *Or race*. In fact, we see that when Messiah returns one day on Yom Teruah, He is going to save the tents of Judah first as witnessed in Zechariah 12: 7, in this way: ***"YHVH also will save the tents of Judah first in order that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah."*** We see from verses 8 & 9 of Zechariah 12, the timing of this event as follows: ***"In that day YHVH will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like Elohim, like the angel of YHVH before them. (9) And it will come about in that day that I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem."***

When will all these nations come against Jerusalem? We find the answer in Revelation 16: 13 – 16, in this way: ***'And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; (14) for they are spirit of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of Elohim, the Almighty. (15) (Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments (study Torah), lest he walk about naked and men see his shame.')*** (16) ***And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.'*** So it is clear that when Messiah returns He will interact with the house of Judah, and as a result the dead in Him will be resurrected as witnessed in Romans 11: 15, as follows: ***'For if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?'*** Messiah warned that prophecy is a subject to be handled with extreme care (in Matthew 24: 23 – 26), in case we are deceived. Regrettably, many sorrowful events have occurred from Messiah's time onward leading many naïve believers to be ridiculed or even to disbelieve the rest of the Scriptures, by incorrect interpretations of prophecy. During the past 2000 years numerous people have claimed to be prophets, holy teachers or even the Messiah and have deceived many. It is therefore only normal for some to become suspicious about Scriptural prophecies and then go on to

¹⁷ Mark 13: 32 & 33, ***"But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time (Yom Teruah) is."***

avoid all religious topics. Do not be deceived; Scriptural prophecy serves a very important purpose for believers in Messiah.

However, we should avoid the many dangers of becoming so entangled in prophecy that we interpret every interesting event as a sign of the end-times or at the other end of the scale, dismiss every occurrence on the world scene as unimportant. But what is the correct interpretation or view of Scriptural prophecy? Rav Kepha wrote that fulfilled prophecy should serve to strengthen our faith and hope in prophecies yet to be fulfilled, in 2 Peter 1: 19, saying: ***'And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.'*** Rav Kepha compares Scriptural prophecy in this verse to a light that provides us with vision until the ultimate coming of Elohim's Kingdom on earth. It is as Yahshua told His disciples in Matthew 24: 27, saying: ***"For just as the lightning (or sunlight) comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be."*** Even though Elohim gives us a general outline of prophetic events, He does not give specific details of such events. However, as we get closer to the time of Messiah's return, things become a lot clearer, as He also said to Daniel in Daniel 12: 10: ***"Many will be purged, purified and refined; but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand."*** Even so, we need to realize that there is a reliable framework of prophecy, which can become counterproductive if we try and interpret every detail. But as we move towards the end, things have and will become clearer to those who remain close to Elohim.

But what is this framework of prophecy? Including in the prophecies and events leading up to Messiah's return are a number of major conditions that can be confirmed historically. The first condition that Messiah mentioned that only became possible during and after World War II is man's ability to annihilate all life from the earth. This was the first of the conditions that Messiah described that would only be present as the end of the age draws near, as witnessed in Matthew 24: 21 & 22, in this way: ***'For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. (22) And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short.'*** Yahshua told His disciples that a time would come when man's destructive capacity would be so great that all life could be wiped out, if He does not return in time. This is why the time of tribulation will be so distressing and unequalled in human history. Even though mankind has been waging wars since the beginning of time, he never had the ability, with stones and sticks; bows and arrows; or even canons and automatic rifles to erase all human life from earth, to fulfill this prophecy. But as most of us know, this all changed when the first atom bomb were detonated in 1945. Since then, mankind developed hydrogen bombs and has thousands of nuclear weapons available to destroy all life on earth, a thousand times over. Messiah predicted, that even though mankind was never a good caretaker of the earth, there will come a time before the end, when because mankind will have developed the capacity to totally destroy all life on earth that He will have to come and intervene to save us from ourselves. In fact Messiah also showed Yochanan in Revelation 11: 18 what our world will be like just before His return, as follows: ***"And the nations were enraged, and Thy wrath came, and time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints (faithful believers) and to those who fear Thy name (Jews), the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."***

The second condition that will have to exist before Messiah's return concerns the existence of the modern state of Israel. The survival of the culture and religion of the Jewish people, which witnessed the rise and fall of great empires and civilizations, such as Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome goes against all odds. Even though the Jewish nation has been dispersed throughout the world YHVH has promised that He will one day bring them back to the Promised Land, saying in Isaiah 66: 8, ***"Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a***

nation be brought forth all at once? As soon as Zion travailed (suffered in childbirth), she also brought forth her sons.” This happened in 1948 when the descendants of the ancient kingdom of Judah again came into possession of the Promised Land, which they then called Israel. As prophesied in the books of Joel , Zechariah and elsewhere in the Tanach a significant number of Jews are once again present in and around Jerusalem, before the second coming of Messiah. The prophet Daniel prophesied about a time when Jews will once again be sacrificing animals before Messiah’s return. In fact Messiah Himself spoke about this in Matthew 24: 15 & 16, saying: ***“Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, (16) then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.”*** The abomination of desolation described in Daniel 8 to 12 talks about the defiling of sacrifices at the Set-apart place in Jerusalem. However, for these prophecies to be fulfilled there will have to be a holy or Set-apart place with an altar, if the temple will not be rebuilt.

It was only since the 1967 Six Day War that Israel took possession of the divided city Jerusalem, but in order to defuse further hostility and tension, the Israeli government decided that the Temple Mount should remain under Muslim control. There have been many attempts since then to try to rebuild the temple, which was destroyed by the Romans about forty years after Messiah’s death. Arabs or Turks governed Jerusalem until after the defeat of the Turks in World War 1. The British ruled the area under mandates from the League of Nations and the United Nations, until 1948 when the state of Israel was established. During those many years the temple Mount was a stronghold of the Muslims and Jews were banned from worshipping anywhere near it. An Islamic place of worship was constructed on the very place where many authorities believe sacrifices were once made. It was therefore impossible for the prophecy of Messiah in Matthew 24 to be fulfilled while the Arabs held control over Jerusalem. However, the newly established nation of Israel regained control over Jerusalem in 1967, which set the scene for this prophecy of Messiah to come to pass. Even so, at this point only a small number of Jews believe it to be their responsibility to rebuild the Temple, and it would ultimately take divine intervention to ensure the actual rebuilding of the temple.

The third condition necessary to exist before Messiah will return, deals with the revival of the Roman Empire, which was prophesied widely in the books of Daniel and Revelation. Daniel interpreted king Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of an enormous image of himself, talking about a number of consecutive kingdoms to appear on the world scene. King Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom was the first of the kingdoms that Daniel saw. This was followed by three additional kingdoms and which we are able to identify by comparing history with Scriptural prophecy as the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greco-Macedonian and Roman empires. When discussing the condition of the fourth and final kingdom, the Roman Empire, Daniel wrote in Daniel 2: 40, saying: ***“Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces.”*** The Roman Empire was definitely more dominant and durable than its predecessors, and its reign remained for many centuries. Daniel continued to reveal some prophetic details about the Roman Empire, saying that the legs and feet of the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, represented the Roman Empire over the duration of its reign. Finally the feet and toes were composed partly of iron and clay, which essentially indicated that it will be as strong as iron, but also as brittle as clay. We read accordingly from verses 41 – 43 of Daniel 2, ***“And in that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay. (42) And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle. (43) And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery.”***

Next Daniel tells us in verse 44 of Daniel 2 saying: ***“And in the days of those kings the Elohim of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.”*** This was obviously a prophecy about the coming kingdom of Elohim, when Messiah will come and rule the world from Jerusalem. This is similar to the prophecy Messiah Himself revealed to Yochanan in Revelation 11: 15 , as follows: ***‘And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Master and His Messiah; and He will reign forever and ever.”’*** However, we are all aware that the Kingdom of Elohim was definitely not established in the time of the ancient Roman Empire. The question is: Was Daniel wrong about when these events will occur? We find the answer in examining other prophecies about this fourth kingdom. Rav Yochanan was given an amazing prophecy by Yahshua our Messiah in the book of Revelation about what will happen in the rest of mankind’s history until Messiah’s return and even after the establishment of the New Jerusalem on earth in Revelation 21. Similar to Daniel, Yochanan was told to write about the events that will lead up to Messiah’s return. We read from Revelation 19 about His return and the overthrow and destruction of the other kingdoms and their armies. We also read about a great false religious leader as well as ‘the beast’ which agrees with the Roman Empire or fourth kingdom described by Daniel as per king Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. Yochanan was given a series of visions in which he saw this mighty empire pictured symbolically, its fall, resurrection and final destruction. So important is the knowledge of this empire to Elohim’s people that the Scriptures deal with it in great detail.

We see the description of the composite beast that Yahshua showed Yochanan in a vision in Revelation 13: 1 & 2, in this way: ***‘And he stood on the sand of the seashore. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.’*** In the following verses of Revelation 13, Yahshua showed Yochanan a symbolic beast which looked as though it were composed of three different animals – a lion, a leopard, and a bear. It included the most powerful parts of the very animals by which Elohim had pictured the Chaldean, the Persian and Grecian empires to Daniel. In other words the beast Yochanan saw represented the characteristics of all these empires in one. When Daniel wrote, about 650 years before Yochanan’s vision, three of the four empires pictured by the four beasts had not yet come to power. But by the time of Yochanan’s vision, all of these world empires, except one, had existed and fallen. Therefore the beast Yochanan saw represented specifically that fourth empire then existing, which had swallowed up all vestiges of the other three, conquering and occupying their former territories. The Roman Empire was the greatest war-making machine the world had ever seen, for it had the strongest part of the ‘lion’, the Head and jaws, it had the massiveness and power of the most powerful part of the ‘bear’, the legs; and it possessed the swiftness, the cunning, and the cruelty of Alexander’s army, symbolized by the body of the ‘leopard’.

The Roman Empire represented by the beast Yochanan saw in Revelation 13, had absorbed and therefore included the three empires before it which were described in Daniel 7. Therefore this beast was seen with all six heads of the first three beasts (including the four heads of the third beast), plus its own. So this beast of Revelation 13 has seven heads. It was the fourth beast Daniel saw, which had ten horns, and the beast Yochanan described had ten horns. Therefore if we allow the Scriptures to interpret the Scriptures, we must conclude that the beast of Revelation 13 is the Roman Empire! Yochanan like Daniel, pictures this beast in the second part of Revelation 13: 4, not as a religious institution, but a powerful government having a tremendous army, as follows: ***‘And they worshipped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?”’*** We see from verse 3 of Revelation 13, that the beast received a deadly wound and the head that was wounded died. However, we also see from verse 3, that the deadly wound healed.

The sprawling Roman Empire was divided for administrative reasons after 330 CE, when there were two legs to the Roman Empire, namely: the Western division with its capital at Rome, and the Eastern division with its capital at Constantinople. The Roman Empire in the west ceased to exist in the fifth century as a result of Germanic invasions. But, Emperor Justinian from the east 'revived' the empire in 554 CE in what historians call the "Imperial Restoration." From that time on, through successive revivals till the time of Napoleon, that empire continued to exist. We see from verse 2 of Revelation 13 that Satan was the motivating force which empowered this beast. The Roman Empire was one of the greatest of the political instruments through which the god of this world, Satan the devil (2nd Corinthians 4: 4), has worked in deceiving and dominating mankind. For that reason Satan himself was represented to Yochanan as having seven heads and ten horns (Revelation 12: 3). And in the near future Satan will once more guide a final revival of the same political system which had its beginnings in the ancient 'Babylon' of Nimrod. After the beast's 'deadly wound' was healed, it was to continue for forty two months. Using the Scriptural day-for-a-year principle, we find that 'forty and two months' equal 1260 days (42 times 30), or 1260 years – the length of time Elohim allowed the 'healed' beast to continue. Thus the beast continued in existence from its restoration in 554 CE to the fall of Napoleon in 1814. After Napoleon's fall, the 'Holy' Roman Empire split up. Each Italian, German, or Netherlands principality became independent. Italy was broken up into twelve separate smaller states. At that time eight of the original ten 'horns' of Revelation 13 – five of the seven 'heads' of Revelation 17 – had arisen and fallen. The beast then went temporarily into a non-existent condition symbolized as the 'bottomless pit'.

The sixth head of the beast of Revelation 17, which is equivalent to the ninth horn of the beast in Revelation 13 pictured as existing in the end time, at which time this prophecy would be understood, was the head which began with Garibaldi in Italy and Bismarck in Germany and culminated in the Mussolini-Hitler dynasty (1870 – 1945 CE). In 1870 – 71, Garibaldi seized Rome and succeeded in uniting all the Italian states into the one nation of Italy. Italy then entered the race for colonies and acquired Libya, Eritrea and Italian Somaliland in Africa. In 1870, also Otto von Bismarck united all Germany and defeated the French in the Franco-Prussian War. At that time the German Empire was re-established. In 1929 Mussolini entered into a concordat or an agreement made by the Papal see with a secular power, offering the protection of the church to political rulers who promise in return to defend the church and to guarantee the authority of her teaching over the people, just as Napoleon did, thus defining the official relationship between Italy and the Vatican state. In 1935 Mussolini attacked and conquered Ethiopia, adding this to Italian Somaliland, Eritrea, Libya and later Albania. He proclaimed his empire a resurrection of the Roman Empire. The king of Italy, Victor Emmanuel III, assumed the title of Emperor, though Mussolini exercised real power. Mussolini then allied himself with Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler. This was the insignificant, short lived ninth horn of the beast of Revelation 13 – the sixth head of the beast of Revelation 17 – the sixth resurrection of the empire since the 'deadly wound' was healed in 554 CE. It is described in verse 8 of Revelation 17 as 'the beast that was, and is not, and yet is'. Italy was so unimportant internationally that as a mighty Roman Empire, it really 'was not' – and yet it was – at least in name. In World War II, this weak, almost insignificant ninth horn or sixth head was defeated and destroyed. The beast dropped for the second time into the 'bottomless pit'. The church-dominated Roman Empire existed for 1260 years as Elohim had prophesied. It ceased to exist with the downfall of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1814 and began to revive again in 1870, but was completely crushed a second time in 1945. But 'there are seven kings' says prophecy, and one 'is not yet come' (Revelation 17: 10). So once more the religious-political system is to revive, arising out of the symbolic 'bottomless pit' to form the seventh head of Revelation 17 or the tenth and Final 'horn' of Revelation 13: 1 & 2 and Daniel 7.

The 'seven heads' of the beast are called seven mountains in Revelation 17: 9. Oddly enough there are seven literal hills on which Rome is built, symbolic of the seven kingdoms or revivals of the

Roman Empire over which the Roman church was to rule. It was on May 9, 1936, that Mussolini acclaimed the rebirth of the fated hills of Rome after fifteen centuries. But the 'mind that had wisdom' is to see beyond the symbol. A Scriptural symbol for a nation or kingdom is called a 'mountain'. So the seven mountains in Revelation 17: 10 represent seven kings. The words 'one is, and the other is not yet come' in Revelation 17: 10 tells us that these kingdoms are clearly successive revivals of the one empire. As prophesied, a great religious authority sat astride each of these revivals from Justinian to Mussolini. It is obvious therefore that the same religious power will dominate the seventh and last resurrection of the Roman Empire yet to come. In Revelation 17: 11 the church-dominated empire is actually called an 'eighth' beast, but yet it is one of the 'seven'. The Chaldean Empire, Persia, the four divisions of Greece and the original Roman Empire add up to seven, as symbolized by the heads of the beast of Revelation 13. These seven heads were not dominated by religion. Pagan Rome was the seventh head and was wounded to death. Yet later Rome continued as a revived – 'healed' beast (described in Revelation 17). Its system is called the 'eighth' in Revelation 17: 11 because it is different from the previous seven – it is and has always been ridden by a fallen 'woman', the symbol for a great apostate church – representing a union of church and state; and yet it is part of the original seventh, and therefore 'of the seven.'

The image interpreted by Daniel had feet and toes of iron mixed with clay. In Revelation 17 we see that the 10 toes correspond to the ten horns of the beast seen by Yochanan. We read from verses 12 – 14 of Revelation 17: ***"And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. (13) These have one purpose and they give their power and authority to the beast. (14) These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Master of masters and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."*** Ten 'kings' will unite in a political, economic and military alliance immediately prior to Messiah's return. Because these kings will represent various cultures and nationalities, they will be divided in ways other than in their allegiance with the beast. The power and authority that come from their confederation will last only for a short period of time before they make the mistake of making war with Messiah at His return, at which time they will be destroyed .

Where does this leave us? With mankind possessing the capacity to destroy all life on earth; with Israel in control of Jerusalem; and the desire for some Israelis to restore the temple and sacrifices; and with the move afoot to continue to unify Europe, we need to heed the warnings of Scriptural prophecy and watch both ourselves in terms of Torah observance, but also prophecies and the news regarding these developments. Only then will we be ready for Messiah's imminent return! Think about it!

Chapter 8: What can we learn from the first marriage?

When YHVH created the first human being he was all alone and YHVH put him into the Garden of Eden to cultivate and preserve it. It was during this time that YHVH also instructed him about the food available to him in the garden, including the tree of knowledge of good and evil from which YHVH told him not to eat. Then YHVH brought the animals that He created to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. Now whilst naming the animals Adam suddenly noticed something, as we read from Genesis 2: 20, in this way: ***'And the man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him.'*** Therefore Adam must have thought to himself – *'all these animals have mates; but I am all alone without anybody to help me.'*

Continuing with the account of man's creation in Genesis 2: 21 & 22, we read: ***'So YHVH Elohim caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh at that place. (22) And YHVH Elohim fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.'*** Because YHVH gave mankind the ability to talk, we often look for someone else to talk to, since animals cannot communicate nor have an intelligent meaningful discussion with us. It is for this reason that single people often find themselves in very lonely circumstances. Elohim had a purpose for initially making man alone, as Adam learnt when YHVH brought the newly fashioned woman to him, Adam said in verse 23: ***"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."*** Elohim knew that Adam had a problem and provided him with the perfect solution, a woman to be his helpmate another word for spouse or partner. Elohim as the giver of every perfect gift knew exactly how to form a woman for Adam the first man, as is also witnessed by Rav Yaa'cov in James 1: 17, saying: ***'Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow.'*** Elohim made Adam from the dust of the ground – the name Adam is basically the short form for the transliterated Hebrew word *'adamah'*, which means ground. Adam recognized his link to Eve – she was part of him and so was he part of her. However, we see that instead of also using dust or soil to make Eve, Elohim caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep and fashioned Eve out of one of his ribs. Elohim literally formed Eve physically and mentally, to be the perfect complement to Adam.

Since YHVH made Eve from Adam's ribs there was a very special relationship between them. Even so, as can be seen from verses 24 & 25 of Genesis 2, YHVH had a special purpose in making Eve for Adam, as follows: ***'For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. (25) And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.'*** We see here, before there were ever such things as parents, YHVH tells us the purpose for making Eve; so that the man could cleave to her, after reaching the age where they are grown-up and mature enough to have families of their own. That is when they are required to leave the home of their parents and start a life of their own. It is usually advisable for young married couples to seek the help and advice of their parents, but as a new family unit, newlyweds need to realize that they should talk to one another and discuss problems and differences of opinion amongst themselves, since this is the only way to get to know your mate, without outside interference. Because your parents used to do certain things in a particular way, does not mean that the way they do it, is always the only and correct way of doing it. It is therefore important to discuss our reasons for doing things the way we do, but also consider the way our mates learnt to do it from their parents. In discussing things, we sometimes discover different ways of doing things, but also to help us get rid of bad habits – as long as we are prepared to listen.

A husband and wife must learn to work together in marriage, showing respect and love to one another as Rav Shaul explains in Ephesians 5: 22 & 23, saying: ***'Wives be subject to your own***

husbands, as to the Master. (23) For the husband is the head of the wife, as Messiah also is the head of the congregation, He Himself being the Savior of the body.’ Rav Kepha similarly advised in first Peter 3: 1 - 7, saying: ‘In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, (2) as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. (3) And let not your adornment be merely external— braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; (4) but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of Elohim. (5) For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in Elohim, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands. (6) Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear. (7) You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.’ Laying down family guidelines and customs in an atmosphere of love and respect gives newly married couples a foundation upon which to build their lives.

Besides Elohim, our wives and husbands should be our highest commitment. This is essentially what is meant by cleaving as mentioned in Genesis 2: 24 quoted before. The Scriptures are clear that a man should build a special close relationship with his wife. Despite the fact that Elohim allowed some men in the Tanach to have a number of wives at the same time, such arrangements were never Elohim’s intention from the beginning. When listing the qualifications of an overseer of the congregation in first Timothy 3: 2, Rav Shaul makes it clear that such a man should be the husband of one wife. In fact he repeats the same advice to Titus in Titus 1: 5 & 6, saying: **‘For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, (6) namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.’** We see here from verse 6 that a teacher in the congregation should be above reproach. This means that he should be an example to the people he teaches, and there should be no reason to reprove him for doing things that are illegal or immoral. Once we who come from the churches of the world decide to become obedient to the Torah to the point of being circumcised – we need to be very careful how we live, since we become examples to others in our community.

Yahshua in His Sermon on the Mount where he gave His followers His Halacha or way to obey the Torah to a higher level than the scribes and the Pharisees, supported the belief that married husbands should remain faithful to one wife only, when He taught in Matthew 5: 27 – 32, saying: **“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. (29) And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. (30) And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to go into hell. (31) And it was said, ‘WHOEVER DIVORCES HIS WIFE, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DISMISSAL’; (32) but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”** It was also for this reason that YHVH commanded men to wear Tzitzit (physical reminders to obey His spiritual Law) in Numbers 15: 37 – 40, saying to Moses: **“Speak to the sons of Israel, and tell them that they shall make for themselves tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and that they shall put on the tassel of each corner a cord of blue. (39) And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of YHVH, so as to do them and not follow after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you played the harlot, (40) in order**

that you may remember to do all My commandments, and be holy to your Elohim.” Now I know that not all of us were born Jews who always lived Torah obedient lives and some in our community might harbor a certain amount of guilt when reading these words of Messiah.

However, we need to remember that when we were immersed YHWH washed our past sins away in the blood of Messiah. In fact Rav Shaul assures us in Romans 6: 3 – 7 that we have now been freed from our past sins, saying: ***‘Or do you not know that all of us who have been immersed into Messiah Yahshua have been immersed into His death? (4) Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, (6) knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; (7) for he who has died is freed from sin.’*** Elohim’s forgiveness is confirmed by David in Psalm 103: 11 -13, in this way: ***‘For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. (12) As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. (13) Just as a father has compassion on his children, so YHWH has compassion on those who fear Him.’*** The point is, after YHWH has forgiven us our past sins, we should fear Him enough, not to go back to our old ways. This is what Rav Shaul tells us in first Corinthians 6: 9 – 11, saying: ***‘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 the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of Elohim. (11) 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.***’

After we started to follow the way of Elohim, we should never go back to our old ways. That is one reason why we cannot immerse people who live together, before they get legally married. Rav Shaul also wrote a second time to the Corinthian congregation in 2 Corinthians 12: 21, saying: ***“I am afraid that when I come again my Elohim may humiliate me before you, and I may mourn over many of those who have sinned in the past and not repented of the impurity, immorality and sensuality which they have practiced.”*** Before we are immersed, we should repent of our past sins, and never return to it. Rav Kepha warns about this in 2 Peter 2: 20 – 22, saying: ***‘For if after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Master and Savior Yahshua Messiah, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. (21) For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them. (22) It has happened to them according to the true proverb, “A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT,” and, “A SOW, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.”*** A second more serious warning is given in Hebrews 10: 26 & 27, in this way: ***‘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 FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES*** (meaning those who are against Elohim’s laws, even after learning the truth).’

A man should build a special close relationship with his wife and the idea of cleaving to multiple wives is foreign to what we read earlier in Genesis 2: 24. But, how is it possible for a husband and wife to bond with each other to the point of making theirs a loving lasting relationship? Husbands and wives need to work constantly at building their relationship, so that they will get to a point where they will find it easier to settle family disagreements. Some people believe love to be a magical mysterious emotion that two people fall into and out for no reason at all. However, the truth of the matter is that loving relationships must be nurtured. It takes a great deal of effort, as love is care and consideration directed towards another person, not just meaningless emotion. It

takes time and effort to build a strong lasting marital relationship and those who are committed to this process often refer to their partners as their best friends. We need to practice on an ongoing basis to love and respect our marital partners. We find many practical guidelines how to practice love and respect in our marriages in the Scriptures, some of which are as follows:

- Speak kindly to one another: One of the best indicators of a couple's relationship is the way they talk to and about each other. Proverbs 15: 1 tells us that: ***'A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.'*** A polite tone of voice allows married partners to focus their energy and resources on the subject at hand, rather than on each other. Avoid finger pointing. Fight the urge to keep score and cast blame – it is better to reassure your mate by saying: *'this could happen to anyone.'*
- Be forgiving to one another: Without forgiveness, no human relationship can survive. It is as Yahshua taught His disciples in Matthew 6: 12 – 15, saying: ***"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 glory, forever. Amen. (14) For if we forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. (15) But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."***
- Be faithful. Marital relations are as it implies within marriage only, as Elohim also instructs us through His servant in first Corinthians 6: 15 – 20, saying: ***'Do you not know that your bodies are members of Messiah? Shall I then take away the members of Messiah and make them members of a harlot? May it never be! (16) Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, "THE TWO WILL BECOME ONE FLESH." (17) But the one who joins himself to the Master is one in spirit with Him*** (essentially what we do at immersion into Yahshua's name). ***(18) Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. (19) 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? (20) For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify Elohim in your body.'***
- Share your financial resources: When married couples work hard and share their financial resources, they show their commitment to one another and foster respect for one another. Rav Shaul writes in first Timothy 5: 8, saying: ***'But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.'***
- Be sure to include Elohim in your relationship: Ask Elohim to help you in your marriage relationship and always be aware of what king Solomon wrote in the first part of Psalm 127: 1, saying: ***'Unless YHVH builds the house, they labor in vain who build it.'*** Remember romance – before a young couple gets married they enjoy spending hours on end talking, touching and courting. As a married couple we should continue to talk to one another and assure our partners that they are special to us.

Many married couples who have lost interest in their partners, will find the feelings they longed for will return, once they decide to do things that bind them together. It is further more important to avoid conflict, by making a commitment to never engage in any dehumanizing speech or non-verbal practices including:

1. Gossip and tale-bearing about your spouse;
2. Insults, ridicule, shaming, criticizing and complaining;
3. Sexism, racism for those married to partners from a different race or language group;
4. Snobbery name calling and or derogatory gestures.

To build a house based on the value of shalom (peace, patience and goodwill), you need to lay foundations of trust and compassion. With goodwill as the cornerstone, the foundation is laid for growth, over time with deeper empathy and understanding.

The steps that lead to a proper loving sexual relationship are vital to a successful marriage. However, we should develop a lasting friendship, before indulging in marital relations. Even so, most people fail miserably in this matter. Dating in our western society often means sleeping with someone. This is the supposedly enlightened way that sex is not a sacred loving relationship meant for married couples only, but that it is simply a biological function to be indulged in without restraint. But, Elohim intended sex to be part of the marriage relationship and it should not take place outside of marriage. We read accordingly from Hebrews 13: 4, as follows: ***'Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators (those who indulge in sex before marriage) and adulterers (sex when one or both partners is married to someone else) Elohim will judge.'*** A second witness comes from first Corinthians 7: 1 & 2, in this way: ***'Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. (2) But because of immoralities (sexual sins), let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.'*** Elohim intended sex to be an intimate, binding experience between a husband and his wife, and is meant to help marriages survive and grow.

We read from Genesis 2: 25, ***'And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.'*** Complete nakedness, like marital relations should be restricted in marriage relationships only. We see from Elohim's teachings in Torah that He regards one comparable to the other, where He instructs Moses in Leviticus 18: 6, saying: ***'None of you shall approach any blood relative of his to uncover nakedness; I am YHVH.'*** The punishment for doing this including adultery and the other sexual sins mentioned in the rest of Leviticus 18, will result in being cut off from the people of Israel as recorded in verse 29, as follows: ***'For whoever does any of these abominations, those persons who do so shall be cut off from among their people.'*** Men and women need to control their minds and dress modestly to discourage sexual arousal outside of marriage. Rav Shaul told early believers to remember that Elohim called them to be Set-apart and not to defraud or mistreat others in marriage or the relationships leading up to it, in first Thessalonians 4: 2 - 7 saying: ***'For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Master Yahshua. (3) For this is the will of Elohim, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; (4) that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, (5) not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know Elohim; (6) and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Master is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. (7) For Elohim has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.'***

We need to understand that marriage is one of Elohim's wonderful gifts to mankind. It is something we should uphold and hold dear. The guidelines that YHVH gave Adam and Eve in Genesis 2: 24 remain valid for ever and to follow them is to make the only honorable choice. Marriage was specifically established by YHVH to see if we will remain faithful to our marriage partners; if those of us called and chosen by YHVH remain faithful to our partners, we will most likely also remain faithful to Him. It is for this reason that Rav Shaul wrote in 2 Corinthians 11: 2, saying: ***'For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Messiah I might present you as a pure virgin.'*** We see further from Revelation 17: 14 that it is only those called, chosen and who remain faithful to the end, who will rule with Messiah during the millennium and beyond, as follows: ***"These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Master of masters and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."*** Think about it!

Chapter 9: Why is it so important for us to overcome?

We read a great deal about ‘overcoming’ in the Scriptures. We need to understand why overcoming is so important in the life of a true Believer, and what impact it has on our ultimate rewards. Since Yahshua as our perfect example came to show us the way of Elohim, we need to consider what He taught and how He lived whilst He was on earth. We see from Hebrews 2: 9 – 10, that even though He was Elohim in the flesh, he became perfect, in this way: ***“But we do see Him who has been made for a little 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. (10) For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.”***

Since we are imitating Messiah’s way of walking as our perfect example, we too have to at least strive to become perfect during this life, as He also taught in Matthew 5: 48, saying: ***“Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*** The word ‘be’ in this verse should correctly be translated as ‘become’, since repentance as well as the process of building a perfect character, can only be accomplished over a period of time. We see from Hebrews 2: 16 – 18 that Yahshua Messiah became perfect through the trials and tests of human experience, as follows: ***‘For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. (17) Therefore He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to Elohim, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. (18) For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.’*** Yahshua overcame the temptations of Satan, His own ‘human nature’ and the world, and despite stiff opposition, He kept Elohim’s commandments fully. In so doing He developed the perfect spiritual character enabling Him to become our Savior, but also our elder brother.

Because Elohim send Yahshua specifically to show us the way, He expects believers in Yahshua to overcome the same influences that He overcame and as He told us through Yochanan in Revelation:

- 2: 7, ***“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the congregations. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of Elohim.”***
- 2: 11, ***“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the congregations. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”***
- 2: 17, ***“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the congregations. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.”***
- 2: 26 & 27, ***“And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father.”***
- 3: 5, ***“He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.”***
- 3: 12, ***“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My Elohim, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My Elohim, and the name of the city of My Elohim, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My Elohim, and My new name.”***
- 3: 21 ***“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.”*** and;
- 21: 7 ***“He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his Elohim and he will be My son.”***

Fact is that no one else can overcome for you; overcoming is something each person must do himself with the help of Yahshua Messiah living in him through the Set-apart Spirit. Similar to the

way Yahshua showed us, our overcoming involves “good works”, obedience to Elohim, service to others, personal sacrifice, struggle against sin, and fighting the good fight of faith. Yes, it requires a great deal of effort on our part to become the kind of spiritually minded and motivated person Elohim can use to rule the universe. To put it in a nutshell, overcoming is vitally important to YHWH because that is the only way we can develop the character necessary as a son and co-ruler in Elohim’s ruling Family. Through overcoming the evil pulls of the flesh, the devil, and the world, our character is perfected, we build the very kind of character Elohim has. The more we overcome, the greater our character will become and the greater authority and rulership we will be capable of exercising, therefore, the more we overcome, the greater will be our reward. We read from Matthew 24: 46 & 47 that those who overcome to the very end and are still growing in character at Yahshua’s return, or at the end of their lives, if that comes first, shall inherit the Kingdom of Elohim and receive a reward, in this way: ***“Blessed is that slave whom the master finds so doing when he comes. (47) Truly I say to you, that he will put him in charge of all his possessions.”*** Yahshua will not be satisfied with only a little overcoming, but desires continual, constant overcoming and the obedience it entails. We should never let down or grow faint hearted, especially since we know that the time is near.

Rav Kepha testified in 2 Peter 1: 5 – 9 that we need to grow continually in quality of character during this life, if we want to finally qualify to rule under Messiah in the kingdom of Elohim, as follows: ***‘Now for this reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge; (6) and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness; (7) and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. (8) For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Master Yahshua Messiah. (9) For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.’*** Rav Kepha also shows in verses 10 & 11 those who do not grow and overcome will not make it into Elohim’s kingdom, saying: ***‘Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; (11) for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Master and Savior Yahshua Messiah will be abundantly supplied to you.*** We need to realize that we are not busy playing church like some whom YHWH has called out of the churches of the world seem to think – no, we are busy with a very special purpose of preparing to rule under Yahshua our Messiah as future kings and priests.

Since we know that our father in the faith already qualified to rule in Elohim’s coming kingdom, let’s take a look at the example that he left us. Rav Yaa’cov tells us about Abraham’s faith in Elohim in James 2: 21 - 24, saying: ***‘Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? (22) You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; (23) and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED ELOHIM, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS,” and he was called the friend of Elohim.’*** Abraham was tested in a similar way as YHWH Who had to offer up His only begotten Son, and in that way YHWH showed Abraham His plan of salvation through his ‘seed’ Yahshua, as also witnessed in Galatians 3: 16, as follows: ***‘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, Abraham had to prove his faith in Elohim by works, as Rav Yaa’cov wrote in verse 24 of James 2, saying: ***‘You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.’*** Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his only son, although he knew that only through his son could Elohim’s promises to him be fulfilled. By stepping out and acting on the Word of YHWH, Abraham proved his faith in Elohim. As a result Abraham has already qualified to receive a high

position of rulership when he will one day be born-again (or resurrected) into Elohim's Family because he was willing to do whatever Elohim required of him.

Elohim requires the same kind of steadfast obedient faith that was demonstrated by righteous Abraham from each one of us whom He is calling at this time. We must be willing to accept Elohim's rule in our lives at this time, before we will be allowed to govern others in Elohim's Kingdom. We see from Genesis 12: 1 & 4 that even prior to Abraham's supreme test, he showed by his actions that he was willing to give up his old ways, customs and surroundings to perform Elohim's will, in this way: ***'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." (4) So Abram went forth as YHVH had spoken to him; and Lot went with him. Now Abraham was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.'*** We see from Hebrews 11: 8 & 9 that Abraham did this based purely on believing what Elohim said, as follows: ***'By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. (9) 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.'*** By faith Abraham also look forward to dwell in Elohim's heavenly city the New Jerusalem (as recorded in verse 10 of Hebrews 11) when one day it descends to earth after the Millennium, as recorded in Revelation 21: 10 – 14, in this way: ***'And he (the angel) carried me (Yochanan Messiah's disciple) away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from Elohim, (11) having the glory of Elohim. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal clear jasper. (12) It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are those of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. (13) There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. (14) And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.'*** Even though Abraham is still in his grave, Yahshua confirmed in Luke 13: 28 that he will one day be in Elohim's kingdom, saying: ***"There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth there when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of Elohim, but yourselves being cast out."*** Abraham "departed" from his old ways and yielded himself to Elohim by obeying all of His commandments, as Elohim said to Isaac in Genesis 26: 5, saying: ***"Because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws."***

Despite what the churches of the world teach, this is exactly the kind of submissive attitude Elohim requires of believers today. Yahshua came specifically to teach those of us from the lost ten tribes to return to the faith of our father's in the faith, and to keep Elohim's commandments. When the rich young man wanted to know what he must do to inherit eternal life in Matthew 19: 16, Yahshua told Him to keep the commandments in verse 17. When he wanted to know which commandments, Yahshua said in verses 18 & 19: ***'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER; YOU SHALL NOT STEAL; YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS; (19) HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER; and YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'*** Yahshua enumerated enough of the commandments to make it clear He was talking about the Ten Commandments. The point is as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 2: 13, saying: ***'For not the hearers of the Law are just before Elohim, but the doers of the Law will be justified.'*** Most Christian churches say the Ten Commandments in the hearing of all during Sunday services, but do they do them? Where were they on the Sabbath day before their worshiping service? Why not say the same Ten Commandment on the Sabbath that Elohim set-apart for worshipping Him?

We are told the only way to truly know (transliterated as 'yadah' in Hebrew) YHVH in first John 2: 3, as follows: ***'And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.'*** Rav Yochanan calls the one who claims to love YHVH without His commandments a liar, saying in

verse 4: ***‘The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.’*** Yochanan wrote further in first John 3: 4, saying: ***‘Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.’*** If we do not obey Elohim’s Torah, we practice sin – as simple as that. We see from Romans 6: 23 that: ***‘(For) the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of Elohim is eternal life in Messiah Yahshua our Master.’*** The very first step we need to take to escape the death penalty and come within Elohim’s “grace” or His unmerited pardon is as given in Mark 1: 14 – 15, as follows: ***‘And after Yochanan (the Immerser) 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 (turn back from your Torah breaking and start obeying it) and believe in the gospel.”*** To ‘repent’ means to turn around and go the other way – to forsake your way which is contrary to Elohim’s Torah, and turn to Elohim’s way, which is the way of His Torah, i.e. obedience to Torah. To believe the gospel means to believe the message that Yahshua brought – the good news of the coming Kingdom of Elohim, which includes belief in Him as your personal Savior, but also that He is coming to rule the world from Jerusalem, in the foreseeable future. This is what Rav Kepha told the brethren in Acts 3: 19 – 21, saying: ***‘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 holy prophets from ancient time.’***

Elohim makes it very clear through the writings of Rav Shaul in Galatians 5: 19 – 21 that no one who practices sin will ever be born into His universe-ruling family, saying: ***‘Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outburst of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, (21) envying, drunkenness, carousing (partying), and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of Elohim’*** All who want to become born-again children of Elohim and co-rulers with Yahshua Messiah in the Kingdom of Elohim must stop breaking Elohim’s commandments. They should repent of rebellion against Elohim, and must desire to actually begin to literally obey His Word, submitting to His authority over their lives! As a symbol of their submission to Elohim’s rule, after belief and sincere, heartfelt, deep repentance of sin, a new believer in that way of Elohim, should be immersed, as Rav Kepha told those in Acts 2: 38, saying: ***“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.”***

We see from Romans 6: 3 – 7, that immersion symbolically pictures the death, burial and resurrection of Yahshua Messiah, but it also pictures our voluntary crucifixion or putting to death our old sinful self, as follows: ***‘Or do you not know that all of us who have been immersed into Messiah Yahshua have been immersed into His death? (4) Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, (6) knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; (7) for he who has died is freed from sin.’*** Our coming up out of this watery grave pictures a changed person – one ‘resurrected’ to a new, righteous obedient life dedicated to Elohim, as per verse 4 (quoted above) and also in verses 11 – 13, in this way: ***‘Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to Elohim in Messiah Yahshua. (12) Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, (13) and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to Elohim as those alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness to Elohim.’*** By being immersed we express our faith in Yahshua Messiah our Savior;

we show our acceptance of His death for our sins, and our belief in His resurrection to eternal life! Immersion is also an outward symbol of our repentance of our old sinful disobedient life; and our complete departure from our old sinful way of living. We read further from Romans 5: 10 that it is by Yahshua's life that we are saved, in this way: ***'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.'*** That is, the life which He now lives within us.

But why is it so important for us to receive the Set-apart Spirit? We read the answer from Romans 8: 11, as follows: ***'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.'*** Elohim's Set-apart Spirit is His very own life which comes into you as the begettal of eternal life. You then become an heir of Elohim – a joint-heir with Messiah to inherit the entire universe when He returns. The Set-apart Spirit imparts to you with the characteristics of Elohim listed in Galatians 5: 22 & 23. First of these is love – not carnal human love, but Elohim's Agape love. It is love that enables us to keep Elohim's Torah, because only Elohim's spiritual love can keep His Law which is spiritual (as per Romans 7: 14). Even so, after we have been suitably immersed we need to grow in knowledge by studying Elohim's word and by getting to know Him. As a result of this newly acquired knowledge (which the Spirit in us will help us to understand¹⁸) will strengthen our faith to obey Elohim's Torah with a spiritual intent. Elohim's Spirit imparts us with spiritual understanding, as well as wisdom and patience. The main reason why Elohim bestows us with these gifts, is that we use it to grow spiritually, to serve others and to overcome those sins which so beset us.

Once we have truly repented, been Immersed and received the begettal of Elohim's Set-apart Spirit, we become part of the body of Messiah, as witnessed in first Corinthians 12: 13 & 27, in this way: ***'For by one Spirit we were all immersed into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit (27) Now you are Messiah's body, and individually members of it.'*** Rav Shaul wrote further about the body of Messiah in Ephesians 1: 22 – 23, saying: ***'And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the congregation, (23) which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.'*** However, we cannot become a part of the true body of Messiah – the congregation of Believers called out of the world by Elohim - by simply deciding to 'attend' Sabbath services. The stamp of a member of Elohim's true congregation is the begettal of the Set-apart Spirit. Those who have not received the Set-apart Spirit are simply not part of the true body of Messiah. They are definitely not true Believers, as Rav Shaul explains in Romans 8: 9, saying: ***'However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of Elohim dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Messiah, he does not belong to Him.'*** Elohim promises His Set-apart Spirit only to those who repent of sin and are suitably immersed, giving them the Set-apart Spirit at the laying on of hands of a teaching elder of the congregation, as witnessed in Acts 8: 12 – 17, but specifically in verses 14 - 17, as follows: ***'Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of Elohim, they sent them Kepha and Yochanan, (15) who came down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Set-apart Spirit. (16) For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been immersed in the name of the Master Yahshua. (17) Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Set-apart Spirit.'***

¹⁸ The Set-apart Spirit is the necessary agent to help us understand Elohim's thoughts as witnessed in first Corinthians 2: 11 & 12, as follows: ***'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.'***

But even all of this is not a guarantee that we will receive and retain the Set-apart Spirit. It is very important to remember that Elohim only gives His Set-apart Spirit to those who obey Him as witnessed in Acts 5: 32, in this way: ***“And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Set-apart Spirit, whom Elohim has given to those who obey Him.”*** It is therefore important that we ensure that new believers are already obeying the four stipulations given in Acts 15: 20, before they are immersed, namely they:

- ***‘abstain from things contaminated by idols’*** - the things offered to idols are not only restricted to meat, but may include such items as Easter Eggs, hot cross buns, Xmas cake etc. But, the point to remember is that the idolatry which was the cause of Israel’s captivity, resulting in them becoming like Gentiles, had to do with keeping Feast Days at different times to what the Scriptures ordain.
- ***‘and from fornication’*** - fornication is prevalent in the Israelite nations today, and many live together and even believe they are righteous before Elohim. However, before one gets immersed we should ensure that if he/she lives with someone and is not married, they get legally married to avoid that they walk out on their existing partners and get involved with someone else, thereby continuing in fornication.
- ***‘and from what is strangled and from blood’*** – this refers to all those things in Torah which refer to the proper way in which to deal with various blood issues. One such blood issue is for husbands and wives to be in a totally kosher marriage relationship and to abstain from marital relations during periods of menstruating. The second blood issue is that Nazarene believers are commanded in Torah not to eat meat with any residue blood in it:
 1. Only meat from specific species is permissible.
 2. Mammals and fowls must be slaughtered by a trained individual, who must ensure that all the blood of the animal is poured out on the ground (as per Deuteronomy 12: 23 & 24). Before the animal is slaughtered, it is checked to ensure that it does not have a medical condition, as sick or diseased animals are not considered 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.
 3. 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.

After immersion Rav Kepha tells us in the first part of 2 Peter 3: 18, saying: ***‘But grow in grace and knowledge of our Master and Savior Yahshua Messiah.’*** Once we have repented, are immersed and have received Elohim’s Set-apart Spirit, divine life has been begotten in us. But we are not yet spirit-born children of Elohim. We are only ‘begotten’ anew and our spiritual life has begun as a very small ‘seed’ which must be allowed to grow. To grow spiritually, we must be given spiritual food. This we do by studying the Scriptures, through personal, intimate daily contact with Elohim in prayer, through meditation on Elohim’s word, and through regular fellowship with members of Elohim’s congregation, by attending Sabbath and annual Feast Day services. Spiritual growth is the development of Elohim’s very character in us. We are required to gradually become more and more like Elohim in the way we act and do things (as Yahshua said in Matthew 5: 48). With time we will develop the ability to discern what is right, and then do it regardless of pressures and circumstances to the contrary. Character is the ability in a free moral agent to determine and direct one’s own actions always in the right direction, which is the way of righteousness – the way of obedience to Elohim, of giving, serving, helping others. It is the way which produces eternal happiness.

Messiah commissioned His trained disciples who at the end of their period of training under Him became teachers to immerse and teach new believers the things that He taught them as recorded in Matthew 28: 18 – 20. In addition He instructed Rav Kepha in John 21: 15 – 17, to ***‘tend My lambs’***

(meaning to gently teach the children in the congregation); to ***'shepherd My sheep'*** (meaning to teach and guide the men in the congregation with a firm hand like a shepherd would); and to ***'tend My sheep'*** (or ewes)' (also meaning to gently teach and guide the ladies in the congregation). It is for this reason that Rav Kepha also wrote in first Peter 5: 1 - 3 saying: ***'Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Messiah, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, (2) shepherd the flock of Elohim among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of Elohim; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; (3) nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.'*** Elohim has set his called and chosen teachers in His congregation to feed the flock and it is for this reason that Rav Shaul wrote in Ephesians 4: 11 – 15, saying: ***'And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, (12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Messiah; (13) until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of Elohim, to a mature man, to the measure and stature which belongs to the fullness of Messiah. (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; (15) but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head even Messiah.'***

In a similar way as a human mother feeds her begotten child within her womb through the placenta and umbilical cord, Elohim's children are nourished with spiritual food within His congregation. And as the human mother carries her unborn child from physical harm, so does Elohim's teachers protect the begotten children of Elohim from false doctrines and false teachers. Through the feeding process, each Believer receives nourishment necessary to 'grow' until the Believer is ready to become a teacher himself, and is ready to be born as the very sons and daughters of Elohim. Yahshua Himself promised Kepha and His other disciples that His congregation will continue to exist throughout the ages, saying in Matthew 16: 18, ***'And I also say to you that you are Peter*** (meaning a stone as Rav Kepha mentions in first Peter 2: 5), ***and on this rock*** (meaning Himself as the rock of offense which Rav Kepha mentions in first Peter 2: 8) ***I will build My congregation; and the gates of Hades*** (the grave) ***shall not overpower it.'*** Elohim's congregation started in the wilderness at Mount Sinai when Moses received the Oracles of Elohim, as we read from Acts 7: 38, in this way: ***"This is the one (Moses) who was in the congregation in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and who was with our fathers; and he received living oracles to pass on to you."*** On the day of Pentecost (in Acts 2) 31 CE after Yahshua's ascension to heaven He sent the Set-apart Spirit to His congregation of called out Believers to lead them into all truth, and as He promised in Matthew 16, the gates of hell (or the grave) will not overpower it, until He returns one day soon.

Yahshua Messiah is plainly pictured as dwelling in the midst of His congregation in Revelation 1: 13. Here the congregation is represented by seven golden candlesticks; each one of these candlesticks represent a stage in the history of the true congregation of called out Believers. And true to Elohim's word, that congregation is alive today. Are you part of that congregation? If so then you should be preparing to rule under Yahshua during His soon coming kingdom. Those of us called out of the religions of the world were actually born to rule. We were born to become part of governing, teaching and guiding this world during the millennium rule of Messiah – and after that, to assist in ruling the entire universe of Elohim for all eternity. That is the incredible destiny that Elohim offers to mankind. But how are we progressing towards that goal? Evaluate your own life and character honestly, to see if you are obeying Elohim? Are you growing spiritually? Are you developing self-control? Are you successfully restraining wrong desires and selfish motives? If you suddenly had great power in your control to direct a major city, would you be able to direct and exercise that

power as you know Elohim would have used it? If you are currently directing the little powers in your control, such as your temper, your voice, your passions and emotions, or you're present, possibly small income, then you probably could be entrusted to properly control at least a slightly larger power.

However, if you have not yet learned to control and constructively guide even these little powers Elohim has permitted you to use, then how could He entrust you to handle the awesome responsibilities in the Kingdom of Elohim? If you don't learn to be faithful even in the use of your present income, who will entrust to your care the true riches, and the great powers of Elohim? Ask Elohim for wisdom, knowledge and understanding so that you can rightly direct the comparatively little powers and responsibilities you now have. Ask Him for wisdom and help in properly exercising and using the abilities you've been given so you can be a faithful and productive servant. Strive to learn to be faithful over the small things Elohim has already given you, so that one day you will hear Messiah say to you as recorded in Matthew 25: 21: ***"Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master."***

This life is our training ground, during which we must learn to rule by performing our responsibilities faithfully and by learning to rule over ourselves. We must come to submit to Elohim's authority, keeping His commandments. Preparing to rule in Elohim's Kingdom begins with submission to His Torah now! We need to know that Elohim will never save any person He does not govern. So we need to learn Elohim's Torah, study it, meditate on it, and live by it. And with the help of the Set-apart Spirit, overcome our human nature, the pulls of the world, and the wiles of Satan. We need to grow spiritually until death or until Messiah returns one day. At that time Elohim will change our vile bodies into sinless, glorified bodies, as we read from first John 3: 2, in this way: ***'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 as He is.'*** Even King David knew this when he wrote these words in Psalm 17: 15, saying: ***'As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Thy likeness when I awake.'*** At that time we will have qualified to rule the nations according to Elohim's Torah. What an incredible and exiting calling do we have? Halleluyah!

Chapter 10: What it means to be led by the Set-apart Spirit.

Before we can talk about the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim, it is necessary to explain what it is, because of the many misconceptions about it in the religions of the world. First of all we need to understand why there are so many misconceptions about what constitutes the Set-apart Spirit or the Ruach HaKodesh as it is transliterated in Hebrew. Most Jewish Rabbis agree that one should only consider studying Kabbalah after a solid grounding in Torah study resulting in a secure belief in the Oneness of Elohim. I believe the reason why Christianity misunderstood Elohim, is because the early church fathers made a cursory study of it, but at the same time they rejected Torah, because they believed Messiah already kept it for believers in Him. As a result these church fathers came up with the doctrine of the so-called trinity. Nevertheless, I also believe that it is because some Messianic Jews/Israelites and like-minded believers in Messiah such as the Churches of G-d and the Assemblies of YHVH, either totally rejected or have never heard of Kabbalah, they misinterpreted Elohim's Set-apart Spirit simply to be the power of Elohim.

Another reason for these believers to claim that the Set-apart Spirit is the power of Elohim, is because of misreading first Corinthians 2: 4 & 5, as follows: ***'And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, (5) that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of Elohim.'*** Let's consider how these verses could lead believers to assume that the Set-apart Spirit is the power of Elohim. Most students of the Scriptures are aware of the principle that we should allow the Scriptures to interpret the Scriptures; where we read all the relevant Scriptures on a specific subject, before coming to a final conclusion. Let's therefore commence our analysis by reading from first Corinthians 1: 22 – 24, where Rav Shaul start discussing the subject, in this way: ***'For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; (23) but we preach Messiah crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, (24) but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Messiah the power of Elohim and the wisdom of Elohim.*** So we see that it is only the ones that Elohim has called, who understand that Yahshua our Messiah is in fact the power of Elohim. The reality that Yahshua is the power of Elohim is confirmed in Jeremiah 32: 17, where we read: ***'Ah YHVH Elohim! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee.'*** A third witness comes from Jeremiah 51: 15, in this way: ***'It is He who made the earth by His power, who established the world by His wisdom, and by His understanding He stretched out the heavens.'*** This is also confirmed in Isaiah 11: 1 & 2, as follows: ***'Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. (2) And the Spirit of YHVH will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength (power), the spirit of knowledge and the fear of YHVH.***

Even though the opponents to Kabbalah will deny it, it runs throughout the Tanach, but also the Renewed Covenant like a golden thread. The concept is first mentioned in Exodus 6: 6 where YHVH tells Moses, saying: ***"Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am YHVH, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage, I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.'"*** We read a second witness to this, where YHVH talks to Pharaoh by the mouth of Moses in Exodus 9: 15 & 16, saying: ***"For if by now I had put forth My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, you would then have been cut off from the earth. (16) But indeed, for this cause I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power, and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth."*** We also see that after the Israelites finally left Egypt and because of yet another miracle during which YHVH allowed the Israelites to pass through the Red Sea dry shod and let the Egyptians drown in the sea, Moses and the sons of Israel sang the song recorded in Exodus 15. We will only touch on the applicable verses of the song, namely verses 2, 6, 12 and 13 to highlight the topic under discussion, as follows: ***"YHVH is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; this is my Elohim, and I will***

praise Him; my father's Elohim, and I will extol Him. (6) "Thy right hand, O YHVH, is majestic in power, Thy right hand, O YHVH shatters the enemy. (12) Thou didst stretch out Thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. (13) In Thy lovingkindness Thou hast led the people who Thou hast redeemed; in Thy strength Thou hast guided them to Thy set-apart habitation." We read similar words to these from Psalm 98: 1 – 3, in this way: *'O sing to YHVH a new song, for He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. (2) YHVH has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. (3) He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our Elohim.'*

We continue with our study of the arm of YHVH mentioned in Jeremiah 32: 17 and spoken about in Isaiah by reading from verse 1 of Isaiah 53, as follows: *'Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of YHVH been revealed?'* This is an important question, since most people do not understand who the arm of YHVH is. However, when reading the entire 53rd chapter of Isaiah, we come to understand that it is talking about Yahshua our Messiah, especially when reading verses 5 & 6, as follows: *'But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our wellbeing fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. (6) 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.'* Most Nazarene/Messianic believers in Messiah are aware that our Jewish Brothers have at this time been blinded to the identity of Messiah, as is confirmed in John 12: 37 – 40, in this way: *'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 HE HARDENED THEIR HEART; LEST THEY SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED, AND I HEAL THEM."* But we are also aware that both houses of Israel are blinded at this time; whereas our Jewish Brothers are blinded to Messiah's identity; the house of Israel, mostly to be found amongst the Christians in the western world is blinded to the true gospel, namely the gospel of the coming Kingdom of Elohim.

Most people who study Kabbalah can relate to the two arms spoken about in the first part of Deuteronomy 33: 27, in this way: *"The eternal Elohim is a dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms."* Even though the attributes of the eternal, immortal, invisible Elohim whom no man has seen or can see (as per first Timothy 1: 17 & 6: 16), is depicted in Kabbalah as ten attributes (Sefirot) set-out as three supernal lights, it is also depicted in the form of a man known as the Adman Kadmon or image of Elohim. As the two arms of the image of Elohim, the right arm is referred to as the power or severity (transliterated as Gevurah in Hebrew) and the left arm as mercy or kindness (transliterated as Chesed in Hebrew). Rav Shaul also referred to these two attributes in Romans 11: 22, saying; *'Behold then the kindness and severity of Elohim; to those who fell severity, but to you, Elohim's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.'* He further speaks about the same in 2 Corinthians 6: 6 & 7, saying: *'In purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Set-apart Spirit, in genuine love, (7) in the word of truth, in the power of Elohim; by the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left.'* Yahshua in the model prayer that He taught His disciples in Matthew 6 concludes in the second part of verse 13, saying: *'For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the (Shekinah) glory, forever. Amen.'*

But before we belabor the point let's get back to the quoted section from first Corinthians 2: 4 & 5 earlier. We see that verse 4 concludes with the words *'the Spirit and of power'* and verse 5 with the words *'the power of Elohim.'* Having read from first Corinthians 1: 22 – 24, and by letting the Scriptures interpret the Scriptures, we come to see that verse 4 is talking about both the Set-apart Spirit and Yahshua the power of Elohim, and verse 5 is telling us that our faith should not rest upon

wisdom of men, but on the power of Elohim namely Yahshua. Even though Jeremiah 32: 17 tells us that YHVH made the heavens and the earth by His Great Power and outstretched arm, we also read from the first part of Psalm 33: 6, ***'By the word of YHVH the heavens were made.'*** Yahshua our Messiah is therefore referred to in the Scriptures as the power, the wisdom, the word and the right hand of YHVH. Even so, for those who remain doubtful, the problem should be resolved by John 1: 1 - 3, in this way: ***'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.'*** Yet, we find that even this truth is at times explained away by those who believe in two (YHVH)'s.

Now let us get to the subject at hand, namely: What it means to be led by the Set-apart Spirit or Divine Nature of Elohim, as may be understood by reading from 2 Peter 1: 4, as follows: ***'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.'*** In addition to man's body of flesh, man also has a spirit as witnessed in numerous Scriptures, one of which being in Zechariah 12: 1, in this way: ***"The burden of the word of YHVH concerning Israel. Thus declares YHVH who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him."*** Because man is a created being he is like all the created animals a living creature or soul. Man's soul or life is so intertwined with the spirit that is in man, that the way he lives, is reflected by the spirit within him. It is for this reason that we read from Hebrews 4: 12, ***'For the word of Elohim is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thought and intentions of the heart.'*** Once a person is called by Elohim to come out of the religions of the world, to repent and be immersed into Yahshua's saving name, he/she he is given a portion of Elohim's Set-apart Spirit as a pledge as witnessed in Ephesians 1: 13 & 14, in this way: ***'In Him you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation— having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Set-apart Spirit of promise, (14) who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to redemption of Elohim's own possession, to the praise of His glory.'*** Once a person is immersed into Yahshua's saving name, his life should begin to reflect the Se-apart Spirit in him, and we should begin to see the fruits of the Spirit reflected in the way he lives his daily life.

As Nazarene believers in Messiah, we are commanded to observe the Feast of Weeks (Shavuot) or Pentecost once every year. When celebrating this festival of Elohim, we remember one of the greatest events in the history of ancient Israel, fifty days after they left Egypt and arrived at Mount Sinai where Elohim gave them His commandments, statutes and judgments. Shavuot is therefore a commemoration of the awesome event experienced by the children of Israel seven weeks after their Exodus from Egypt when they camped at the foot of Mount Sinai. This was when Elohim's will was revealed to Israel. The events preceding this time, namely the Exodus of Israel from slavery, the death of the first born in Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea, the giving of the manna as well as the giving of the commandments, were miracles which had an enormous impact on the history of Israel. However, the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost also reminds us as Nazarene believers in Messiah, that this was also the day in 31 CE after Messiah's ascension to heaven, that the Set-apart Spirit was given to believers, just as Messiah promised in John 16: 7, 13 & 14, saying: ***"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. (13) But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. (14) He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you."***

The Feast of Pentecost is a celebration of both these events, but also that Elohim works in each one of us through His Spirit that indwells us. It is only by the indwelling of the Set-apart Spirit that we are

able to change the way we lived in the past, and start obeying Elohim. When we study the Scriptures and by reviewing what happened on that first Pentecost after Yahshua's ascension, we find the beginnings of these miracles. We read Messiah's instructions to His disciples before His ascension in Acts 1: 8, saying: ***"But you shall receive power (courage) when the Set-apart Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."*** This promise was fulfilled eight days after Yahshua's ascension to heaven on the Day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2: 1. Rav Kepha concluded his sermon for the Pentecost service that day as recorded in Acts 2: 38 & 39, saying: ***"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. (39) For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off (returning Israelites of the lost ten tribes), as many as YHVH our Elohim shall call to Himself (note: we immerse only those whom YHVH calls, and not those we would like to convert)."*** After the physical manifestations described in Acts 2, we find the Set-apart Spirit descending on a large group of people. It changes their lives (souls) dramatically reflecting the Spirit of Elohim (which has now merged with the spirits in them) in their lives.

The book of Acts are full of the accounts of these people's lives and the impact they had on the world at that time. The way in which their lives were changed, ***'have upset the world'*** as recorded in Acts 17: 6. The question is as we asked at the beginning: what does it mean to be led by the Set-apart Spirit? This is explained in detail by Rav Shaul in Romans 8 where he shows the reason why we need Elohim's Spirit, but also how the Spirit works in the life of a believer. Rav Shaul summarizes these two beliefs in verses 11 & 14, saying: ***'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. (14) For all who are being led by the Spirit of Elohim, these are sons of Elohim.'*** From this we see that a true believer is one who is being led by the Spirit (or very nature) of Elohim now indwelling him/her. The implication of this is, that through Elohim's Spirit that indwells us, we accomplish what we do as believers (Sabbath keeping, eating Kosher foods, and giving freewill offerings), rather than through our own efforts. But, it is not enough to be led by Elohim's Spirit. We must also allow Elohim to rule in our lives, through His Spirit. We need to continually ask ourselves if we are truly being led by Elohim's Spirit, or does our own human nature still sometimes come to the fore.

Elohim's Spirit is His divine nature which leads us and helps us to truly be the light to a dying world and like salt influence the people around us. It is as Yahshua told His disciples in Matthew 5: 14 & 16, saying: ***"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. (16) Let your light (or example) shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."*** What does Elohim's Spirit do for us as believers in Messiah? This is a very important question in the life of a believer, because without Elohim's Spirit in our lives we would have no relationship with the Father. It is because of the Spirit in us that we will one day be resurrected as Spiritual children of Elohim, as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 8: 15 – 17, saying: ***'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, "Avinu! Father!" (16) The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of Elohim, (17) 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 (or exalted) with Him.'*** It is important to understand that being led by the Spirit of Elohim, does not mean that Elohim forces us to do what we do not want to do – no, it means that Elohim leads us through the indwelling of His Spirit. Even so, it will not prevent us from sinning, nor will it force us to do what is right. It leads us, and we must follow.

Elohim's spirit works with our minds where we make decisions and record in our memories Elohim-like character, through the correct actions and decisions we make. Rav Yochanan describes this in

first John 3: 24, saying: ***‘And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.’*** The Set-apart Spirit in us provides a deeper understanding of Elohim’s word and His will for us, as Rav Shaul wrote in first Corinthians 2: 9 – 11, saying: ***‘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 the depths of Elohim. (11) For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit (or nature) of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of Elohim no one knows except the Spirit of Elohim.’*** Without the Spirit of Elohim, a person cannot understand Elohim’s expressed will and word. Rav Shaul wrote about this in verse 14 of first Corinthians 2, saying: ***‘But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of Elohim; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.’*** The Set-apart Spirit helps us overcoming those sins which so beset us and there is nothing too difficult for us with Elohim’s Spirit working in our lives, as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 8: 26 & 27, saying: ***‘And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; (27) and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of Elohim.’***

Messiah promised His followers in Matthew 19: 26, saying: ***“With men this is impossible, but with Elohim all things are possible.”*** A believer’s life is one of overcoming – we need to understand that Elohim does not want us to remain as we were the day He called us. Instead we must 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’*** as per Romans 12: 2. It is as Yahshua said in John 16: 8, ***“And He (the Spirit of Elohim), when He comes will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness and judgment.”*** Elohim’s Spirit within us, working with our conscience minds (or spirit), helps us to recognize and avoid sin. It makes us feel guilty, when we want to do the wrong thing and in that way prompt us not to sin. We read from Hebrews 9: 14, ***‘How much more will the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to Elohim, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim?’*** Messiah’s sacrifice washes the sin in our lives away, but we must repent before we are forgiven, since repentance means change and an effort to avoid sin. The Set-apart Spirit of Elohim interacts with our spirits and helps us to produce the fruits of the Spirit in our lives. These are listed in Galatians 5: 22 & 23, as follows: ***‘But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.’***

As promised by Messiah the Set-apart Spirit will comfort and encourage us. We need not therefore be overly concerned about the future or what may happen to us, as Rav Shaul also explained in Romans 8: 28, saying: ***‘And we know that Elohim causes all things to work together for good to those who love Elohim, to those who are called according to His purpose.’*** Even though it is possible for a true believer to become discouraged, it is through the Set-apart Spirit that we can begin to look at life differently. We should be extremely thankful, knowing that Elohim is still working in our lives through His Set-apart Spirit. Slowly but surely our human natures are being changed to reflect Elohim’s Divine Nature (or Spirit) in our lives. The greatest miracle is yet to come when the Spirit of Elohim, who raised Messiah from the dead, will also one day in the near future give life to our mortal bodies through His Set-apart Spirit who indwells us. Halleluyah!

Chapter 11: How important is Moses in the life of a believer in Messiah?

Historians agree that Moses was born around 1520 BCE in Egypt. Both his parents namely Amram and Jochebed were from the tribe of Levi, making him a full-blooded Levite. The life of Moses can be divided into three periods of 40-years: his time during which he was brought up and educated in Egypt as the son of and Egyptian princess, his exile in Arabia and his governance of Israel, as described in Acts 7: 17 - 36, in this way: ***“But as the time of promise was approaching which Elohim had assured to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt, (18) until THERE AROSE ANOTHER KING OVER EGYPT WHO KNEW NOTHING ABOUT JOSEPH. (19) It was he who took shrewd advantage of our race, and mistreated our fathers so that they would expose their infants and they would not survive. (20) And it was at this time that Moses was born; and he was lovely in the sight of Elohim; and he was nurtured three months in his father’s home. (21) And after he had been exposed, Pharaoh’s daughter took him away, and nurtured him as her own son. (22) And Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds. (23) But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren the sons of Israel. (24) And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian. (25) And he supposed that his brethren understood that Elohim was granting them deliverance through him; but they did not understand. (26) And on the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, ‘Men, you are brethren, why do you injure one another?’ (27) But the one who was injuring his neighbor pushed him away, saying, ‘WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND JUDGE OVER US? (28) YOU DO NOT MEAN TO KILL ME AS YOU KILLED THE EGYPTIAN YESTERDAY, DO YOU?’ (29) And at this remark MOSES FLED, AND BECAME AN ALIEN IN THE LAND OF MIDIAN, where he became the father of two sons. (30) And after forty years had passed, AN ANGEL APPEARED TO HIM IN THE WILDERNESS OF MOUNT SINAI, IN THE FLAME OF A BURNING THORN BUSH. (31) And when Moses saw it, he began to marvel at the sight; and as he approached to look more closely, there came a voice of the Master: (32) ‘I AM THE ELOHIM OF YOUR FATHERS, THE ELOHIM OF ABRAHAM AND ISAAC AND JACOB.’ And Moses shook with fear and would not venture to look. (33) BUT YHVH SAID TO HIM, ‘TAKE OFF THE SANDALS FROM YOUR FEET, FOR THE PLACE ON WHICH YOU ARE STANDING IS HOLY GROUND. (34) I HAVE CERTAINLY SEEN THE OPPRESSION OF MY PEOPLE IN EGYPT, AND HAVE HEARD THEIR GROANS, AND I HAVE COME DOWN TO DELIVER THEM; COME NOW, AND I WILL SEND YOU TO EGYPT.’ (35) This Moses whom they disowned, saying, ‘WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE?’ is the one whom Elohim sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the thorn bush. (36) This man led them out performing wonders and signs in the land of Egypt and in the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years.”***

The Egyptian princess who found Moses in the Nile River called him Moses meaning ‘drawn out’ since she drew him out of the water as per Exodus 2: 10. Moses’ name and the account of his being saved from death through the agent of water symbolize something similar to when we are immersed and saved from a life of sin and eternal death, as Rav Shaul described in Romans 6: 3 & 4, saying: ***‘Or do you not know that all of us who have been immersed into Messiah Yahshua have been immersed into His death? (4) Therefore we have been buried with Him through immersion into death, in order that as Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.’*** Both Moses and Israel were saved from death through water: the River Nile and the Red Sea as Rav Shaul further wrote in first Corinthians 10: 1 & 2, saying: ***‘For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; (2) and all were immersed into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.’*** However, the

Encyclopedia Judaica¹⁹ holds that the phrase ***“Because I drew him out of the water”*** should logically have required the word ‘mashui’, meaning ‘one that has been drawn out’. Moshe on the other hand means ‘one that draws out,’ showing how this infant slave would later be used to draw out the people of Israel from their bondage in Egypt and from the Red Sea.

In one day Moses’ slave clothes were replaced with the raiment of a prince. He went from bearing a death sentence to a position of honor and privilege in Pharaoh’s household, and was educated and trained as a royal child, with the best education the Egyptians provided. Then Moses’ life changed again when he had to flee for his life to the land of Midian. For the first time Moses’ life of luxury and privilege was over. From then on YHVH trained Moses through the life of a shepherd, preparing him for his service to Elohim and to lead his people Israel. The Scriptural record of Moses’ next act also deals with water, when he helped some young maidens water their sheep. This is then also when he met Zipporah one of the seven daughters of Jethro. Moses shortly afterwards married Zipporah and she bore him a son, Gershom, whose name means ‘foreigner’ thus identifying both Moses and the child as strangers and pilgrims in the land, as witnessed in Hebrews 11: 13, as follows: ***‘All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.’*** Whilst in Midian, Elohim told Moses through the miracle of the burning bush to save His people Israel from slavery in Egypt.

It was very difficult for Moses to perform what YHVH required of him and he tried to evade (YHVH)’s directive, saying in Exodus 3: 11, ***“Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt.”*** Humanly speaking, this fallen prince of Egypt knew the extent of Pharaoh’s power and the futility of an outcast Israelite to convince him to let the Israelites go free. This was when YHVH told Moses that He is the Eternal (or I AM) and that he would be with him all the way. To convince Moses Elohim performed two miracles: Moses’ staff became a snake and then turned back into a stick, and Moses’ hand became leprous and was healed instantly. Elohim told Moses that he would be able to perform these same miracles before Pharaoh, and in addition to these also be able to change water from the Nile, poured on the ground, into blood. Moses again pleaded with YHVH to send someone else instead of him. Even though this displeased Elohim, He agreed to send Aaron, Moses’ brother with him as a spokesman. Eventually Moses agreed to and undertook his mission with willingness. Together Moses and his brother Aaron went to Egypt and called the elders of Israel together to inform them about Elohim’s intention to free them from Pharaoh’s rule. But when they eventually approached Pharaoh he was not receptive to their message. Elohim therefore unleashed 10 plagues in succession on the Egyptians.

The Egyptians were very religious people, but pagan to the core. They had gods for everything and painstakingly tried to please them. In fact they had 39 main gods, many of them depicted in Egyptian art with animal bodies or heads. They had numerous priests that cared for many types of sacred animals that represented different gods. The Israelite’s exodus out of Egypt represented a confrontation between YHVH the Elohim of Israel and the false gods of Egypt. It would remove any doubt in the minds of the Israelite’s as to who the true Elohim was. It was not only Elohim’s plan to take them out of Egypt, but also to discourage worship of the supposedly powerful Egyptian gods. YHVH made it clear to Moses in Exodus 12: 12, saying: ***“For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment—I am YHVH.”*** Elohim directed each of the 10 plagues against the Egyptian gods that supposedly held influence over all the aspects of nature. The plagues symbolized as a collective spectacular demonstration to both the Israelites and Egyptians that the gods the Egyptians worship were false and helpless to help anyone who besought them.

¹⁹ Encyclopedia Judaica 1971, Vol., 12, p372.

Let's consider the 10 plagues that Elohim unleashed upon Egypt. He turned water into blood, making the water undrinkable and rancid, and the fish perished. The Egyptians counted on the Nile goddess Hapi and the powerful Osiris to protect the Nile. But, their prayers to the Egyptian gods could not purify the water. Only when Moses and Aaron prayed to YHVH the true Elohim were the waters refreshed once again. The second plague was aimed at the frogs the Egyptians associated with the Nile and worship in the form of Heqt, whose statue carried the head of a frog. Heqt the god of frogs was supposed to control the frog population, but when too many frogs appeared during the second plague, the Egyptian's prayers and incense offered to Heqt could not change the situation. It was only when YHVH the Elohim of Israel intervened that the frogs died and the crises stopped. The third and fourth plagues that came forth represented Kheper the scarab god represented by beetles and other insects. When the swarm of lice and gnats stung the Egyptians, the magicians asked the incest god to control them, but again only when Moses asked YHVH the Elohim of Israel to remove the plague, did they stop. The plague that affected the cattle which the Egyptians deemed to be under the control of the bull god Apis and the cow goddess Hathor, could not be stopped by them and all the livestock in Egypt died, but not one of the livestock of the sons of Israel died. The plague of boils which came next, which the Egyptian's god of medicine Imhotep a physician they worshipped and the god of magic Thoth could not cure, even to the point where the magicians could not stand before Moses, due to the boils they suffered. Again when Pharaoh and the Egyptians pleaded with Moses that Elohim would take away the problem, did Elohim stop the plague. It is also after this plague that Elohim said to Pharaoh in Exodus 9: 15 & 16, ***'For if by now I had put forth My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, you would then have been cut off from the earth, (16) But, indeed, for this cause I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power, and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth.'*** This witness remains for us who study Torah today.

Egypt's food crops were affected severely by the next two plagues; a hailstorm struck the harvest, followed by a swarm of locusts that completely decimated it. The crops were supposed to be guarded by Seth the harvest god and the weather goddess Nut was supposed to prevent the bad weather, but the prayers of the Egyptians fell on ears that could not hear anyway. The ninth and tenth plagues were aimed at the two supposed to be the mightiest gods in Egypt, namely Ra which is represented by the sun, and Pharaoh himself. The darkness of the ninth plague brought about darkness for three days during which the sun did not shine. Notwithstanding the prayers the Egyptians offered, Ra could not help them. Pharaoh was also powerless to stop the final plague, the death of the firstborn in Egypt. With all Pharaoh's gods proven to be non-existent, the ruler of Egypt finally gave in and virtually begged Moses to take the Israelites out of Egypt. The plagues accomplished their purpose, and obtained freedom for the Israelites and Moses gained respect from the people, as witnessed from Exodus 11: 3, in this way: ***'And YHVH gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Furthermore, the man Moses himself was greatly esteemed in the land of Egypt, both in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.'*** The final plague caused the Egyptians to become so traumatized that they begged the Israelites to go. Because the Israelites left in great haste, their bread dough did not have time to rise and they had to bake unleavened bread for their journey. But even in that was a lesson, as we read from Exodus 13: 6 - 9, as follows: ***"For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to YHVH. (7) Unleavened bread shall be eaten throughout the seven days; and nothing leavened shall be seen among you, nor shall any leaven be seen among you in all your borders.(8) And you shall tell your son on that day, saying, 'It is because of what YHVH did for me when I came out of Egypt (our personal sin). (9) And it shall serve as a sign to you on your hand, and as a reminder on your forehead, that the law of YHVH may be in your mouth; for with a powerful hand (meaning Yahshua) YHVH brought you out of Egypt."*** The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a sign that

we want to keep Elohim's law, as much as the wearing of phylacteries are signs that we will do Elohim's law as well as learn it. Notice we do it first and then we learn about its meaning.

Elohim planned to destroy the Egyptian army when they followed the Israelites through the Red Sea. He first miraculously opened the sea for the Israelites to pass through dry shod, then drowned the Egyptian army as they struggled to get through the muddy sea bed, by closing up the sea around them, after the Israelites arrived on the other side. Moses as the deliverer of Israel freed them from captivity in Egypt. Then he led them for the next forty years through the wilderness. The wandering of the nation of Israel can be likened to the wandering as Nazarene believers through the wilderness of the world. The Israelites failed to learn and obey from their time of trials and tests in the wilderness. Elohim taught them to trust and obey Him throughout their journey, but they failed to enter the Promised Land, because of unbelief resulting from disobedience. It is for this reason that we are warned in Hebrews 4, since the promise of entering Elohim's rest in the soon coming kingdom of Elohim on earth remains, not to lose out because of unbelief (in the gospel), when Messiah returns one day soon. Unbelief resulted in Satan's success to deceive the whole world into disbelieving Messiah's gospel, as Rav Shaul explained in 2 Corinthians 4: 3 & 4, saying: ***'And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, (4) 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 glory of Messiah*** (meaning when Messiah comes into His kingdom as King of kings and Master of masters), ***who is the image of Elohim.***' If we do not believe in the coming kingdom of Elohim, to the point where we make Elohim King in our lives already, and therefore also keep all of the Torah applicable to us, we will not enter that rest of the kingdom of Elohim, when Messiah returns.

Our Jewish brothers to this day believe in the true gospel of the coming kingdom of Elohim, with Messiah coming to rule the united nation of Israel as well as the rest of the world from Jerusalem. They already believe in the resurrection of the dead and know that the kingdom of heaven will come to earth as it is now in heaven, just as Messiah taught His disciples to pray. In fact most Rabbis agree that if one believes in the coming kingdom of Elohim, he should keep all of Torah to confirm his belief. Satan has deceived the rest of mankind through mainly Christianity that good people will go to heaven at death and the wicked will be tormented in an eternal hellfire forever. When Satan rebelled against Elohim, he wanted to take over Elohim's throne in the third heaven as witnessed in Isaiah 14: 13 & 14, in this way: ***"But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven, I will raise my throne above the stars (angels) of Elohim, and I will sit on the mount (government) of assembly in the recesses of the north (the throne of Elohim). (14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'*** In addition we know that Satan and his demons will ultimately be thrown into the lake of fire where they will be tormented forever, as witnessed in Revelation 20: 10, as follows: ***'And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet had been cast also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.'*** Satan has succeeded in selling his own desires as well as his final destination to his deceived audience, Christianity, as their most important teaching.

Moses was a man of Elohim and as a general and prince in Egypt, as the governor of Israel, as deliverer, leader and prophet, he was totally dedicated to Elohim. He was a humble man, understanding that everything he had and everything he accomplished came from Elohim as he recorded in Deuteronomy 8: 11 – 20 and especially in verse 18, saying: ***"But you shall remember YHVH your Elohim, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant (the Ten Commandments, Statutes and Judgments) which He swore to your fathers as it is this day."*** Even though Moses failed to enter the Promised Land because he struck the rock twice due to his frustrations with the Israelites, after Elohim specifically instructed him to talk to the rock and water will come forth from it, we see witnessed in Hebrews 11: 24 – 29, 39 & 40, that he will definitely be in the kingdom of Elohim, as follows: ***'By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused***

*to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; (25) choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of Elohim, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; (26) considering the reproach of Messiah greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. (27) By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen. (28) By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn might not touch them. (29) By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned. (39) And all these (the ones mentioned in Hebrews 11: 7 – 38 including Moses), **having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised,** (40) **because Elohim had provided something better for us, so that apart from us, they should not be made perfect** (at Messiah's return)."*

YHVH promised Moses that His people will also believe in Moses forever as recorded in the first part of Exodus 19: 9 in this way: ***'And YHVH said to Moses, "Behold, I shall come to you in a thick cloud, in order that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe in you forever."*** At the time Moses did perhaps not fully understand what YHVH meant, but later when YHVH gave Moses instructions regarding His other Feast Days, did Moses realize what YHVH meant. The Feast Days of Elohim given in Leviticus 23 are His Set-apart Days to be kept by all those who worship Him. Even though the weekly Sabbath occurs every seventh day of the week, Elohim told Moses that he (or those who represent him – i.e. sit in his seat) was responsible for proclaiming the annual Feast Days of Elohim, provided they are in due season. YHVH does not expect each individual to determine the annual Set-apart calendar for themselves. Instead He intended the calendar to be proclaimed by an authoritative body – it is definitely not every man for himself? Even so, we see increasingly how people simply do what is right in their own eyes. YHVH is not the Author of such Spiritual anarchy. He gave the responsibility for determining the annual Feast Days calendar to Moses. YHVH specifically told Moses in verses 2 & 4 of Leviticus 23, saying: ***"Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, '(YHVH)'s appointed times which you shall proclaim as set-apart convocations – My appointed times are these: (4) These are the appointed times of YHVH, holy convocations which you (Moses) shall proclaim at the times appointed (the KJV correctly reads: 'in their season') for them."***

The Hebrew term for convocation is *'miqra'*, which refers to an officially called assembly. In Numbers 10: 2 Moses was told that two silver trumpets were to be made and one of their main uses were ***"for summoning the congregation"*** and ***"when convening the assembly"*** (verse 7). But who was responsible to use these trumpets? We read the answer from verse 8 of Numbers 10, as follows: ***"The priestly sons of Aaron, moreover, shall blow the trumpets; and this shall be for you a perpetual statute throughout your generations."*** Continuing in verse 10 we read: ***"Also in the day of your gladness and in your appointed feasts, and on the first days of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be as a reminder of you before your Elohim. I am YHVH your Elohim."*** The noun *'miqra'* is derived from the verb *'qara'*, rendered as ***"proclaim"*** in Leviticus 23: 2 and 4. What exactly does it mean? It is the same word used in Genesis 1: 5 where we read: ***'And Elohim called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.'*** A further example where the Hebrew word *'qara'* is translated as called may be read from Genesis 1: 8 & 10, where Elohim ***"called"*** the expanse heaven (v 8), the dry land He ***"called"*** earth, and the gathering of the waters He ***"called"*** seas (v 10). Later we learn that YHVH Elohim brought before Adam the animals He had created to see what he would call them. We read in the second part of Genesis 2: 19, ***"and whatever the man called (qara) a living creature ('nephesh' or soul), that was its name."*** So we see that qara also means to "call", "name" or "designate", and YHVH assigned the responsibility to name or designate all the different animals to Adam.

In Leviticus 23, we learned that Moses and the group of elders also mentioned in Deuteronomy 17: 8 – 12 were responsible for naming or proclaiming the days on which the congregation was to assemble before Elohim. Numbers 10 explains that this refers to the Priesthood and shows that YHVH gave them the responsibility to announce the arrival of new moons and annual Feast Days. It was not an individual matter for each Israelite to arrive at by himself; rather it was a collective matter to be proclaimed by an authoritative body. Nevertheless, there is more - most read right over the implications of who was to name, or proclaim, the days that would be considered Elohim's appointed festivals. The Priesthood was given the right to name, or proclaim, those days – in the same way that YHVH gave Adam the authority to name, or designate the animals He had created. YHVH gave the Priesthood guidelines and principles by which they were to proclaim those days, but He did not spell out every single detail. He gave them the principles with which they had to make judgments. We read in the first part of Psalm 103: 7, ***'He made known His ways to Moses.'*** We read further in Psalms 147: 19 & 20, ***'He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and His ordinances to Israel. (20) He has not dealt thus with any nation, and as for His ordinances, they have not known them.'*** This is talking about Israel, before the nation Israel split in two and were taken into captivity, because of idolatry. Since then only the Jewish nation remained faithful to Elohim and has been keeping His Set-apart Days since Ezra and Nehemiah returned to the Promised Land about 500 years before Messiah's first coming.

Moses prophesied about another prophet who would arise after him as witnessed in Deuteronomy 18: 18 & 19, in this way: ***'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. (19) And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.'*** That prophet was Yahshua the Messiah as is confirmed in Acts 3: 19 – 22, as follows: ***"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 holy prophets from ancient time. (22) Moses said, 'YHVH ELOHIM SHALL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED in everything He says to you.'"*** Moses was a forerunner to this great prophet to come. Rav Shaul compared the two prophets in Hebrews 3: 1 – 6, saying: ***'Therefore, holy brethren (those who are set-apart by the Torah and the Set-apart Spirit), partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Yahshua, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. (2) He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. (3) For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. (4) For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is Elohim. (5) Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were spoken of later; (6) but Messiah was faithful as a Son over His house whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope (to be in the kingdom of Elohim) firm until the end.'*** Pulling back the curtain of history, we are able to read Elohim's revelation through both prophets. Messiah told us in no uncertain terms, that we are to live by every word of Elohim (in both Matthew 4: 4 and Luke 4: 4), which includes every word that Moses recorded for us in the Torah.

In addition we know that Messiah also told His disciples in Matthew 5: 17 – 20, saying: ***'Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. (18) For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished. (19) Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (20) For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not***

enter the kingdom of heaven.' Yahshua also told His disciples in Matthew 23: 1 – 3 saying: ***'Then Yahshua spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, (2) saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; (3) therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things, and do not do them.'*** However, as Rav Kepha warned us about false teachers who would introduce destructive heresies, even contradicting what Yahshua said in 2 Peter 2: 1, saying: ***'But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies*** (doctrines about different calendars so that when Messiah returns on Yom Teruah when our Jewish Brothers will be in their synagogues one day, as witnessed in Zechariah 12: 7 – 14, those who follow these calendars will not be waiting for Him and might be a day or two too late, resulting in Him closing the door on them), ***even denying*** (a word translated from the Greek word 'arneomai' which also means to contradict) ***the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.'***

Finally for those Christian and other teachers who assert that their followers need not be concerned with the writings of Moses namely the Torah, Yahshua said in John 5: 43 – 47: ***'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? (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?'*** Think very carefully about it!

Chapter 12: What is the significance of Wisdom, knowledge and understanding to us?

We commence our study by reading (YHVH)'s words to Moses in Exodus 31: 1 – 5, in this way: ***'Now YHVH spoke to Moses, saying, (2) "See, I have called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. (3) And I have filled him with the Spirit of Elohim in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship, (4) to make artistic designs for work in gold, in silver, and in bronze, (5) and in the cutting of stones for settings, and in the carving of wood, that he may work in all kinds of craftsmanship."*** Elohim's Spirit working in the mind (or spirit) of Bezalel endowed him with wisdom, understanding and knowledge to perform all sorts of special work in the interior design of the temple of Elohim. The name Bezalel transliterated in Hebrew means *'the shadow of El'*. Bezalel was the son of Uri which transliterated in Hebrew means *'my light'* – so Bezalel the shadow of El was the son of my light. Bezalel therefore reminds us of Yahshua our Messiah, who is *'the image of Elohim'* (as per Colossians 1: 15) the Son of Elohim, who is according to first John 1: 5 ***'light'*** and who is busy building the temple of Elohim.

Let's turn to the book of Proverbs to read more about wisdom, knowledge and understanding: We start reading from Proverbs 2: 1 – 3, as follows: ***'My son, if you will receive my sayings, and treasure my commandments within you, (2) make your ear attentive to wisdom, incline your heart to understanding; (3) for if you cry for discernment, lift your voice for understanding.'*** This was in fact what King Solomon asked YHVH to give him, when He told him to ask whatever he desires as recorded in first Kings 3: 9, saying: ***"So give Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Thine?"*** Solomon continues in Proverbs 2 telling us in verses 4 – 6, saying: ***'If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; (5) then you will discern the fear of YHVH, and discover the knowledge of Elohim. (6) For YHVH gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.'*** We read further from verses 7 – 22, ***'He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity. (8) Guarding the paths of justice, and He preserves the way of His godly ones. (9) Then you will discern righteousness and justice and equity and every good course. (10) For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; (11) discretion will guard you, understanding will watch over you. (12) To deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things; (13) from those who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; (14) who delight in doing evil and rejoice in the perversity of evil; (15) whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways; (16) to deliver you from the strange (non-Israelite) woman, from the adulteress who flatters with her words; (17) that leaves the companion of her youth, and forgets the covenant of her Elohim; (18) for her house sinks down to death, and her tracks lead to the dead; (19) none who go to her return again, nor do they reach the paths of life. (20) So you will walk in the way of good men, and keep to the paths of the righteous. (21) For the upright will live in the land, and the blameless will remain in it; (22) but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the treacherous will be uprooted from it.'*** From this we understand that the wisdom, understanding and knowledge from Elohim are able to keep us on the right paths and lead us away from perverse people, but most of all, also from the harlot.

But who or what is this harlot that the book of Proverbs is referring to? We find the answer in Revelation 17: 1 – 5, as follows: ***'And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, (2) with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality." (3) And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on the scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. (4) And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of unclean things of her immorality, (5) and upon her forehead a name***

was written, a mystery, “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” If we seek the wisdom, knowledge and understanding from YHVH and study Torah, it will definitely keep us from the harlot, since they teach that Torah is the curse that J*e*s*u*s redeemed them from. Elohim’s true congregation teaches that the blessings of the Law are as recorded in Deuteronomy 28, together with the curses and when Yahshua became the sacrifice, he effectively did away with the sacrificial requirements of the law in respect of sin. However, even though YHVH does not require sin offerings any longer, righteous sacrifices will again be offered in the future, as witnessed in Psalm 51: 16 – 19, in this way: **“For Thou dost not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; Thou art not pleased with burnt offering. (17) The sacrifices of Elohim are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O Elohim, Thou wilt not despise. (18) By Thy favor do good to Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem. (19) Then Thou wilt delight in righteous sacrifices, in burnt offering and whole burnt offering; then young bulls will be offered on Thine altar.”** Messiah has become the Sacrifice required by the law to pay for indebtedness for transgressing Elohim’s Torah. We read from Colossians 2: 14, **‘having cancelled 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.’** This does not say, like many in Christianity believe that Yahshua nailed the law to the cross, but that He nailed our certificate of debt for breaking the law to the cross – meaning He has redeemed us from having to die the second death for our own sins, provided we repent and start obeying Elohim’s teachings.

To fully understand the importance of wisdom, understanding and knowledge, let’s turn to the book of Proverbs written by King Solomon. We read therefore from Proverbs 9: 10, **‘The fear of YHVH is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.’** If Eve feared YHVH; if she respected His word, she would already have had the wisdom not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If King Solomon feared YHVH enough, he would have obeyed Him and not take so many wives which resulted in idolatry and the split in the kingdom of Israel, leaving us as the lost ten tribes of the house of Israel in the situation we are in today. But as they say: it is all water under the bridge and thanks to Elohim’s wonderful love for us His people, He has sent Yahshua to reconcile us back to Him, but also to Brother Judah. Continuing with this theme we read from Proverbs 15: 14, **‘The mind of the intelligent (understanding one) seeks knowledge, but the mouth of fools feeds on folly.’** For those familiar with the Amidah a Jewish prayer recited daily, the forth blessing (out of 19) said in this prayer, which is for understanding or insight, in this way: **‘You graciously endow man with wisdom and teach insight to frail mortal. So endow us graciously from Yourself with wisdom, insight and discernment. Blessed are You, Adonai, gracious giver of wisdom.’** It is by reading from Colossians 1: 9 & 10, that we understand that Rav Shaul as a Jew knew about this blessing in the Amidah, when he spoke to the brethren in Colossae, saying: **‘For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, (10) so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Master, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of Elohim.’**

Continuing in Colossians 1 we read firstly about Yahshua’s reconciling work from verses 21 – 23, as follows: **‘And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, (22) yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—(23) If indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Shaul, was made a minister.’** Then we read about Elohim’s mystery from verses 25 - 27 and Colossians 2: 2 & 3, in this way: **‘Of this congregation I was made a minister according to the stewardship from Elohim bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of Elohim, (26) that is,**

the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, (27) to whom Elohim willed to make known that the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Messiah in you, the hope of glory. (2: 2) That their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of Elohim's mystery, that is Messiah Himself, (3) in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.' But how could all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge be hidden in Messiah? Because Messiah, being the living word of Elohim, He is also accordingly the embodiment of all wisdom, understanding and knowledge.

The Psalmist shows us in Psalm 119 that we need understanding to be able to keep Elohim's commandments, as witnessed in verses 34, 73 and 98, as follows: ***'Give me understanding, that I may observe Thy Law, and keep it with all my heart. (73) Thy hands made me and fashioned me; give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments. (98) Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever mine.'*** Yes it takes understanding to realize that Elohim's commandments are for our good! The mystery that YHVH created the universe by Yahshua in whom are the hidden treasures of wisdom, knowledge and understanding is confirmed in Proverbs 3: 19 & 20, in this way: ***'YHVH by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens. (20) By His knowledge the deeps were broken up, and the skies drip with dew.'*** Elohim's Torah or word contains wisdom, understanding and knowledge – therefore when He looked into His word, the blueprint of all creation, He created His dwelling place on earth. That is the whole purpose of creation – when YHVH created Adam in His image and likeness, His purpose was to build a dwelling place for Him on earth, in Adam. Over time He intended to fill man with wisdom, knowledge and understanding that would give him eternal life. However, Adam and Eve preferred to partake of the tree of (earthly) knowledge of good and evil, instead of the tree of (eternal) life. Therefore, they doomed themselves to death and had to leave the Garden of Eden or paradise and start fending for themselves.

Later when YHVH again decided to build the tabernacle in the wilderness as a dwelling place for Him on earth, He filled Bezalel (the shadow of El, the son of light) with wisdom, knowledge and understanding thus empowering him to build a dwelling place for Him. A shadow is a reflection of reality – when the sun casts a shadow of you on the ground, it looks like you, but it is not really you. Therefore the shadow of El looked like El, but was not Elohim. We see the reason for Elohim to fill Bezalel with wisdom, knowledge and understanding is to ***'make artistic designs for work in gold, in silver, and in bronze, and in the cutting of stones for settings.'*** Rav Kepha, in understanding what Yahshua explained to Him in Matthew 16: 18, said in first Peter 2: 5, ***'you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Elohim through Yahshua Messiah.'*** Living stones are able to change shape and can be formed. Similarly to Bezalel we read about Yahshua from Isaiah 11: 1 & 2 in this way: ***'Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. (2) And the Spirit of YHVH will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of YHVH.'*** We read further about Messiah in Zechariah 6: 12 & 13: ***"Then say to him, 'Thus says YHVH of hosts, "Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of YHVH. (13) Yes, it is He who will build the temple of YHVH, and He who will bear the honor and sit on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices."***

We read further about Yahshua from Colossians 1: 15 – 18, as follows: ***'And He is the image of the invisible Elohim (the one who came to show or manifest Elohim to us), the first-born of all creation. (16) For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created by Him and***

for Him. (17) And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. (18) He is also Head of the body, the congregation; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.' Messiah the Son of Man has already qualified when He was born-again as the Son of Elohim at His resurrection (as we are told in Romans 1: 4²⁰). He willingly gave His life for the sins of the world, but also to be able to remarry His bride the general assembly and congregation of the first-born, enrolled in the book of life in heaven, when He returns. However, He also had to go away, so that the Set-apart Spirit could come to indwell those of us whom the Father called out of this world, after immersion in Messiah's saving name and the laying on of hands by the elders in the congregation. Ever since Messiah's ascension to heaven, those called out of the world by YHVH who have been immersed, and are being taught in the congregation of first-fruit believers by those who came before them, to equip them for the work of service, to build up the body of Messiah, until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of Elohim, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Messiah (as par Ephesians 4: 12 & 13).

A summary of this process is given in Ephesians 2: 11 – 14, 19 – 22, in this way: **'Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Un-circumcision" by the so-called 'Circumcision,' which is performed in the flesh by human hands— (12) remember that you were at that time separate from Messiah, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without Elohim in the world. (13) But now in Messiah Yahshua you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Messiah. (14) For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall. (19) So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of Elohim's household, (20) 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 the Master; (22) in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of Elohim in the Spirit.'** It is for this reason that having wisdom, understanding and knowledge is so important, since it gives us as individuals the ability as living stones to make YHVH a dwelling place in us, upon the earth. Not only as individuals, but more so as a congregation of called our believers.

In the beginning there were two kinds of wisdom available to man, and in a similar way Rav Yaa'cov warns in James 3: 13 -17, saying: **'Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. (14) But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. (15) This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. (16) For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. (17) But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. (18) And the seed whose fruit is righteous is sown in peace by those who make peace.'** It is important to notice that wisdom and understanding is connected to works and behavior. Wisdom and understanding gives us the ability to discern and is connected to how we behave. We see from verse 16 above that jealousy and self-seeking result in confusion and every foul deed. Because wisdom, understanding and knowledge brings stability and order, we need to strive to obtain the right wisdom in our lives. If we partake of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in our lives, by leaning on our own understanding, we are heading the wrong way. On the contrary if we are seeking for wisdom, knowledge and understanding from Elohim's word and those who teach only from His word, we will be known by the fruit in our lives. There would not be any hypocrisy and as it says in

²⁰ Romans 1: 4, **'Who was declared the Son of Elohim with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the spirit of holiness, Yahshua Messiah our Master.'**

verse 18 of James 3, ***‘And the seed whose fruit is righteous is sown in peace by those who make peace.’***

Let’s see what our Master Yahshua the Messiah had to say about the fruit we bear in Matthew 7: 15 – 27, in this way: ***“Beware of false prophets, who come to you 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? (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 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 (meaning Messiah the wisdom, knowledge and understanding of Elohim). (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 on 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.”***

Finally, Yahshua told the parable about the 10 virgins (the remnant from the lost ten tribes called out of the world) in Matthew 25: five are wise and five are foolish. The five wise virgins make sure that they have enough oil indicative of their Scriptural Study and lifestyle, during which they acquire ample wisdom, understanding and knowledge about Elohim and His way and practice the same, whilst the foolish virgins are not that diligent in getting to know all they can about Elohim and His way – they are just cruising along leisurely. We read the end result from verse 5 – 12, as follows: ***“Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. (6) But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ (7) Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. (8) And the foolish said to the prudent, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ (9) But the prudent answered, saying, ‘No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ (10) And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. (11) And later the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Master, Master, open up for us.’ (12) But He answered and said, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you.”*** People it is time to wake up, by not only regularly studying Torah, to acquire wisdom, knowledge and understanding but also by diligently apply it in our lives, if we want to be part of the five prudent virgins ready to marry our bridegroom when He returns.

Chapter 13: Why is it so important to watch what you say?

Most of us who are called out of the world to have a relationship with Elohim, over time become very concerned about what we put into our mouths. Most of us or at least our wives who are responsible for procuring the groceries and foodstuffs for our families have become label readers, to ensure that what we eat is kosher. 'Kosher' is a word usually applied to food prepared in accordance to dietary laws described in Torah. However, it should be applied to everything we do, including our speech. Yes there are Torah commands that even apply to the way we should control what we say.

The entire way we live our lives should be totally controlled by Torah, despite those who now believe that we live in the age of grace, Rav Kepha tells us about this grace saying in first Peter 1: 13 – 19, ***'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 One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; (16) because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY FOR I AM HOLY." (17) And if you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each man's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay upon earth; (18) knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, (19) but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Messiah.'*** Elohim's teachings should regulate our moral precepts; dietary regulations; agricultural science; financial success; sexual behavior and religious practices.

The reason why slander have a direct effect on its perpetrator, goes right back to the origins of speech. We read accordingly from Genesis 2: 7, ***'Then YHVH Elohim formed man of the dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being*** (or soul). By breathing into man the spirit of speech and understanding man received the spirit in man, as is also witnessed in Zechariah 12: 1, in this way: ***'The burden of the word of YHVH concerning Israel. Thus declares YHVH who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him.'*** Job who lived during the time of Abraham was a very wise man who said in Job 32: 7 & 8, ***"I thought age should speak, and increased years should teach wisdom. (8) But it is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding."*** Yes, the merger of soul and spirit gives us the ability to speak, understand, make decisions and remember things, thus allowing us to build character over the period of our human lives on earth. Because we were created in the image of Elohim, man alone among creation is endowed with this ability, a result of having a spirit in man.

Speech itself makes an earlier appearance in Genesis, where Elohim speaks the universe into existence by His word. The first time man spoke, was when Adam gives names to the animals as witnessed in Genesis 2: 19, as follows: ***'And out of the ground YHVH Elohim formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.'*** Man's 'creativeness' differs from Elohim, in that man needs material things to make something else, as opposed to Elohim, who creates something from nothing. However we obtain an appreciation for speech based on the comparison, since man's speech is a G-dly activity. The first time that speech was misused in the Scriptures was when the serpent seduced Eve to eat from the fruit of the tree of good and evil. Elohim's response to man's sin may be better understood based on the set-apartness of speech. After man ate of the forbidden fruit they felt alienated and hid themselves from the presence of YHVH. Then Elohim called to Adam saying: ***"Where are you?"*** It was only when Adam failed to find proper words that he blames the woman that YHVH gave him for his sin, and as a result they are expelled from the Garden of Eden. True repentance of our sins or as it is transliterated in Hebrew

'Teshuvah' requires that we verbalize our sins before YHVH. This is necessary and when properly understood, will enable us to reacquire our exalted status of the image of Elohim.

We need to be especially careful what we say about the Almighty Elohim we believe in. We read from the Ten Commandments, specifically about the name of Elohim in the third commandment as recorded 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."*** The Hebrew word for vain is 'shavah', meaning to use lightly, destroy or bring the name of YHVH your Elohim to naught, by hiding, refusing to use, or purposely misspelling His name. Now there are a number of ways in which one can take the name of YHVH our Elohim in vain; one of which is mentioned in Leviticus 24: 10 - 16, in this way: ***'Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the sons of Israel; and the Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel struggled with each other in the camp. (11) And the son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name (of Elohim) and cursed. So they brought him to Moses. (Now his mother's name was Shelomith the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) (12) And they put him in custody so that the command of YHVH might be clear to them. (13) Then YHVH spoke to Moses saying, (14) "Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head; then let the congregation stone him. (15) And you shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If anyone curses his Elohim, then he shall bear his sin. (16) Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of YHVH shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.'"***

A second way in which we bring YHVH our Elohim's name to naught, is when we use titles like 'LORD' and 'God' in prayer and worship services instead of YHVH and Elohim, thereby purposely changing Elohim's Name to get people to forget it as witnessed in Jeremiah 23: 26 & 27, as follows: ***"How long? Is there anything in the hearts of the prophets who prophesy falsehood, even these prophets of the deception of their own heart, (27) who intend to make My people forget My name by their dreams which they relate to one another, just as their fathers forgot My name because of Baal (LORD)?"*** In the foreword of a number of modern translations of the Bible, as is the case with the New American Standard Bible, the Editorial Board THE LOCKMAN FOUNDATION, openly tells the reader that the word G-d is translated from the Hebrew word Elohim and the word LORD is translated from the word YHVH. The word Lord (lower case letters) is translated from the word Adonai and should be translated as Master in English. Their reason for making these seemingly unimportant changes as given in the foreword of this Bible is ***'in order to avoid confusion.'*** However, that is exactly what they have done – they have confused the user of this Bible, in that the reader finds it difficult to distinguish when the Scriptures talk about YHVH or Yahshua in the Renewed Covenant. A third way of misusing Elohim's name, is by attaching pagan feast days like Xmas and Easter to His name, or by in prayer ask Him to bless foods which He declared to be unclean, such as pork and octopus, known as calamari by those who eat such creatures.

If we claim to be the Almighty's people, we should know His name as stated in the first part of Isaiah 52: 6 ***"Therefore My people shall know My name; therefore in that day I am the one who is speaking, Here I am."*** We see from Psalm 72: 17 - 19 that the name of YHVH is eternal: ***"May his name endure forever: May his name increase as long as the sun shines; and let men bless themselves by him: let all nations call him blessed. Blessed be YHVH Elohim, the Elohim of Israel, who alone works wonders. And blessed be His glorious name forever; and may the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amein, and Amein."*** Knowing the correct name of the Almighty gives us every reason to start using it. In fact it will be our only way of survival during the forthcoming time of tribulation, prophesied in many scriptures in the Bible, one of which being in Joel 2: 31 & 32, as follows: ***"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and***

awesome day of YHVH comes. (32) 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". However, we must still be careful not to use the name of YHVH 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 is simply not His real name.

However, If we overcome Satan, the world and our own human natures, we may also be given the Elohim Family name, as witnessed in Revelation 3: 12, as follows: **"He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My Elohim, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My Elohim, and the name of the city of My Elohim, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My Elohim, and My new name."** If we are truly (YHVH)'s people, it is very important that we know, and use, the correct names for both our Heavenly Father and that of His Son. By so doing, we can be sure that we obey the third Commandment. Those who do not understand the significance of names might believe that it does not matter what you call the Heavenly Father, since they trust that *'He knows what they mean anyway'*. They are the people who prefer to use the titles 'L-RD' and 'G-d' as well as the incorrect name for our Savior, namely: J*e*s*u*s*. These people have never considered the meaning of Isaiah 65: 11, where the Almighty warns of the falling away of His people at the end-time, as follows: **"But you who forsake YHVH, who forget My Set-apart mountain, who set the table for Fortune²¹, and who fill cups with mixed wine for Destiny²²."** This verse tells us that the people of YHVH have forsaken Him and are today worshipping Fortune, the Sun-god, as the god of 'Good Luck', and Destiny, the Moon-god as the goddess of 'Fate'. Is this the reason why Sunday worship is more popular than the worship of YHVH on the Sabbath; why many people are regularly wishing others *'Good Luck'*; and why they rely on *'Fate'* instead of on YHVH our Elohim for guidance in their lives? The worship of false deities commences with disobeying the warning in Exodus 23: 13, in this way: **"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."** I am positive that we all believe that we will become part of the 144,000 faithful with the correct names on our foreheads as per Revelation 14: 1 **"And I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion and with Him one hundred forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father's name written on their foreheads."** Let us therefore heed this warning and start using the correct names of YHVH and His Son Yahshua, but let us do so with reverence and awe and only do so in prayer, self-study and worship services.

Speech has a much greater impact than what we can imagine. The people who built the Tower of Babel said in Genesis 11: 4, **"Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the earth."** Their tower was destroyed and they were dispersed throughout the earth. Apparently the builders of the Titanic believed that they built this ocean fairing ship so well that when one of the deckhands was asked at the beginning of its maiden voyage from Southampton, England to New York, whether she was really unsinkable, he replied: *'G-d Himself could not sink this ship'*. Even though the person did not use Elohim's true name the ill-fated ship was sank by an ice-berg long before it reached its destination during the night of April 14, 1912. Similarly a famous rock star in the early 1990's brought out a new record in which he sang the words: *'G-d knows I want to be free.'* He was set free after his record reached top sales, when he died some time later.

²¹ Fortune is the Canaanite deity of 'Good Luck' known as Gad or Gawd. In Joshua 11: 17 'Baal -gad'; Baal-gad was considered the Sun-god.

²² Destiny is the Canaanite deity of 'Fate' known as Meni; Meni was considered the Moon-god.

The most serious speech problem is when we talk evil about another person. Evil talk or as it is transliterated in Hebrew *'lashon hara'* refers to a derogatory statement about another person, including tale bearing and slander. Yahshua our Messiah warned specifically against this practice which at times might even involve Elohim's people in Matthew 5: 21 & 22, saying: ***"You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court. (22) But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca (Aramaic for empty head, or good for nothing),' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell."*** Yes, it is possible for us who have been called at this time to die the second death, because of the way we talk to, and about our neighbors. King Solomon the wisest man that walked the earth wrote on this subject in Proverbs 6: 12 – 19, saying: ***'A worthless person, a wicked man, is the one who walks with a false mouth. (13) Who winks with the eyes, who signals with his feet, who points with his fingers; (14) Who with perversity in his heart devises evil continually, who spreads strife. (15) Therefore his calamity will come suddenly; instantly he will be broken, and there will be no healing. (16) There are six things which YHVH hates, yes, seven which are an abomination to Him; (17) haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, (18) a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, (19) a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers.'*** Both the Torah portions Tazria and Metzora are concerned with the intricate laws of tzara'at. Tzara'at is a skin disease spoken about in the Scriptures as leprosy. Tzara'at affected people as a consequence of having spoken evil against someone else. We are all aware that Miriam was punished with this skin disease in the wilderness for speaking evil about Moses her brother. These Torah portions warn us to be careful about evil speech. Even so there are situations where one is required to speak up, such as warning about a prospective marriage or business partner; and as Nazarenes we are all appointed as watchmen over the house of Israel. We are therefore told in Isaiah 58: 1 to: ***"Cry loudly, do not hold back; raise your voice like a trumpet, and declare to My people their transgression, and to the house of Jacob their sins."***

We need to be especially careful of deceptive talk – it is very important that we do not mislead others by telling half-truths, or use flattery or boasting to get them to do things which they would otherwise not have done for us. Another kind of un-kosher speech is when we use disgusting foul language, which include curse words and or 'dirty jokes'. We should use positive language to point out the good in others, and to uplift and encourage them. But one of the biggest problems about deceptive language has to do with those of us who teach others the way of Elohim. The point is that before we start teaching others, we need to be certain that we know enough so as not to mislead others. Yahshua spoke about this in a parable to His disciples in Luke 6: 39 - 45, saying: ***'And He also spoke a parable to them: "A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit? (40) A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher. (41) 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? (42) Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye. (43) For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit; nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. (44) For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush. (45) The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart. '"***

Our discipleship program should take about three and a half years during which we are required to attend about 200 Sabbath services and all the Feast Days of Elohim during the three years, plus a

Scripture study of about two hours weekly. However, since it is not possible for everyone to attend Scripture study lessons during the week, the normal discipleship program last about seven years. After the first three and a half years, disciples may assist their Torah Teacher by doing a regular sermonette on such subjects, as: Why do we keep the Sabbath?, Why do we need to keep Elohim's annual Feast Days?, How to debunk the many reasons some site for not eating kosher, etc. Rav Yaa'cov also warns prospective teachers to make very sure that they know their facts, before they start teaching others, saying in James 3: 1, ***'Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment.'*** In continuing to talk about teachers, He also warns all of us to bridle our tongues in verses 2 – 10 of James 3, saying: ***'For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. (3) Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they may obey us, we direct their entire body as well. (4) Behold, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds are still directed by a very small rudder, wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. (5) So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. Behold, how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! (6) And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. (7) For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed, and has been tamed by the human race. (8) But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. (9) With it we bless our Master and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of Elohim; (10) from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.'***

As teachers in the congregation we should make sure that those whom we teach will not easily be deceived by the false teachers we are warned about by Rav Kepha in 2 Peter 2: 1, in this way: ***'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 (or contradicting) the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.'*** One area in which many have been deceived by false prophets is in respect of the mystery of our Nazarene faith as explained in first Timothy 3: 16 (KJV), as follows: ***'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 in glory.'*** This is obviously talking about the Oneness of Elohim, as is also confirmed by Elohim's words through Isaiah in Isaiah 43: 10 & 11, in this way: ***"You are My witnesses (talking about us from Nazarene Israel together with our Jewish Brothers)," 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."*** However, Rav Shaul continues in first Timothy 4: 1 saying: ***'But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.'***

The reason why our world is waxing from bad to worse, where more and more people become increasingly evil by the day, is because of people who deny the Oneness of Elohim as Rav Shaul explains in Romans 1: 19 – 31, as follows: ***'(Because) that which is known about Elohim is evident within them (mankind – consisting of body, soul and spirit as is confirmed in first Thessalonians 5: 23²³); for Elohim made it evident to them. (20) For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes (Ein Sof) , His eternal power (Yahshua) and divine nature (the Set-apart Spirit), have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (21) For even though they knew Elohim, they did not honor Him as Elohim, or give thanks; but they***

²³ First Thessalonians 5: 23, ***'Now may the Elohim of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Master Yahshua Messiah.'***

became futile in their speculations (about who or what is Elohim), ***and their foolish heart was darkened.*** (22) ***Professing to be wise, they became fools,*** (23) ***and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible Elohim for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures*** (meaning created beings, rather than the Creator). (24) ***Therefore Elohim gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, but their bodies might be dishonored among them.*** (25) ***For they exchanged the truth of Elohim for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amein.*** (26) ***For this reason Elohim gave them over to degrading passions; for their woman exchanges the natural function for that which is unnatural,*** (27) ***and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.*** (28) ***And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge Elohim any longer, Elohim gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,*** (29) ***being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips,*** (30) ***slanderers, haters of Elohim, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,*** (31) ***without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;*** (32) ***and, although they know the ordinance of Elohim, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.'***

Knowing this, we should hold to the confession of our faith as expressed in first Timothy 3: 16. In addition we should learn to zip our lips as far as talking about our neighbors are concerned, and we should refrain from idle talk, swearing and ever using the name of YHVH our Elohim in vain! Our lives depend on it!

Chapter 14: What can we learn from the lives of Jacob and Job?

Most people know Jacob as the father of the twelve tribe nation, known in the Scriptures as the children of Israel. Jacob was like those of us called out of the religions of the world, born into a family that Elohim had chosen and was working with. His father Isaac was the son of Abraham and Sarah and Elohim chose to work with their descendants. Jacob's father Isaac was a righteous man and like his father Abraham, he was a servant of Elohim. As a result Jacob was blessed with an abundant life with enough to eat and wear.

Even so, whilst Jacob was growing up he most probably did not think about his blessings much. Like many siblings Jacob and his brother Esau were very different in character and as a result were not very close. Isaac, Jacob's father spent more time with Esau, because Esau was an outdoors type and liked hunting and roughing it in the wild, whilst Jacob felt closer to his mother, Rebekah. Because Esau was the first born son in their family, he was therefore also the one to receive a double portion of the family inheritance. Knowing that, Jacob was obviously concerned and as a result, when his brother came home from one of his many expeditions in the wild absolutely famished, Jacob saw his chance to negotiate with Esau for his birthright to the family inheritance. We read the account in Genesis 25: 27 – 34, in this way: ***'When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field, but Jacob was a peaceful man living in tents. (28) Now Isaac loved Esau, because he had a taste for game; but Rebekah loved Jacob. (29) And when Jacob had cooked stew, Esau came in from the field and he was famished; (30) and Esau said to Jacob, "Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished." Therefore his name was Edom (meaning red). (31) But Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." (32) And Esau said, "Behold, I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me?" (33) And Jacob said, "First swear to me"; so he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. (34) Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and rose and went on his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.'***

Even though we as modern day descendants of Jacob do not think much of the discussion between these two brothers, YHVH was not pleased that Esau gave up his birthright for a meal of lentil stew, as witnessed in Malachi 1: 2 – 4, as follows: ***"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.'*** Rebekah, their mother later contrived a scheme to ensure that Jacob will receive the inheritance legitimately, by instructing Jacob to obtain his father's blessing by disguising himself as his brother Esau. As a result of this, Esau became bitter against his brother Jacob, and he swore to kill him. Jacob had to flee from his parent's home and went trekking across the barren wilderness not knowing what lay ahead in the future. One night whilst he was sleeping under the stars with a rock as his pillow, Jacob heard Elohim speak to him in a dream. We read the account from Genesis 28: 12 & 13, in this way: ***'And he had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of Elohim were ascending and descending on it. (13) And behold, YHVH stood above it and said, 'I am YHVH the Elohim of your father Abraham and the Elohim of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants.'***

In a dramatic vision Elohim told Jacob that He would work with him the same way He did with Abraham his grandfather and Isaac his father. Jacob wondered if he will ever see his family again, upon which YHVH tells him in verses 14 & 15, saying: ***"Your descendants shall also be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the***

south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” (15) And behold, I am with you, and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” YHVH promised Jacob a country, children and protection but also that He would bring him back home one day in the future. However, at this time YHVH did not tell Jacob that He would be Jacob’s Elohim, since he wanted Jacob to make that decision for himself. Rav Shaul tells us in first Corinthians 7: 14 that even if one parent of a family is converted and follow the way of Elohim, the children are also set-apart, saying: ***‘For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.’*** Therefore our children and grandchildren still have a chance to have a relationship with Elohim in a similar way that we are having. We read a second witness about this in Isaiah 61: 6 - 9, showing how we will be priests to Elohim and how our children will be blessed during the millennium, in this way: ***‘But you will be called the priests of YHVH; you will be spoken of as ministers of our Elohim. You will eat the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast. (7) Instead of your shame you will have a double portion, and instead of humiliation they will shout for joy over their portion. Therefore they will possess a double portion in their land, everlasting joy will be theirs. (8) For I, YHVH, love justice, I hate robbery in the burnt offering; and I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. (9) Then their offspring will be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples. All who see them will recognize them because they are the offspring whom YHVH has blessed.’*** We read further about this from Isaiah 44: 2 – 3, as follows: ***‘Thus says YHVH who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you, ‘Do not fear, O Jacob My servant; and you Jeshurun whom I have chosen. (3) For I will pour out water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring, and My blessing on your descendants.’*** However, Elohim has given every human being freedom of choice; He will never force His will on us. Instead it is our responsibility to let Him know what we want.

Although Jacob did not at the time accept YHVH as His Elohim, YHVH told him that He would be with him wherever he goes. What a fantastic promise – imagine if you have that guarantee from YHVH. It would mean that He will be with you when you are trying to get a suitable job; when you are not feeling well; when you are discouraged; and even when you are preparing for a test. This had a tremendous influence on Jacob’s life, knowing that Elohim would always be with Him. When Jacob woke up from his sleep that night, YHVH was no longer the Elohim who only spoke to his father and grandfather; YHVH had now also communicated with him. It was at this point that Jacob made a vow as recorded in Genesis 28: 20 – 22, saying: ***“If Elohim will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, (21) and I return to my father’s house in safety, then YHVH will be my Elohim. (22) And this stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be Elohim’s house; and of all that Thou dost give me I will surely give a tenth to Thee.”*** Similar to some of us, when we were new to the faith in Elohim, Jacob bargains with Elohim. It is only later when we truly get to know who Elohim really is; we realize that we are in no position to bargain with Him. The point is that everything we have and are belongs to Elohim anyway. We have nothing to offer Him, but He has everything, including eternal life to offer us.

We also see at this point the only needs that Jacob could think of was the basic needs of man such as food, clothing and to return home safely. Many years later in Jacob’s life his needs would shift to things far more important. Whilst living in the land of Haran, Jacob’s relationship with his father-in-law took a turn for the worst and he decided that it was time for him to return home. But the thought of his brother’s desire to kill him was still fresh in his mind. What kind of reception would he receive from Esau? At that time YHVH again spoke to Jacob as recorded in Genesis 31: 3, saying to him: ***“Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you.”*** Jacob left his

father-in-law Jethro and he returned home, after serving him for many years. On his way home, Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau. Inspired by Elohim, he picked out two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty camels and their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. Then he divided each kind of stock into groups, sending each group out at a different time to approach Esau as one of several gifts. He instructs his servants in charge of each of these groups to tell Esau that their master Jacob hopes he (Esau) will accept his gifts. In this way Jacob made Esau to change his attitude towards him.

After the animals intended for Esau had gone on, Jacob moved the two sections of his entourage on ahead a short distance to camp for the night, whilst he remained behind alone to pray. We read about this as well as the strange thing that happened to him that night, in Genesis 32: 22 - 30, 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 the Jabbok. (23) And he took them and sent them across the stream. And he sent across whatever he had. (24) Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. (25) 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. (26) Then he said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." But he said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." (27) So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." (28) And he said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with Elohim and with men and have prevailed." (29) Then Jacob asked him and said, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And he blessed him there. (30) So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said, "I have seen Elohim face to face, yet my life has been preserved."'*** We read in Hosea 12: 3 – 5 that Jacob actually wrestled with Elohim, as follows: ***'In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his maturity he contended with Elohim. (4) Yes, he wrestled with the angel and prevailed; He wept and sought His favor. He found Him at Bethel, and there He spoke with us, (5) even YHVH, the Elohim of hosts; YHVH is His name.'*** However, because we know that nobody has ever seen or can see YHVH, this must have been the visible (form or) image of ELOHIM that Jacob beheld, as we read in Numbers 12: 8; This was the Word who later became flesh and dwelt among us about 2000 years ago, namely Yahshua.

It was a trying night for Jacob, when he realized that he was dealing with more than a human being. He struggled to get a blessing from this Superior being. Before sunset the next morning he was blessed and praised for his determination. Jacob was determined to strive with all his might not to lose Elohim's blessing and eternal promises. Jacob's determination was greater than that of Esau, who sold his birthright for a bowl of stew. He proved that he had strength of character to overcome his spiritual problems. The wrestling match was actually a test of character. Before Jacob's wrestling partner left, He told Jacob that his name would be changed from Jacob to Israel, which means one who overcomes. Elohim would not give His blessing and a birthright to a man who had taken them from a weaker brother unfairly. YHVH appeared as a man to give Jacob the chance to prove himself as one who is able to overcome. In fact this is exactly what YHVH expects of each and every one of us individually. Like Jacob YHVH wants each one of us on an individual basis to prove that he or she is indeed an Israelite. How do we prove that? How did the man whose name was changed to Israel prove that? Jacob had to strive with Elohim and to become Israel; he had to get to know YHVH our Elohim more intimately. Similar as to how our father Jacob had to overcome to prove his strength of character, each one of us, whom YHVH called at this time, has to overcome those sins which so beset us, before we will be allowed access into the coming Kingdom of Elohim.

Each one of us has our own set of circumstances to overcome; one might have a problem with immersion; another might have a problem with circumcision; whilst another might have a problem

with wearing head coverings during prayer and worship services; and yet another might have a problem with accepting the Oneness of Elohim. Yes, each person has his own cross to bear. However, we are assured that those of us who have been immersed in Yahshua's saving name (as per Acts 2: 38²⁴) and had hands laid upon us by the elders (as we read in Acts 8: 16 & 17²⁵), have already received a portion of the Set-apart Spirit as a pledge of inheritance, with a view to redemption (as per Ephesians 1: 13 -14²⁶). This is confirmed for us in 1 John 5: 4, as follows: ***'For whatever is born of Elohim overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith.'*** The question is: do these attacks or challenges come from Satan? Or is it a challenge directly from YHVH, who wants you Jacob – the latter day descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to prove who He (YHVH) is – like in the case with father Jacob?

To find the answer, let's turn to the book of Job in the Scriptures. Reading from Job 1: 8, we notice that YHVH identifies Job as blameless and an upright man, fearing Him and turning away from evil. Continuing on in Job 1, 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 He allows Job to be harmed by him, 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 life. We read in verse 13 of Job 1, that Job's children were having a party in the eldest brother's house. From verse 14 to 19 we see Satan unleashing disaster upon Job's family and property. The Sabeans 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 who took 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 the servant 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 - 22 of Job 1, that Job did not curse YHVH because of what happened to Him. Instead we see: ***'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.'***

Self-righteous people like Job 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 He 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 - 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***

²⁴ Acts 2: 38, ***'And Peter said to them, "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."***

²⁵ Act 8: 16 -17, ***'For He (the Set-apart Spirit) had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been immersed in the name of the Master Yahshua. Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Set-apart Spirit.'***

²⁶ Ephesians 1: 13 – 14, ***'In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your 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 redemption of Elohim's own possession, to the praise of His glory.'***

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. Similarly YHVH will also allow attacks on us, to bring problems in our faith to our attention. So even though the attacks on our faith might come from Satan and his agents, YHVH might allow it, to help us improve our character and strengthen our faith.

Both Jacob and Job got to know YHVH our Elohim intimately in their respective struggles in life. Jacob proved to himself that the one he wrestled with was the one who later became Yahshua, or Immanuel meaning Elohim with us. Job also knew that the life of everything living is in the hand of YHVH, as witnessed in Job 12: 9 & 10, in this way: **"Who among all these (talking about the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea) does not know that the hand of YHVH has done this. (11) In whose hand is the life of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind."** Job also wrote about Elohim in Job 9: 8 & 9, saying: **'Who alone stretches out the heavens, and tramples down the waves of the sea; (9) Who makes the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades, and the chambers of the south.'** Job a very wise man knew His Creator, (but as we see here, he also knew about the different planets long before Copernicus discovered them). In the same way YHVH wants each one of us to get to know Him intimately. It is as we read from Deuteronomy 4 where YHVH told the ancient nation of Israel, that even though He will scatter us throughout the world because of idolatry, one day in the distant future a remnant of us will return to Him, saying in verses 27 – 30: **'And YHVH will scatter you among the peoples, and you shall be left few in number among the nations, where YHVH shall drive you. (28) And there you will serve gods, the work of man's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. (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. (30) 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."** Like Jacob, each one of us has to discover who or what Elohim is, before our names can be changed from Jacob to Israel.

We need to stop speculating about Elohim's Being when He tells us in Deuteronomy 6: 4 (KJV), saying: **'Hear O Israel: YHVH our Elohim is one YHVH.'** Yahshua is as we read from Colossians 1: 15, **'the image of the invisible Elohim.'** This is confirmed in the first part of Hebrews 1: 3, in this way: **'(And) He is the radiance of His (Elohim's) glory and the exact representation of His nature.'** It was for this reason that Yahshua said to His disciples in John 14: 6 & 7, **"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."** In response to this Philip asked Yahshua to show him the Father, upon which Yahshua replied in John 14: 9, saying: **"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?'"** In fact earlier when we read how our Jewish Brothers are blinded to the identity of Yahshua the arm of YHVH in John 12: 37 – 41²⁷, we also read from verses 44 & 45: **'And Yahshua cried out and said, "He who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him who sent Me. (45) And he who beholds Me beholds the One who sent**

²⁷ John 12: 37 – 40, **'But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him; 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?" For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, "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."**

Me.” YHVH is the eternal, immortal, invisible One, who manifests Himself in heaven as His ever living Word, and on earth, as His Word made flesh by which He became our Salvation.

If we do not stumble over the identity of Yahshua, the rock of our salvation any longer, and are obedient to the Word of Elohim, we too become a chosen race and the royal priesthood referred to in 1 Peter 2: 6 - 10, in this way: ***‘For this is contained in Scripture: “BEHOLD I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.” (7) This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who believe, “THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone,” (8) and, “A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE”; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed. (9) “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation (the Israel of Elohim), a people for Elohim’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; (10) for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF ELOHIM; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCEY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.”*** Since we are already a royal priesthood and the Israel of Elohim, who will meet our Torah observant Jewish Brothers on the mountains of Israel at Messiah’s return (provided we remain faithful to the end), we already wear head coverings during worship services and keep all of Torah applicable to each one of us as individuals. Halleluyah!

Chapter 15: Does the Feast days we keep matter to Elohim?

Yahshua our Messiah was born a Jew and there is not a single witness of Him starting a new religion called Christianity anywhere in the Scriptures, as many assume. The original congregation was started by YHVH through Moses in the wilderness as witnessed in Acts 7: 37 & 38, in this way: ***"This is the Moses who said to the sons of Israel, 'ELOHIM SHALL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN.'*** (38) ***This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and who was with our fathers; and he received living oracles to pass on to you."*** Yahshua's main purpose was as given in Isaiah 49: 5 & 6, as follows: ***'And now says YHVH, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, in order that Israel might be gathered to Him (for I am honored in the sight of YHVH, and My Elohim is My strength), (6) He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones (Notsrim – believers in Yahshua who keep Torah; Nazarenes) to Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'***

Yahshua came specifically to bring a remnant of the lost ten tribes of Israel back to the covenant relationship which united Israel (including both the house of Judah and the house of Israel) entered into at Mount Sinai. This was also what He told the Canaanite woman who asked Him to heal her demon-possessed daughter in Matthew 15: 24, saying: ***"I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*** The followers of Yahshua in Renewed Covenant times were a sect of the Pharisees (the forebears of the Modern Day Rabbinical Jews) known as the Nazarenes, as is recorded in Acts 24: 5, 14 & 15, in this way: ***"For we have found this man a real pest and a fellow who stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. (14) But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the Elohim of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law, and that is written in the Prophets; (15) having a hope in Elohim, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked."*** As Nazarene believers in Messiah, we simply follow the Rabbi/Discipleship program started by Yahshua, where a teacher teaches His disciples for a full time period of three and a half years, after which he sends his disciples out as apostles (a word which simply means ones sent forth to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of Elohim) or teachers to immerse and teach disciples of their own, as also witnessed in Matthew 10: 5 – 8, as follows: ***"These twelve Yahshua sent out after instructing them, saying: "Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; (6) but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (7) And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' (8) Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons; freely you received, freely give."*** In this way the congregations of Elohim was to continue and grow until Messiah's return, but were not to sell religion at any cost.

Contrary to the Nazarene way, Simon Magus started a religion whereby religious knowledge is sold to believers as witnessed in Acts 8: 12 – 21, and especially in verses 18 – 21, in this way: ***'Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, (19) saying, "Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Set-apart Spirit."*** (20) ***But Kepha said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of Elohim with money! (21) You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before Elohim."*** Rav Shaul further talked about those who preach a different doctrine as the gospel of the Kingdom of Elohim, preached by Yahshua, and who in addition sell religion in first Timothy 6: 3 – 5, saying: ***'If anyone advocates a different doctrine, and does not agree with sound words, those of our Master Yahshua Messiah, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, (4) he is conceited and understands nothing; but he***

has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, (5) and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.' Christianity was started soon after Yahshua's ascension to heaven, as Rav Shaul warned the congregation in Galatia saying in Galatians 1: 6 – 8: ***'I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Messiah, for a different gospel; (7) which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Messiah*** (the one He preached in amongst other Mark 1: 14 & 15, about the coning kingdom of Elohim). ***(8) But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.'***

So as opposed to Nazarene Judaism, Christianity has systematically changed the Feast Days of Elohim to conform to pagan religious festivals such as Xmas and Easter to enable pagan converts to come into their church fellowship. Easter is a replacement for the Scriptural Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. They even abandoned the weekly seventh day Sabbath in favor of Sunday, supposedly in commemoration of Messiah's resurrection, which even though they say occurred on a Sunday, can be proven to be late on the Saturday afternoon, three days and three nights after His burial on Wednesday afternoon after His mid-week crucifixion as prophesied by Daniel in Daniel 9: 26 & 27, in this way: ***"Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. (27) And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.'*** We need to recognize immediately that overruling Elohim's instructions is dangerous behavior and precisely what He warned us about in Deuteronomy 13: 1 – 3, saying: ***"If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and give you a sign or a wonder, (2) and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,' (3) you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for YHVH your Elohim is testing you to find out if you love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul."***

When Elohim began dealing with ancient Israel he wanted them to become a model nation to the nations around them as witnessed in Deuteronomy 4: 1, 6 – 8, in this way: ***"And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which YHVH, the Elohim of your fathers is giving you. (6) So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' (7) For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as YHVH our Elohim whenever we call on Him? (8) Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as the whole law which I am setting before you today."*** However, we know that our forefathers failed dismally to meet Elohim's requirements, which were all for their own good. Rav Shaul warns us in first Corinthians 10: 1 – 11, that the failings of our forefathers were to serve as an example for us not to do as they did, saying: ***'For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; (2) and all were immersed into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; (3) and all ate the same spiritual food; (4) and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Messiah. (5) Nevertheless, with most of them Elohim was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. (6) Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved. (7) And do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is***

written, “THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY.” (8) Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty three thousand fell in one day. (9) Nor let us try YHVH, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. (10) Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. (11) Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.’

Whilst Israel was enslaved in Egypt they were exposed to the Egyptian pagan culture and worship. The Egyptians worshiped a number of gods as every object and wonder in nature was thought to be possessed by a spirit that could choose its own form, such as principally a bull, but also cats, baboons, jackals and crocodiles. Immediately after YHVH miraculously delivered the Israelites from Egypt, He declared that they are to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation to Him and instructed them how to worship Him by giving them the Ten Commandments, His statutes and judgments (in Exodus 20 – 23). He also specified what foods He Set-apart for them to eat, so as to remain Set-apart to Him (in Leviticus 11). Later Elohim revealed His annual Feast Days to the Israelites, specifying when and how He should be worshiped on His Set-apart Days (in Leviticus 23). However it was whilst YHVH gave Israel His commandments, that Moses was delayed from coming down from Mount Sinai, when Aaron and the people decided to mix the Egyptian form of worship with the instructions they had only recently received from Elohim. After creating the golden calf (in Exodus 32) Aaron proclaimed the following day a holiday— A Feast day to Elohim. We are told in verse 6 of Exodus 32, that they rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings to the golden calf, and afterward sat down to eat, drink and play. Elohim immediately instructed Moses to go down the mountain, saying in verses 7 & 8 of Exodus 32: **‘Go down at once for your people whom you brought up from the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. (8) They have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a molten calf and worshiped it, and have sacrificed to it, and said, ‘This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!’”**

Elohim shows us in His word that He expects much more from those who worship Him, and as a result of this sin, we know that he removed their priestly ornaments from the first born sons of Israel (as recorded in Exodus 33: 5 & 6²⁸) and officially declared the Levitical Priests to be His priests in place of every first born son in Israel; this after the Levites killed about three thousand men of the people that day according to Elohim’s instruction to Moses. The remaining people had to drink water mixed with pulverized gold from their idol. Elohim is totally against presumptuous behavior as witnessed from Numbers 15: 29 – 31, as follows: **“You shall have one law for him who does anything unintentionally, for him who is a native among the sons of Israel and for the alien who sojourns among them. (30) But the person who does anything defiantly, whether he is a native or an alien, that one is blaspheming YHVH; and that person shall be cut off from among his people. (31) Because he has despised the word of YHVH and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt shall be on him.”** YHVH has described in detail how and when He wants us to worship Him in His word; no one not specifically designated by Him should declare Feast Days to Him in defiance to the way He stipulated in His Torah. People often ask why we cannot meet together with those who keep to calendars designated by groups who are not specifically authorized to do so.

We find the answer in Amos 3: 1 - 3, in this way: **‘Hear this word which YHVH has spoken against you, sons of Israel, against the entire family which He brought up from the land of Egypt. (2) “You**

²⁸ Exodus 33: 5 & 6: **‘For YHVH had said to Moses, “Say to the sons of Israel, you are an obstinate people; should I go up in your midst for one moment, I would destroy you. Now therefore, put off your ornaments from you, that I may know what I will do with you.” So the sons of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb onward.’**

only have I chosen among all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.” (3) Do two men walk together unless they have made an appointment?’ The appointments spoken about here are the Feast Days of Elohim, which He appointed as Set-apart for all Israel to observe. We cannot ever make the mistake Aaron made in declaring any day a Feast Day to Elohim. The principle holds true amongst Elohim’s called out people today. Once we come to understand His truth, we are obliged to obey His every instruction applicable to us. We need to understand that Elohim’s teachings were recorded for our spiritual instruction and benefit, as Rav Shaul confirmed in Romans 15: 4 - 6, saying: ***‘For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (5) Now may the Elohim who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Messiah Yahshua; (6) that with one accord (in total agreement and at the specified time) you may with one voice glorify the Elohim and Father of our Master Yahshua Messiah.’***

Part of Elohim’s instructions to Israel included an explicit warning against pagan customs, as he told them through Moses in Deuteronomy 12: 29 – 32, saying: ***“When YHVH your Elohim cuts off before you the nations which you are going in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, (30) beware that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How do these nations serve their gods, that I also may do likewise?’ (31) You shall not behave thus toward YHVH your Elohim, for every abominable act which YHVH hates they have done for their gods; for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. (32) Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it.”*** Unfortunately the Israelites failed permanently to heed Elohim’s warning. The house of Israel became fascinated with the religious practices of the nations around them, and time and again, throughout the ages they lapsed into idolatrous worship. It was for this reason that YHVH through Jeremiah again warned the house of Israel around 600BCE to stop their idolatrous worship in Jeremiah 10: 1 – 5, saying: ***‘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 custom 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 with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers so that it will not totter. (5) Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field are they, and they cannot speak; they must be carried, because they cannot walk! Do not fear them, for they can do no harm, nor can they do any good.’*** Whether this is talking about an Xmas tree or a figurine of a man they call J*e*s*u*s* on a wooden cross, we the remnant of the lost ten tribes, called out of the world, should not ever return to having these pagan symbols in our homes or worship them in any way.

A number of years later Elohim again expressed His disdain for the things His people do in Jeremiah 23: 32 – 36, saying: ***‘Behold, I am against those who have prophesied false dreams,” Declares YHVH, “and related them, and led My people astray by their falsehoods and reckless boasting; yet I did not send them or command them, nor do they furnish this people the slightest benefit,” declares YHVH. (33) Now when this people or the prophet or a priest asks you saying, ‘What is the oracle of YHVH?” then you shall say to them, ‘What oracle?’ YHVH declares, ‘I shall abandon you.’ (34) Then as for the prophet or the priest or the people who say, ‘The oracle of YHVH,’ I shall bring punishment upon that man and his household. (35) Thus shall each of you say to his neighbor and to his brother, ‘What has YHVH answered?’ or ‘What has YHVH spoken?’ (36) For you will no longer remember the oracle of YHVH, because every man’s own word will become the oracle, and you have perverted the words of the living Elohim, YHVH of hosts, our Elohim.’*** Here we are told that if we forget Elohim’s oracles given to the Levites, every man’s own word will eventually become

the oracle and as a result we will have perverted the word of the living Elohim. This is exactly what happened today, where we find various groups establishing so-called Biblical calendars of their own design.

The oracles or standards preserved for us by the Levites among the Jews remain the only oracles regarding Elohim's Set-apart Days and covenants, and when it comes to observing these Set-apart days Israelite leaders have no say about it, as is confirmed in Ezekiel 13: 2 – 4 and 9 as follows: ***"Son of man prophesy against the prophets of Israel who prophesy; and say to those who prophesy from their own inspiration 'Listen to the word of YHVH! (3) Thus says YHVH "Woe to the foolish prophets who are following their own spirit and have seen nothing. (4) O Israel your prophets have been like foxes among ruins. (9) So My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations. They will have no place in the council of my people (the council or Sanhedrin who decides about the Set-apart Days of YHVH), nor will they be written down in the register of the house of Israel, nor will they enter the land of Israel, that you may know that I am YHVH Elohim."*** Elohim is not pleased with those who are double-minded in their worship of Him, as Rav Yaa'cov warned in James 1: 7 & 8, saying: ***'For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Master, (8) being a double-minded man unstable in all his ways.'***

Many in especially the Christian faith, but also some Nazarene/Messianic Israelites wrongly assume that the instructions in the Tanach that condemned mixing paganism with the way we worship Elohim were annulled during apostolic times. As a result some will attend Sabbath services with you, and the next day attend Sunday services or at certain times enjoy singing Xmas carols with their Christian friends. To prove the continuity of Elohim's teachings in the Renewed Covenant, we see Rav Shaul's warnings to a group of Israelites in Corinth, who already at this time believed they were Gentiles and some real Gentiles who were called into the true faith by Elohim, with a tradition of idol worshiping in first Corinthians 12: 2, saying: ***'You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the dumb idols, however you were led.'*** Rav Shaul was addressing the issue of whether pagan religious customs and practices had any place among Elohim's people. He continues warning believers in 2 Corinthians 6: 14 – 18; 7: 1, saying: ***'Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? (15) Or what harmony has Messiah with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? (16) 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. (18) And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says YHVH Almighty. (7:1) Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting set-apartness in the fear of Elohim'***

Rav Shaul explains that we are not to retain our favorite past religious traditions, saying in Colossians 3: 9, ***'Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices.***' Yahshua told His disciples that we cannot embrace two competing systems of worship at the same time in Matthew 6: 24, saying: ***"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve Elohim and mammon (or riches)."*** Since Elohim is strongly opposed to altering His revealed ways and times of worship (as He warned in Deuteronomy 12: 32), by what authority did human beings change the days we observe? We see from the *'Library of Universal knowledge'* Chicago 1958 that *"The first Sunday law was that of Constantine the Great A.D. 321"* Even though some have theorized the change from Sabbath to Sunday to have occurred in honor of Messiah's supposed resurrection of Sunday, we have already seen that this rationale is flawed because Messiah was resurrected late on the Sabbath

after His burial three days and three nights earlier, on the Wednesday afternoon. Sun-worshipping was also introduced to Christianity by Constantine the Great who adopted the 25th of December, the birthday of the so-called sun-god, as the anniversary of the birthday of 'Christ'.

When the kingdom of Israel divided after King Solomon's death, the northern ten tribes soon changed the date of the Feast of Tabernacles from the seventh month to the eighth month, as witness in first Kings 12: 32 – 33, in this way: ***'And Jeroboam instituted a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast which is in Judah, 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.'*** Jeroboam established a corrupting pattern in Israel's religious life, one that eventually helped lead to the northern ten tribe's destruction at the hands of Assyria. About two thousand years ago Yahshua pointed out that the religious leaders of His time were doing exactly what many so-called believers in Him are doing today, saying in Mark 7: 6 – 9: ***"Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. (7) BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'*** (8) ***Neglecting the commandments of Elohim, you hold to the traditions of men."*** (9) ***He was also saying to them, "You nicely set aside the commandments of Elohim in order to keep your tradition."*** Even though many in Christianity believe Yahshua was talking to the Jews of His day here, Yahshua said that He came specifically for the lost sheep of the house of Israel; the Renewed Covenant was therefore specifically written for believers in Messiah and had nothing to do with the Jews.

To confirm that a number of the Pharisees eventually became believers in Messiah, we read from Acts 15: 5, as follows: ***'But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses.'*** Now, we know that this was not contrary to what Yahshua said in John 5: 45 – 47, in this way: ***"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?"*** Rav Shaul also warns in Colossians 2: 8, saying: ***'See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Messiah.'*** We all have a choice. We can choose to observe the Feast Days instituted by Elohim, or the holidays substituted by human beings. The choices we make could affect our ultimate positions in Elohim's kingdom, but also our relationship with Elohim at this time! We need to think carefully about it!

Chapter 16: Why is the gospel of the Kingdom important to us?

The good news about the coming kingdom is the most well-known and accepted subject in Judaism, but it is also the most hidden message of the Renewed Covenant. It was for this reason very easy for Satan and his agents to deceive most believers in Messiah about the true gospel which He proclaimed whilst He was on earth. This deception where the gospel which Messiah preached was distorted to become one about His person; more specifically about His birth, life, death and resurrection, only started after Messiah's ascension to heaven, as Rav Shaul warned believers in Galatia in Galatians 1: 6 & 7 saying: ***'I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Messiah, for a different gospel; (7) which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Messiah.'*** Rav Shaul similarly warned believers in Corinth about this deception in 2 Corinthians 11: 3 & 4, saying: ***'But I am afraid lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Messiah. (4) For if one comes and preaches another Yahshua whom we have not preached*** (one who supposedly came to do away with his strict old father's laws and promised his followers a position in heaven), ***or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.'***

Believe it or not, the main theme of the Scriptures in its entirety and the purpose of Elohim for mankind is the good news of the coming Kingdom of Elohim. Until recently, the only people who knew the mysteries of the kingdom of Elohim, apart from our Jewish Brothers were the Jehovah's witnesses, the Churches of G-d, and the Assemblies of YHWH who all started proclaiming this gospel since the early twentieth century. Even though the Seventh Day Adventists was not directly involved in proclaiming this gospel, they restored the true Sabbath to their congregants, which is essentially in preparation of Elohim's coming kingdom on earth. Because Christianity essentially elected to reject the good news about the coming kingdom of Elohim on earth, as it is currently in heaven, Christian leaders were involved in trying to destroy the Church of G-d in the early 1990's and succeeded partially because the number of members of the various offshoots of the Church of G-d is currently only slightly more than 10% of what they used to be before they finally split up, with the main group going back to the churches where members came from before they joined the Church of G-d.

Even though the Catholic Church has been fully aware of the promise of the ingathering of the tribes of Israel, they manage to suppress this truth for the past 2,000 years. It took right up to the early twentieth century for the ten tribes exiled within Christianity to wake up to their Hebrew Roots and despite efforts to try and destroy the movement, evidence of this spiritual renovation, which is also the main theme of Scriptural prophecy is busy to thrive throughout the earth today. In fact the restoration movement started by the groups mentioned before is the very foundation of the Kingdom message. Point is that without the physical return of the lost ten tribes of Israel, there can be no Kingdom; and without the repentance for their falling away from Elohim's Torah of this newly identified house of Israel, there can be no physical return. Yahshua our Messiah came specifically to re-gather the lost ten tribes back to their faith in Elohim, and was identified in all four gospels, when He was crucified, by the words: *'King of the Jews'* recorded above His cross – which also recognized Him as a Jew. In fact we read that Caiaphas prophesied His eventual gathering the nation of Judah together in John 11: 49 – 53, in this way: ***'But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "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." (51) Now this he did not say on his own initiative; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Yahshua was going to die for the nation, (52) and not for the nation (Judah) only, but that He might also gather together into one, the children of Elohim who are scattered abroad*** (the lost ten tribes of Israel).'

Yahshua started preaching the good news of Elohim, as soon as He was immersed by Yochanan the Immerser, as witnessed in Mark 1: 14 & 15, as follows: ***‘And after Yochanan 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 preached the gospel throughout the three and a half years that He spends preparing His disciples to do the same, and even after His death and resurrection before His ascension to heaven, they still did not know whether He was going to restore the kingdom of Israel at that time, as shown by their question to Him in Acts 1: 6, in this way: ***‘And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “Master, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?”*** Because most of Messiah’s disciples were Jewish and believed in the prophecies about the coming kingdom of Elohim they misunderstood His first coming to come and take over the kingdoms of the world at that time. It is also because the Hebraic Restoration movement have become fully aware of Judah’s established belief about the return of the lost ten tribes, and their reconciliation to both Judah and Elohim that they began to understand the secret of the gospel text recorded in prophecies such as Ezekiel 37: 15 - 20, as follows: ***‘The word of YHVH came again to me saying, (16) “And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, ‘For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions’; then take another stick and write on it, ‘For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions.’ (17) Then join them for yourself one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. (18) And when the sons of your people speak to you saying, ‘Will you not declare to us what you mean by these?’ (19) Say to them, “Thus says YHVH Elohim, “Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand. (20) And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes.”’*** The Hebraic Restoration movement is beginning to realize that the Messianic Kingdom actually refers to the reunited 12-tribed Kingdom of Israel.

Like most Jews who read the Renewed Covenant the author of the book: *‘Jewish Secrets Hidden in the New Testament’*, understood the message contained in the Renewed Covenant better than most Christians do, as Rabbi Feld showed in this book, saying: *‘As a youngster who was pushed by non-Jewish friends to read the NT, I automatically understood the gist of the writings about the prophesied Redemption. In other words, even as a kid, to my Jewish mind, the Good News of the NT meant the overthrow of Rome and the reunification of the Kingdom of real Israel.’* Most Jews have a tremendous awe and love for the historic King David. King David prepared the materials, musical instruments, fabric and gold for the construction of Elohim’s House, which his son King Solomon built. Jews see King David as the Rebbe and teacher for all repentant sinners, because he helps us through his life and Psalms to strive to fulfill Elohim’s Commands. In fact King David is synonymous with the Kingdom of Elohim. When the Kingdom of Israel split about 2800 years ago and the eventual exile of both houses of Israel, the Tabernacle of David fell at that time, but will be raised again as the prophet Amos wrote in Amos 9: 11, saying: ***“In that day (a phrase used for the end times) I will raise up the fallen booth of David, and wall up its breaches; I will also raise up the ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old.”*** This is also confirmed in the book of the Acts of the Apostles in Acts 15: 13 – 18, in this way: ***‘And after they had stopped speaking, Yaa’cov answered, saying, “Brethren listen to me. (14) “Simeon has related how Elohim first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles (a remnant of the lost ten tribes of Israel, plus a number of real Gentiles) a people for His name. (15) And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written, (16) ‘AFTER THESE THINGS I will return, AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN, AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL RESTORE IT, (17) IN ORDER THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK YHVH, AND ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME,’ (18) SAYS YHVH, WHO MAKES THESE THINGS KNOWN FROM of old.”’*** In fact this encapsulates the Message of the Scriptures as Halachically understood by the sages and teachers of Judah.

The return, restoration and establishment of the re-united 12-Tribed Kingdom of Israel based on the compliance of Elohim's Torah is a vision recited in the closing prayer of every Jewish worship service (known as the Aleinu Prayer), as follows: *"Therefore we put our hope in You, HaShem our G-d, to soon see the glory of Your strength, to remove all idols from the Earth, and to completely cut off false gods; to repair the world, Your holy Empire. And for all living flesh to call Your Name, and for all the wicked of the Earth to turn to You. May all the world's inhabitants recognize and know that to You every knee must bend and every tongue must swear loyalty. Before You, HaShem, our G-d, may all bow down, and give honor to Your precious Name, and may all take upon themselves the yoke of Your rule. And May You reign over them soon and forever and always. Because all rule is Yours alone, and You will rule in honor forever and ever. As it is written in Your Torah: 'HaShem will reign forever and ever.' And it is said: 'HaShem will be Ruler over the whole Earth, and on that day, G-d will be One, and His name will be One,'"* The image of the reunited Kingdom is ingrained upon our Jewish Brothers, and all their Synagogues and places of study are decorated with a pattern of the re-established Kingdom of David, or the establishment and re-erection of David's fallen Sukkah.

We read a future witness to the re-establishment of the Kingdom of Elohim from Isaiah 11: 6 - 11, where even the nature of wild animals will be changed, as follows: ***'And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them. (7) Also the cow and the bear will graze; their young will lie down together; and the lion will eat straw like the ox. (8) And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. (9) They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of YHVH as the waters cover the sea. (10) Then it will come about in that day that the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, who will stand as a signal for the peoples; and His resting place will be glorious. (11) 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 islands (or coastlands) of the sea.'*** This is prophesied to happen after the great tribulation that Yahshua warned about in Matthew 24: 21 & 22²⁹, as also prophesied by Isaiah in chapter 10: 20 – 22, in this way: ***'Now it will come about in that day that the remnant of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped, will never rely on the one who struck them, but will truly rely on YHVH, the Holy One of Israel. (21) A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty Elohim. (22) For though your people, O Israel, may be like the sand of the sea, only a remnant within them will return; a destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness.'***

The prophet Hosea shows similarly that after the corrective punishment and exile of both houses, at least a remnant will return. Jeremiah in Chapter 30: 3 – 9 recorded Elohim's words to him, as follows: ***'For, behold, days are coming,' declares YHVH, 'when I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel and Judah.' YHVH says, 'I will also bring them back to the land that I gave to their forefathers, and they shall possess it.'*** (4) ***Now these are the words which YHVH spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah. (5) "For thus says YHVH, 'I have heard a sound of terror, of dread, and there is no peace. (6) Ask now and see, If a male can give birth. Why do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in childbirth? And why have all faces turn pale? (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. (8) And it shall come about on that day,' declares YHVH of hosts, 'that I will break his yoke from off their neck, and will tear off their bonds; and strangers shall no longer make them their slaves. (9)***

²⁹ Matthew 24: 21 & 22: ***'For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short.'***

But they shall serve YHVH their Elohim, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.”
 Jeremiah continues in Jeremiah 46: 27 & 28, saying: ***“But as for you, O Jacob My servant, do not fear, nor be dismayed, O Israel! For, see, I am going to save you from afar, and your descendants from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return and be undisturbed and secure with no one to make him tremble. (28) O Jacob My servant, do not fear,” declares YHVH, “For I am with you. For I shall make a full end of all the nations where I have driven you, yet I shall not make a full end of you; but I shall correct you properly and by no means leave you unpunished.”***

According to Jeremiah YHVH will gather his flock and will raise up new shepherds over them to bring them back from captivity in Jeremiah 23: 2 – 9, saying: ***‘Therefore thus says YHVH Elohim of Israel concerning the shepherds who are tending My people: “You have scattered My flock and driven them away, and have not attended to them; behold I am about to attend to you for the evil of your deeds,” Declares YHVH. (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. (4) I shall also raise up shepherds over them and they will tend them; and they will no longer be afraid any longer, nor be terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares YHVH. (5) “Behold, the days are coming,” declares YHVH, “When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. (6) In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; and this is His name by which He will be called, ‘YHVH our righteousness.’ (7) Therefore behold, the days are coming,” declares YHVH, “when they will no longer say ‘As YHVH lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ (8) but, ‘As YHVH lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ Then they will live on their own soil.”***

The prophet Ezekiel also prophesied about a remnant of both houses returning, but also warns the rebels amongst the house of Israel who reject the Hebrew calendar and still do what Jeroboam did by changing the feast days kept in Judah to a month later, in order to serve their idols, saying in Ezekiel 20: 33 – 40, in this way: ***‘As I live, declares YHVH Elohim, surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you. (34) And I shall bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out; (35) and I shall bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I shall enter into judgment with you face to face. (36) As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, declares YHVH Elohim. (37) And I shall make you pass under the rod, and I shall bring you into the bond of the covenant; (38) and I shall purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I shall bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am YHVH. (39) As for you, O house of Israel, thus says YHVH Elohim, go, serve everyone his idols; but later, you will surely listen to Me and My holy name you will profane no longer with your gifts and with your idols. (40) For on My holy mountain, on the high mountain of Israel, declares YHVH Elohim, there the whole house of Israel, all of them will serve Me in the land; there I shall accept them, and there I shall seek your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your holy things.’*** Even though those who follow different calendars to the Jews do so sincerely, believing that they are right, there are many Scriptural witnesses supporting the Hebrew calendar; the most obvious one being when Messiah returns on Yom Teruah one day, when He will go to the house of Judah first (as per Zechariah 12: 7) and when they see His hands they will accept Him as their Messiah (as per Zechariah 12: 10) when He will pour the Spirit of grace (by which we are saved) and supplication on them.

Ezekiel continues in chapter 39: 25 – 29, saying: ***‘Therefore thus says YHVH Elohim, “Now I shall restore the fortunes of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I shall be jealous for My holy name. (26) And they shall forget their disgrace and all their treachery which they perpetrated against Me, when they live securely on their own land with no one to make them afraid. (27) When I bring them back from the peoples and gather them from the lands of their enemies, then I shall be sanctified through them in the sight of the many nations. (28) Then they will know that I am YHVH their Elohim because I made them go into exile among the nations, and then gathered them again to their own land; and I will leave none of them there any longer. (29) And I will not hide My face from them any longer for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,” declares YHVH Elohim.’*** Thank YHVH, for even though the people who started the movement to get Israel to return to the covenant which YHVH entered into with them as well as with the house of Judah have almost been quieted, the message now comes from the correct source, namely from Judah in the land of Israel, as it was originally prophesied in Isaiah 2: 2 & 3, in this way: ***‘Now it will come about that in the last days, the mountain (or Government) 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.’***

Yes, Yahshua has not returned yet and even though some will say that both house of Israel are referred to as Zion, we read the true identity of Zion from Psalm 78: 67 & 68, saying: ***‘He also rejected the tent of Joseph, and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim, (68) but chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion which He loved.’*** It is therefore so important to see how the restoration of all Israel, is now proclaimed by our Jewish Brothers from the Promised Land which YHVH promised to Jacob and his descendants. Rav Shaul a Jew from the tribe of Benjamin has this to say about Israel’s calling in Romans 3: 1 – 4, as follows: ***‘Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? (2) Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of Elohim. (3) What then? If some 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.”*** The gospel of the coming kingdom of Elohim is also hidden in a number of the parables that Yahshua used to teach his disciples. The parable of the prodigal son is one of these parables - in this parable the prodigal son who left his father is indicative of the lost ten tribes and the faithful son who remained with his father is indicative of the house of Judah, who never forgot the covenant made with Elohim at Mount Sinai. A second parable showing when Yahshua is returning to establish Elohim’s kingdom, is the one about the ten virgins in Matthew 25. These 10 virgins represent the lost ten tribes awaiting their bridegroom, Yahshua the Messiah. As explained in an earlier lesson the oil spoken about in this parable represents Torah knowledge and its application in our lives. Oil is also connected to those coming back to the Promised Land as witnessed in Psalm 133: 1 – 3, in this way: ***‘Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity! (2) It is like the precious oil upon the head, coming down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard, coming down upon the edge of his robes. (3) It is like the dew of Hermon, coming down upon the mountains of Zion; for there YHVH commanded the blessing—life forever.’*** The five virgins who were found wanting, were not involved in an active relationship with Elohim and a return to the Promised Land; and therefore they will not be ready to greet the Bridegroom when he comes one day soon!

Now for the first time we get to understand the intent of the original Jewish writers of the Renewed Covenant. We also get to understand Yahshua’s words in Matthew 10: 5 – 7, when He sent out His

disciples, saying: ***‘Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; (6) but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (7) And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’*** With all these witnesses the Gospel of the coming Kingdom makes sense, and most of those whom YHVH called out of the Churches of the world are beginning to understand its importance to us!

This sermon is partly a summary of a book entitled: *‘Jewish Secrets Hidden in the New Testament’* written by Jewish Rabbi Avraham Feld and co-authored by a longstanding friend and teacher of mine OvadYah Avrahami. I urged those of you who can afford a copy of this book to order one from: Kol Hator Vision, P.O. box 3174, Karnei Shomrom, Israel 44855 e-mail: info@kolhator.org.il

If there are anyone on my list who would like to send a tithe or special offering to me for the many sermons I send to you weekly, kindly send your contribution to Kol Hator Vision in Israel, since their dream (like ours) is for a reconciled 12-Tribed Kingdom of Israel. Let’s support this Scripturally-based vision and pray that it will happen in our day! Halleluyah!

Chapter 17: What can we learn from the life of Gideon?

When we turn to the faith chapter in the Scriptures namely Hebrews 11, we see that Gideon is also listed among our fathers in the faith, who already qualified to be resurrected as Spiritual children of Elohim in the Olam Haba (world to come) to inherit the Promised Land together with those of us called out of the world at this time (provided we qualify), from verses 32 – 34, 39 & 40, in this way: ***“And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, (33) who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, (34) quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. (39) And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, (40) because Elohim had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect.”***

Even though many view the various accounts of our fathers in the faith as mere ‘Bible stories’, we read from Romans 15: 4, that there is a great purpose for us in each one of these Scriptural accounts, as Rav Shaul wrote saying: ***‘For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.’*** In the case of Gideon, the event of his life with which most students of the Scriptures are familiar with, was a spiritual exercise in overcoming apparently unbeatable odds. Turning to Judges 7 we see that Elohim was preparing Gideon for a battle against the Midianite army of about 135 000 men (as per Judges 8: 10). We start reading accordingly from verses 2 & 3, as follows: ***‘And YHVH said to Gideon, “The people who are with you are too many for me to give Midian into their hands, lest Israel become boastful, saying, ‘My own power delivered me.’ (3) Now therefore come proclaim in the hearing of the people saying, ‘Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him return and depart from Mount Gilead.’” So 22 000 returned but 10 000 remained.’*** Gideon did exactly as YHVH told him, and as we would say in modern parlance, he gave 22 000 Israelite men an honorable discharge from their military duty.

This was also obviously a tremendous test of Gideon’s faith, since the one moment he had an army of 32 000 men before him, they suddenly dwindled to a mere 10 000 willing Israelites to defend the nations against the Midianite army. But Gideon was in for more shocks, as Elohim continues to talk to Him in Judges 7: 4, saying: ***‘The people are still too many; bring them down to the water and I will test them for you there. Therefore it shall be that he of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall go with you,’ he shall go with you; but everyone of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ he shall not go.”*** Once Gideon brought the people to the water, YHVH again spoke to him in verses 5, saying: ***‘You shall separate everyone who laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, as well as everyone who kneels to drink.”*** This exercise further reduced the number of men left for Gideon to fight the Midianite army with to a mere 300, since all the rest of the people knelt to drink the water. Then YHVH said to Gideon in verse 7, ***‘I will deliver you with the 300 men who lapped and will give the Midianites into your hands; so let all the other people go, each man to his home.’*** YHVH chose Gideon’s army not from the 300 most valiant fighters in Israel, but from those who drank water by scooping it with their hands bringing it to their mouths. YHVH reduced Gideon’s army to more than 100 times smaller than what they were at the start.

If Gideon was in our boots, he could only hope that YHVH knew what He was doing, since at that time the odds could not get any worse. In his mind he must have computed the odds by dividing the 135 000 strong Midianite army by his 300 men and arrived at about 450 to one. He did not know how he could possibly overcome the Midianite army with a mere handful of men. However, then Elohim explained by waking Gideon up that night and saying to him in verses 9 – 11: ***“Arise, go down against the camp for I have given it into your hands. (10) But if you are afraid to go down, go***

with Purah your servant down to the camp, (11) and you will hear what they say; and afterward your hands will be strengthened that you may go down against the camp.” So he went down with Purah his servant down to the outposts of the army that was in the camp.” We see from verse 12 that when Gideon and his servant arrived at the camp, the Midianites and Amalekites and all their sons from the east, were sitting in the valley as numerous as locusts. Next Gideon overheard one of the men relating a dream he had in verses 13 – 15, saying: ***“Behold, I had a dream; a loaf of barley bread was tumbling into the camp of Midian, and it came to the tent and struck it so that it fell, and turned it upside down so that the tent lay flat.”*** (14) ***And his friend answered and said, ‘This is nothing less than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; Elohim has given Midian and all the camp into his hand.’*** (15) ***And it came about when Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation, that he bowed in worship. He returned to the camp of Israel and said, “Arise, for YHVH has given the camp of Midian into your hands.”***

The outcome of carnage of the Midianite army is recorded in Judges 7: 16 - 8: 21. Once Gideon got the Midianite army on the run, he summoned the men of Ephraim’s assistance, who captured two of the Midianite leaders and brought their heads to Gideon. However, when he asked those Ephraimites at Succoth and again at Penuel to give his men some bread to eat, they first wanted Gideon to capture the two Midianite kings before they were prepared to do so. Therefore Gideon promised that he will return to suitably punish both groups. Eventually after wiping out the entire Midianite army he also disciplined the Ephraimites who were at Succoth and Penuel, who refused to give his party of 300 men bread, and finally he also killed Zebah and Zalmunna the two kings of Midian. Then the men of Israel said to Gideon (in verse 22 of Judges 8): ***“Rule over us, both you and your son, also your son’s son, for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian.”*** But Gideon said to them in verse 23, ***‘I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; YHVH shall rule over you.’*** After all before YHVH told Gideon to prepare his small army to defend the nation of Israel, he told Gideon that He did not want Israel to think that once they have beaten the Midianites that they overcame the physically and numerically superior Midianite army by their own strength. Herein is also a lesson for us, the remnant of the lost ten tribes of Israel, whom YHVH is busy calling out of the religions of the world; as we read accordingly in our case from first Corinthians 1: 26 – 29, in this way: ***‘For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; (27) but Elohim has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and Elohim has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, (28) and the base things of the world and the despised, Elohim has chosen, the things that are not that He might nullify the things that are, (29) that no man should boast before Elohim.’***

Even though Gideon was the most faithful and brave among all the judges who ruled Israel, when YHVH chose him to save Israel from the Midianites, Gideon considered himself the least likely to succeed, as we read from Judges 6: 15, as follows: ***‘And he said to Him (Elohim), “O Master, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father’s house.”*** However, the angel of YHVH assured Gideon in verse 12, saying: ***“YHVH is with you, O valiant warrior.”*** Elohim continued to strengthen Gideon’s confidence and character and viewed Gideon as a mighty warrior, whilst Gideon saw himself as a youngster with all the associated weaknesses. So when the angel of YHVH approached Gideon where he was beating out wheat in the winepress to save it from the Midianites who terrorized the Israelites for seven years, because they did evil in Elohim’s site, Gideon answered the angel in verses 13, saying: ***‘O my master, if YHVH is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did not YHVH bring us up from Egypt?’ But now YHVH has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian.”*** Continuing in verse 14, YHVH said to Gideon: ***“Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?”***

This is in fact a similar thing that happened to Rav Shaul many years later when YHVH showed Shaul that He is more concerned with our spiritual strength than our physical wellbeing. Rav Shaul showed this when he asked Elohim to heal him from a physical health problem, but Elohim showed him that it would ultimately be better for that he be not healed, as witnessed in 2 Corinthians 12: 9 & 10, in this way: ***'And He (Elohim) has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Messiah may dwell in me. (10) Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Messiah's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.'*** Elohim who created us knows our hearts and minds and that it is very easy for us to take credit for what is actually His doing. Eventually we also get to understand that Elohim is able to use us much more effectively whilst we are weak, as both Rav Shaul and Gideon learned. Gideon knew he was the least likely to become a successful leader in the stiff necked argumentative nation of Israel. He therefore asked that Elohim would in fact prove that He would be with him, in Judges 6: 17 & 18, saying to Him: ***"If now I have found favor in Thy sight, then show me a sign that it is Thou who speakest with me. (18) Please do not depart from here, until I come back to Thee, and bring out my offering and lay it before Thee." And He said, 'I will remain until you return.'"***

Gideon went to prepare a kid and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour and brought them out and presented it, and the Angel of YHVH said to him in verses 20, ***"Take the meat and the unleavened bread; and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And he did so.'*** Gideon did as the angel requested and as recorded in verse 21, ***'Then the angel of YHVH put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and unleavened bread; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the angel of YHVH vanished from his sight.'*** This greatly encouraged Gideon and he built an altar to YHVH there, calling it YHVH Shalom. Even though Gideon was strengthened by this event, he immediately sends out messengers to gather an army to fight against the Midianites. However, we see that as soon as he started out, he required more reassurance from Elohim. Like with us, Elohim allowed Gideon patiently to choose his own way to proof His promises. In the first place Gideon asked that when he leaves the wool of a sheep out during the night, that Elohim will moisten only the wool and leave the surrounding ground completely dry. But, to make sure that Elohim had indeed performed the miracle, Gideon again asked Elohim to do the reverse the next evening. Again Elohim did as Gideon asked. This time Gideon was totally satisfied and he trusted Elohim for calling him for this special task.

When Gideon woke up early the next day he called together the volunteers to help him perform what YHVH wanted Him to do – to deliver Israel from the Midianites. When all the 32 000 volunteers reported for duty, Gideon must have felt very encouraged. But when YHVH told him that there are too many men and He wanted Gideon to scale then down to 10 000 and later to only 300 men he most likely became a little worried. However, once again Elohim assured him that He will be with them. When Gideon saw the size of the enemy army of Midianites and Amalekites in the valley as numerous as locusts, YHVH had to once more assure him of victory, when He sent Gideon and Purah his servant where they overheard the remarkable conversation between two soldiers he was greatly inspired to do what Elohim required of him. Elohim motivated these two soldiers to inform Gideon what Elohim will accomplish for him. When Gideon heard the interpretation of the dream that the one soldier had, he worshiped YHVH and returned to the camp telling his three hundred chosen men to divide into three companies, each carrying a trumpet in one hand and a water pitcher with a torch in the other hand. He also instructed them to follow his lead and do exactly what he will do when they get to the camp. When they reached the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just posted the watch; Gideon and the men blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers, they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in the right hands for blowing and cried, ***"A sword for YHVH and for Gideon."***

We read what happened next from verses 21 & 22 of Judges 7 as follows: ***‘And each stood in his place around the camp; and all the army ran, crying out as they fled. (22) And when they blew 300 trumpets, YHVH set the sword of one against another even throughout the whole army; and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the edge of Abel-meholah, by Tabath.’*** The Midianites were caught off guard and in the dark they panicked not knowing what is happening with all the breaking of pitchers, the shouting and the blowing of trumpets, together with the burning torches surrounding them. In all the confusion they fought and killed each other, whilst Gideon and his army escaped completely unscathed. In spite of Gideon’s victory over this overwhelming great army he remained humble enough to refuse to become king over Israel, and knowing that Elohim gave him the victory he told his fellow countrymen that ***‘YHVH shall rule over you.’*** From the little that he had to do with Elohim Gideon knew that only Elohim could exercise unbiased judgment on mankind. However, by studying the book of Judges, we truly get to see how incompetently man rules himself without obeying Elohim and His teachings.

Every time a good judge ruled the nation, they returned in obedience to Elohim. But, as soon as these judges died, Israel went right back to paganism. We read the concluding statement in the book of Judges in chapter 21: 25, in this way: ***‘In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.’*** Because of this statement some including obviously the nation of Israel assumed that the best solution to the nations continues backsliding during the days of the judges will be to be ruled by a human king. But this is definitely not true as Elohim through the prophet Samuel shows when the nation approaches him and he relates the account of ancient Israel’s history to them in first Samuel 8: 4 – 6, saying: ***‘Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah; (5) and they said to him, “Behold you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations.” (6) But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” And Samuel prayed to YHVH.’*** In verses 7 – 9 YHVH answers Samuel, in this way: ***‘And YHVH said to Samuel, ‘Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them. (8) Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day—in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods—So they are doing to you also. (9) Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them.’’***

The words in Judges 21: 25 is not advocating that the only solution at that time was that Israel be given a human king, and the thought absolutely disgusted Samuel a servant of Elohim with the nation at that time. However, it was clear that the people of Israel did not regard YHVH as their king any longer at that time, and did what was right in their own eyes, meaning they like Adam and Eve took of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, instead of studying Torah and following Elohim’s will and way. According to Jewish tradition Samuel was credited as the author of the book of Ruth, which appeared before or during King David’s reign in Israel (1011 – 971 BCE), before the time when the two houses existed in Israel. It was apparently a prophecy written to show Samuel’s disgust with the nation for rejecting YHVH as their king and requested a human king. Samuel prophesied the eventual split in the nation of Israel and how both houses will be taken captive because of rejecting the Feast Days kept in Judah (in the case of the house of Israel) and because Manasseh the king in the house of Judah did much evil in Elohim’s sight. Many worshippers including prophets were killed during Manasseh’s reign. It is believed that Manasseh was responsible to remove the name of YHVH from all public notices, as well as from all Scriptures, before Judah went into captivity. Even so, Samuel’s prophecy covered the time from king Saul’s time, right up to the time we are living in today, specifically at this time when we the remnant of the lost ten tribes of the house of Israel are

at the point of getting together with Judah as a united nation awaiting the coming of the righteous branch of David to come and rule over us as a nation again.

Samuel's experience in dealing with the carnal unconverted people helps us understand that humans, in rejecting Elohim's rule in their lives, are even at this time incapable of ruling themselves. The lesson we should learn from the life of Gideon is that he understood the importance and safety of having Elohim as our ruler. He was fully aware that the outcome that he obtained with Elohim on his side is far better than being forced into unpredictability, vanity and selfish nature of human leaders. Gideon got to understand that Elohim can always be trusted to do what He promised His people, as opposed to most human leaders, who change their tune soon after they come into power. Gideon's humble outlook on life made him a valiant warrior before Elohim and a hero in the eyes of the nation. With Elohim's help the outcome does not depend on our own strength, since only a select few with Him is better than the majority without Him. In fact YHWH gave humanity 6 000 years to learn that life without His leadership only leads to failure. It is for this reason that we should once again make Him King in our lives, showing Him that we want Him to rule us during His soon coming Kingdom on earth. Think about it!

Chapter 18: How could the whole world be deceived?

In His Olivet prophecy Yahshua the Messiah spoke about the same *'Abomination that makes desolate'* that the prophet Daniel spoke about saying in Matthew 24: 15, ***"Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoke of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)."*** What did these two prophets mean by the words *'Abomination of Desolation'*? A dictionary definition of the word abomination is: the act of abominating or state of being abominated; detestation, make detestable, hateful or abhorrent. The dictionary definition for desolation is to lay waste, to leave alone, to forsake.

Reading from Daniel 11: 30 & 31 where *'the Abomination of Desolation'* is mentioned a third time in the Book of Daniel, he wrote: ***"For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened, and will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action; so he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. (31) And forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation."*** What is this holy covenant spoken about in verse 30? We read from Exodus 31: 16, ***'So the sons of Israel shall observe the Sabbath, to celebrate the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.'*** This shows that the holy covenant has to do with Sabbath observance by all Jews and therefore also in the modern day land of Israel. The king of the north will come against the king of the south, but ships will come against him and he will be discouraged and go to the Land of Israel, where he will become enraged because of Sabbath keeping and will show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant, meaning those who break the Sabbath by keeping either Sunday or Friday in the holy land, namely Christians and Arabs. In addition some of his soldiers will desecrate the sanctuary fortress (Temple) by doing away with the regular sacrifices and setting up the abomination of desolation. How can someone possibly desecrate the Temple? As we've seen from the dictionary definitions of the two words abomination and desolation, they will make the Temple abominable for Jews to enter and therefore offer unclean meat on the altar to their god (or Baal which means Lord). We return to Matthew 24: 16 & 20, where Yahshua continued His Olivet Prophecy saying: ***'Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. (20) But pray that your flight may not be in winter, or on the Sabbath.'*** The forces of this evil king obviously kept Xmas, drinking and do foolish things during winter in Israel, and desecrated the Sabbath, hence the warning in verse 20.

But at this point we need to ask: who is Baal? Baal is the god of the Canaanites. Ungerer's Bible Dictionary shows that *'Baal-zebub was the name of Baal worshipped at the Philistine city of Ekron.* We see that king Ahaziah of Israel injured himself and became ill, so he sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether he will recover from his sickness (as per 2 Kings 1: 2). Baal was viewed as the producer of flies and therefore able to control flies so prevalent in the East. Yahshua identified Beelzebul a derivative of Baal-zebub as Satan as witnessed in Matthew 12: 22 – 27, as follows: ***'Then there was brought to Him a demon-possessed man who was blind and dumb, and He healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and saw. (23) And all the multitudes were amazed, and began to say, "This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?" (24) But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons." (25) And knowing their thoughts He said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste and any city or house divided against itself shall not stand. (26) And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand? (27) And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Consequently they shall be your judges.'*** It is therefore clear that Satan is called Beelzebul (meaning *'Lord {Adonai} of the heavenly habitation*), but that the Pharisees also referred to him as the ruler of the Demons. Scriptural names and titles of Satan are the Dragon, Lucifer before he was thrown down to earth, the prince of the power of the air, the god of this world, Apollyon, Abaddon, Belial and Beelzebul.

Satan was according to Ezekiel 28: 14, ***“the anointed cherub who covers”***; he was in charge of a third of the angels who rebelled with Him against YHVH (as per Isaiah 14: 12 – 14) and was thrown down to the earth (as per Revelation 12: 3 – 9). The title Baal shows that Baal-zebub is the supreme god in the nation where this false god is worshiped. Ungerer’s Bible Dictionary shows further that *‘Bel (Bal), the patron god of Babylon identified with Marduk, head of the Babylonian pantheon. The Hebrews called him Merodach. As a Sun God his festival was celebrated in the spring at the beginning of the year, since the sun’s rays were then the most potent in reviving nature. The Babylonians paid him Supreme tribute and exalted him to the Headship of their pantheon shortly after 2000 BCE.’* It is also in Revelation 12: 9, where we see that Satan deceives (ongoing) the whole world, as follows: ***‘And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.’*** Once Lucifer and his angels rebelled against Elohim, he became known as Satan and his angels as fallen angels or demons. Revelation 17 and 18 also speak of a latter-day wealthy Babylonian religious system that will deceive millions of people and multitudes and nations and tongues (as per Revelation 17: 15) into a false worship system that opposes the true worship of YHVH! Yes, YHVH spoke through Daniel and Yahshua to reveal to us that Satan (Beelzebub) would establish the Babylonian false religious system as ‘Lord’ of this world, that would eventually sit in the Temple that would be built in the latter-days.

We read about this great falling away in the times prior to Messiah’s return from 2 Thessalonians 2: 1 – 12, as follows: ***‘Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Master Yahshua Messiah, and our gathering together to Him, (2) that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of YHVH has come. (3) Let no one 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, (4) who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of Elohim, displaying himself as being Elohim. (5) Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? (6) And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. (7) For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. (8) And then that lawless one will be revealed whom YHVH will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; (9) that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, (10) and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. (11) And for this reason Elohim will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, (12) in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.’*** It is because people do not receive (or accept) the truth about the coming Kingdom of Elohim, and the resurrection of believers in Messiah who will be resurrected as Spiritual children of Elohim, then Elohim will send them a deluding influence, so that they might believe what is false.

We see that this apostasy which is a falling away from the faith once delivered to the saints (meaning true believers), has in fact started not many years after Messiah’s ascension to heaven, as Rav Shaul warns in 2 Corinthians 11: 3 & 4, saying: ***‘But I am afraid lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Messiah. (4) For if one comes and preaches another Yahshua whom we have not preached (one who supposedly came to do away with his strict old father’s laws and promised his followers a position in heaven), or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel (to the one Yahshua proclaimed about the coming Kingdom of Elohim) which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.’*** According to Daniel 7: 23 – 25 this fourth kingdom namely the Roman Empire, the one that will exist on and off from before Messiah’s time on earth, until He

returns one day in the near future, will make changes to times (of worship as given in Leviticus 23) and the law, as follows: ***‘Thus he said: The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms, and it will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. (24) As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. (25) And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.’*** Even though the times of worship have been changed by Constantine about three hundred years after Messiah went to heaven, verse 25 shows that there will be a much stricter application of the law with different times of worship about 3½ years before Messiah’s return (as per verse verses 26 & 27 of Daniel 7³⁰).

In addition we see that Daniel prophesied that Messiah will be cut off in the middle of the week, when He will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering (Messiah was impaled on a Wednesday in the middle of the week and as a result of being cut off as the first-fruit grain offering and as the Lamb of Elohim who takes away the sins of the world, He put an end to the Sacrificial Law in respect of sin, and became the first of the first-fruits), in Daniel 9: 26 & 27 (KJV), as follows: ***“And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary (exactly forty years after Messiah’s death, the Temple was destroyed by the Romans); and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. (27) And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation (the NASB reads: grain offering) to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.’*** Even though the sacrificial system came to an end when the Temple was destroyed by the Roman Empire 40 years after Messiah’s death, the Jews in Israel will according to Messiah’s prophecy in Matthew 24 rebuild the Temple before His return one day, and a descendant of the evil prince of the Roman Empire spoken about in Daniel 9 will again cause the Abomination of Desolation, as read from Daniel 8: 13, ***‘Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, “How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled.”*** We read further from Daniel 12: 11, ***‘And from the time that the regular (daily) sacrifice is abolished, and the abomination of desolation (that lays waste according to the King James Version) is set up, there will be 1290 days.’***

As a side light: We read from the next verse (12 of Daniel 12): ***‘How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to 1335 days!’*** It will be 1335 days before the end (when Messiah returns) when the work of the congregation of called out ones will come to an end. The elect will have 45 days to be taken to Jerusalem, which brings us to 1290 days. Then it will take another 30 days before the 3½ years (1260 days) of the great tribulation, spoken about by Yahshua in Matthew 24: 21 & 22 will start, during which time the elect will be taken to a place of safety. (However, bear in mind this is an interpretation only, for those interested in finer details).

The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible under ‘Abomination that makes desolate’ reads: ‘An enigmatic phrase found in Daniel, 1 Maccabees, Matthew, and Mark.’ Bible users usually refer to idols and pagan deities by a nickname in order to avoid pronouncing some potentially dangerous

³⁰ Daniel 7: 26 & 27: ***‘But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.’***

names, such as Old Nick for Satan. The English words translated as *'abomination that makes desolate'* in Daniel 9: 27 is written as (שְׁקוּצִים מְשֻׁמִּים) in the Hebrew Tanach. These Hebrew words literally mean a *'shameful thing'* again to avoid pronouncing a potentially dangerous name, therefore the phrase *'abomination that makes desolate'* is a term used in place of a foreign god. We see in 2 Maccabees 6: 1 - 4 that the temple was at that time desecrated, by dedicating it to the Olympian Zeus, as follows: ***'Shortly afterwards, the king sent an old man from Athens to compel the Jews to abandon their ancestral customs and live no longer by the Laws of G-d; (2) and to profane the Temple in Jerusalem and dedicate it to Olympian Zeus, and that on Mount Gerizim to Zeus, patron of strangers, as the inhabitants (the Samaritans) had requested. (3) The imposition of this evil was oppressive and altogether intolerable. (4) The Temple was filled with reveling and debauchery by the pagan, who took their pleasure with prostitutes and had intercourse with women in sacred precincts, introducing other indecencies besides.'*** Herodotus recorded how the Greeks identified Zeus with the Egyptian Sun god Amen-Ra. We also see that Yahshua refer to Himself as *'the Amein'* in Revelation 3: 14, and it is for this reason that we should end our prayers by saying Amein and not Amen thereby calling on the name of the Egyptian Sun god. Therefore the name Zeus was set up in the Set-apart Place, the Temple. So we see the Sun god of the pagan nations are *'the abomination of desolation'*.

Now that we have identified that *'the abomination of desolation'* is none other than Satan or Beelzebul or Baal-zebul the prince of demons and the Sun god. We see from 2 Corinthians 4: 4 that Satan is also the god of this world. There was no reason whatsoever to change the name of Yahshua to J*e*s*u*s, since the Hebrew name of Satan is unchanged and known by that name throughout the world. But why did people find a need to change the name of our Messiah? The name of the Greek goddess of healing is called IESO (IASO). Yahshua is also referred to in Greek as IESOUS which can be clearly seen is linked to the name of IESO their goddess of healing. We find other related names, all of them variants of the same name IASUS, IASION and IASIUS, in ancient Greek religion, as all being sons of Zeus. There is also a similarity between the Egyptian ISIS and the Greek IASO. The Egyptian ISIS has a son named ESU which sounds a lot like J*e*s*u*s*. We also see from the Oxford Dictionary that the name or inscription found in many Christian Churches (sometimes even on a round disk with spikes on depicting the Sun), namely IHS is an abbreviation for J*e*s*u*s* (Gk. ΙΗΣ= **IÉS(ous)**). In fact many dictionaries admit that IHS is an abbreviation for IHSOUS. Dr. E.W. Bullinger in 'The Apocalypse, as a footnote on page 396 writes: *"Whatever the meaning of .IHS may be given, the fact remains that it was part of the name Bacchus.'* So whoever was in charge of *'translating'* the name of Yahshua our Messiah to J*e*s*u*s*, manage to exchange it for the pagan god Bacchus or IHS another well-known Sun-god. It is therefore clear that the substitute name IESOUS (J*e*s*u*s*) traces back to a form of sun worship and is associated with pagan deities such as IESO and Bacchus.

So therefore who is the Abomination that makes Desolate? The answer therefore is: Satan, Zeus, Beelzebul, Baal-zebul, Bacchus the Sun-god IHS, IESOUS or J*e*s*u*s*. Wow, Satan has truly deceived the whole world into believing that Yahshua the Messiah, the Son of Elohim is J*e*s*u*s* Christ or IHS (IESOUS) the Sun-god. No wonder that somehow they twisted Messiah's late Sabbath afternoon resurrection to become Sunday morning. Whereas according to the Hebrew way of determining time, a day starts after sunset when three medium size stars become visible to the naked eye, a day according to the Gregorian calendar used in the western world starts at midnight. Yahshua was resurrected at the end of the weekly Sabbath before sunset, and when the women came to His grave after the Sabbath, it began to *'dawn'* toward the first day of the week according to Matthew 28: 1; the first day of the week accordingly started in the evening (erev) of Sunday as it is known in the western world. However, Christianity assuming that Yahshua was resurrected on Sunday morning insists that they are now required to keep Sunday because of the importance of Messiah's resurrection for them, even though He did not command them anywhere in the Scriptures

to do so. In addition, if Messiah's resurrection was truly that important to them, why did they not make sure of their facts? But, then if the intention of Satan and his many human agents were to deceive the whole world, the mistake was essential to get people to continue to worship the Sun on Sunday.

The Abomination that makes Desolate has been around since shortly after Messiah's resurrection and ascension to heaven. Satan has deceived the whole world to worship the '*abomination of Desolation*', a pagan deity IESOUS or J*e*s*u*s* without realizing that he is the other (false) Messiah that Rav Shaul spoke about in 2 Corinthians 11: 2 & 3 as well as in Galatians 1: 6 & 7. It is also for this reason that they worship him on Sunday and Xmas when the Sun is 'reborn' in the northern hemisphere. It is also for this reason that Rav Shaul wrote in 2 Corinthians 6: 14 – 18, saying: ***'Do not be bound together with unbelievers (who are not really unbelievers, but deceived believers); for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? (15) Or what harmony has Messiah with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? (16) 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. (18) And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says YHVH Almighty.'***

To many this information might sound too incredible to accept; since they like most believe that the whole world cannot be wrong. However, think for a moment, why did Yahshua in Matthew 7: 13 – 15 warn His disciples, saying: ***"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 false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves."*** In addition Rav Shaul where he spoke about the false gospel in 2 Corinthians 11, also warns in verses 13 – 15, saying: ***'For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Messiah. (14) And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (15) Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.'*** Bless YHVH the King of the universe for revealing His truth to us! Halleluyah!

Chapter 19: Terminology used by Churchianity to confuse believers into believing they are kosher.

Churchianity makes use of a great deal of Scriptural terminology to make believers think they are kosher. A sure way to cut through the maze of semantics used by them is to show true believers the meaning of these Scriptural terms. There is a lot of talk in Churchianity to getting back to the so-called '*New Testament Church*' as a means of negating the Hebrew roots movement's influence on their membership. But, surprising as it may sound, there are two things the group of believers after Messiah's ascension to heaven did not have: the original Jewish believers in and after Messiah's time did not have church buildings and met in synagogues as witnessed in Rav Yaa'cov's ruling in Acts 15: 19 - 21, as follows: ***'Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to Elohim from among the Gentiles*** (meaning returning Israelites who came to believe that they are Gentiles after many years of exile from Israel), (20) ***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.*** (21) ***For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath.'***

A second witness comes from James 2: 1 – 4, in this way: ***'My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Master Yahshua Messiah with an attitude of personal favoritism. (2) For if a man comes into your assembly*** (the footnote against assembly in the NASB and the KJV reads: synagogue) ***with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, (3) and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there or sit down by my footstool," (4) have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?'*** At the time when Rav Yaa'cov made these statements, the only Scriptures available to believers in Messiah was the Tanach, meaning the Torah, the prophets and the writings, since the Renewed Covenant was not written by then. These are also in fact the books of the Scriptures which Yahshua opened to the understanding of His disciples after His death and resurrection as we read from Luke 24: 44 - 46, as follows: ***'Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."*** (45) ***Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,*** (46) ***and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day."*** So it is clear that the Scriptures that Yahshua was referring to at that time were the Tanach or as Churchianity refer to it, the '*Old Covenant*'.

This was also the Scriptures that Rav Shaul wrote about to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3: 16 & 17, saying: ***'All Scriptures is inspired by Elohim and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; (17) that the man of Elohim may be adequate equipped for every good work.'*** In addition, when Rav Shaul spoke about the brethren in Berea in Acts 17: 11 and the way they examined the Scriptures after his teaching to ensure that what he taught them were indeed so, he was also referring to the Tanach as the only Scriptures available at the time. Rav Shaul was in fact praising the brethren in Berea, because even though they believed what he was teaching was trustworthy, they nevertheless confirmed what he taught by checking the Scriptures. Rav Shaul was saying that these folk from Berea were noble, because they did not take things they were taught at face value, but ensured that it was so from the only Scriptures available to them, namely the Tanach. That means that whenever we receive a teaching from any Torah teacher, we should check the Scriptures to see that what he quoted from them are correct and relevant to the subject he wanted to get across.

Knowing this, let's therefore check the Tanach to determine the correct meaning of the words and phrases that Churchianity bandy about to impress their congregants and outsiders. Firstly let's examine what '*the word of Elohim*' is, as defined in the Tanach. We read fittingly from Isaiah 2: 3, in

this way: ***‘And many people will come and say, “Come let us go up to the mountain of YHVH, to the house of Elohim of Jacob; that He may teach us concerning His ways, and that we may walk in His paths.” For the law (Torah) will go forth from Zion, and the word of YHVH from Jerusalem.’*** The words ‘Zion’ and ‘Jerusalem’ as used here are indicative of the house of Judah or the Southern part of the ancient nation of Israel, namely the Jews. The words ‘Law’ and the ‘word of YHVH’ as used here refer to the Torah and the rest of the Tanach, but also to the Renewed Covenant, since we need to understand that as Nazarene Jews/Israelites the Tanach is a dictionary of Hebraic words used by writers in the Renewed Covenant, and an encyclopedia filled with shadows and types discussed in the writings of Rav Shaul and also in Revelation (penned by Rav Yochanan). It is important to understand that we need to interpret the Scriptures with Scriptures and also allow the Hebrew meaning of the text to aid in our understanding.

Next let consider the words ‘truth’ and ‘lie’ from the way it is interpreted in the Scriptures. To commence with we start by reading from Psalm 119: 142 & 151, as follows: ***‘Thy righteousness is an everlasting (or eternal) righteousness, and Thy law is truth. (151) Thou art near, O YHVH, and all Thy commandments are truth.’*** This explains many phrases in the Renewed Covenant such as in:

- Galatians 3: 1 (KJV), ***‘O foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey truth, before whose eyes Yahshua Messiah hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?’***
- John 3: 21, ***“But he who practices the truth (Torah) comes to the light, that his deed may be manifest as having been wrought in Elohim.”***

Notice here, whereas I used a euphemism to introduce you to this subject, Rav Shaul in Galatians 3: 1 did not pull any punches, when he wrote ***‘who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey truth’***. Rav Shaul goes on in the rest of Galatians 3 to show us how Churchianity duped their people into believing that Yahshua has redeemed them from Torah, and not from the curses of the law against us for transgressing (YHVH)’s commandments (such as for example: that many of us should have been stoned for blasphemy for breaking Elohim’s Torah, for using the names of other gods like Baal (or the Lord) as prohibited by Elohim in Exodus 23: 13, in this way: ***“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.”*** It is for this reason that even ministers in Churchianity have been duped by Satan (or his agents) to teach their members that Torah has been abolished. However let me explain what Rav Shaul was teaching the Nazarene believers in Galatia and how his words have been distorted by the untaught and unstable, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, as Rav Kepha aptly warned in 2 Peter 3: 14 – 16, saying: ***‘Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, (15) and regard the patience of our Master to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Shaul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, (16) as also in all his letters speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.’***

Now let’s see which verses in Galatians 3 are specifically used to trick believers that Torah is a curse. I will use the King James Version of the Scriptures to explain these verses from Galatians, since even though the KJV also contains a few errors in translation, it is still the closest of most Scriptures to the original translation. Starting in verse 10 (KJV), we read: ***‘For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.’*** Now to a logical person this is simple to understand: Only those who do not do the things that are written in the book of the law (meaning the Torah) are cursed by what is written in Torah (as per Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28: 15 – 56). Next we get to verse 13 (KJV), ***‘Messiah hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for***

it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.' Yes, Messiah redeemed us from the curses or punishment due to us for breaking the Law, by becoming cursed for us, as explained by Rav Shaul in Philippians 2: 5 – 8 (KJV) , saying: ***'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Messiah Yahshua: (6) Who, being in the form (or image) of Elohim, thought it not robbery to be equal with Elohim: (7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.'***

The reason why Yahshua was made for a little while lower than the angels was to show those of us who believe in everything He did including what I am explaining here (through no less than the writings of Rav Shaul), that we through faith (meaning knowledge about Him, combined with trust and obedience) may also become Spiritual children of Elohim, as explained in Hebrews 2: 6 – 11, as follows: ***'But one has testified somewhere, saying, "WHAT IS MAN, THAT THOU REMEMBEREST HIM? OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT THOU ART CONCERNED ABOUT HIM? (7) THOU HAST MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; THOU HAST CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAST APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS; (8) "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 (us). (9) 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. (10) For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. (11) For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified (us) are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.'*** In this way we see that when we read all the writings of Shaul together we arrive at the correct answer, but will get confused when we use some of his writings out of context.

Next we get to verses 16 – 19 of Galatians 3 (KJV), in this way: ***'Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not to seeds, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, 'And to thy seed, which is Messiah. (17) 'And this I say, that the covenant (with Abraham) that was confirmed before of Elohim in Messiah, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. (18) For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but Elohim gave it to Abraham by promise. (19) Wherefore then serverth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed (Messiah) should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.'*** At this point we need to ask, which law came 430 years after YHVH made the promise to Abraham that those who believe in Messiah will become Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise (see Galatians 3 verses 26 – 29³¹), and was added because of transgressions. It could not possibly be Elohim's commandments which he gave Israel at Mount Sinai, since we read from Genesis 26: 4 & 5 where YHVH said to Isaac: ***"And I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these land; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed*** (by obviously the knowledge and understanding they will bring to the nations, having been given a double-portion of knowledge, understanding and physical blessings by YHVH); ***(5) because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws."*** So which specific law was added 430 years after Abraham because of transgressions, to become as we read from Galatians 3: 24(KJV), ***'(Wherefore the law was) our school master to bring us unto Messiah, that we***

³¹ Galatians 3: 26 – 29, ***'For you are all sons of Elohim through faith in Messiah Yahshua. For all of you who were immersed into Messiah have clothed yourselves with Messiah. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Messiah Yahshua. And if you belong to Messiah, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.'***

may be justified through faith. The law that was a schoolmaster to the nation of Israel before Yahshua became the sacrifice for the sins of the world, was the **sacrificial law**; that was introduced after the sin of the golden calf, where every time the people sinned they had to bring an animal to be slaughtered in the presence of a Levitical priest to show them that ***‘without the shedding of blood’*** there can be no forgiveness (as per Hebrews 9: 22). Yes, the Sacrificial Law was introduced 430 years after Abraham to like a schoolmaster teach the Israelites this valuable lesson, until Messiah became the Sacrifice for the sins of the world, and thereby did away with the Sacrificial Law in respect of sin.

Having dealt with those who bewitch people not to obey truth or Torah in Galatians 3, let’s go on to the second area where false teachers confuse their congregants and others in John 3: 21. Rav Yochanan expounded on Yahshua’s words used here, in first John 2: 4, saying: ***‘The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.’*** In fact the Tanach gives new meaning to Messiah’s words in John 18: 37, If we bear in mind that according to Psalm 119: 142, ...***‘Thy Law or Torah) is truth’***, and when Yahshua said in John 17: 17, ...***‘Thy word is truth’*** the only word of Elohim, namely the Scriptures available at Messiah’s time was the Tanach (meaning the Law of Moses (Torah), the Prophets and the writings), as follows: ***‘Pilate therefore said to Him, “So You are a king? Yahshua answered, “You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth (Torah). Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”’*** The final underlined words of Yahshua are in fact a witness against those who say they believe in Him, but tell their members that He abolished Torah, as He also confirmed in John 5: 43 – 47, saying: ***‘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? (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?’*** Yes, this is telling us that we cannot be believers in Yahshua the Messiah, unless we believe in the writings of Moses, namely Torah!

It was also for this reason that we read Yahshua’s admonition to the religious leaders of His day, but also to us for whom the Renewed Covenant was specifically recorded, in John 8: 42 – 45, saying: ***“If Elohim were your Father; you would love Me; for I proceeded forth and have come from Elohim, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. (43) Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. (44) You are of your father the devil and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies. (45) But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.”*** When Satan speaks through his many agents, they merely speak according to Satan’s nature, lies. What are lies? They are the opposite of truth or Torah. The opposite of Torah is as Rav Yochanan has written in first John 3: 4, saying: ***‘Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.’***

Now, let’s discuss what the word *‘grace’* means, as this is another word mostly distorted by Churchianity. There are two words for *‘grace’* in the Tanach, the first word transliterated in Hebrew as *‘chen’* meaning grace but also charm. The second word meaning *‘grace’* is transliterated in Hebrew as *‘chesed’* meaning grace but can also mean mercy or undue favor. The Greek equivalent for *‘chen’* is *‘charis’* (where the word charisma comes from in English) can also mean grace or charm. The second word used for grace in Greek is *‘eleos’* and can also mean mercy or undue favor. However, the KJV tends to translate Chen/Charis as grace but tends to translate Chesed/Eleos as mercy. When we as Nazarenes think of Chesed/Eleos in Scriptural terms, we usually think of the

idea of undue favor. If we therefore talk in terms of the way in which the KJV is translated, it appears that there are much more grace in the Renewed Covenant than in the Tanach, since the word 'chen' only appears 70 times in the Tanach, whilst 'charis' appears 233 times in the Renewed Covenant. On the other hand 'chesed' appears 251 times in the Tanach, whilst 'eleos' appears only 50 times in the Renewed Covenant.

We get a better understanding of what grace is by turning to the Tanach. According to the Scriptures, there is a close connection between 'grace' and the 'fear of YHVH', as can be seen from the following three verse:

- Psalm 103: 11 (KJV): ***'For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.'***
- Psalm 118: 4 (KJV): ***'Let them now that fear YHVH say, that his mercy endureth for ever.'***
- Proverbs 16: 6 (KJV): ***'By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of YHVH men depart from evil.'***

Furthermore the fear of YHVH, according to the Tanach includes Torah observance, as follows:

- Deuteronomy 17: 19 (KJV): ***'And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear YHVH his Elohim, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes and do them.'***
- Deuteronomy 31: 12(KJV): ***'Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear YHVH your Elohim, and observe to do all the words of this law.'***

So we see that Torah is closely related to grace. However, if we do not look at the word grace through the glasses of Churchianity, we will realize that it is no different in the Renewed Covenant, as Rav Kepha explains in first Peter 1: 13 – 16, in this way: ***'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 One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; (16) because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY FOR I AM HOLY."*** Ask yourself where is the section in uppercase letters quoted from? Knowing Torah, we immediately realize that it comes from Leviticus 11: 45, where YHVH instructed the Israelites through Moses about the food they should eat to remain holy or set-apart to Him, saying: ***"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."*** Rav Kepha is therefore saying that because we ***'fix our hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Yahshua Messiah'***, we should not only eat only kosher foods but our entire lifestyle should be set-apart in accordance with the way of Elohim. So despite those who now believe that according to the so-called 'New Testament' they are now living in an age of grace, our entire way of life should be controlled by Torah. It is for this reason that Rav Yaa'cov wrote in James 2: 24, saying: ***'You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith.'***

The reason then why we as called out ones have to increase in grace and knowledge as Rav Kepha wrote in 2 Peter 3: 17 & 18, is as follows: ***'You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, (18) but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Master and Savior Yahshua Messiah. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amein.'*** We need to study and keep the commandments, so that we may not be led astray by people who use Scriptural words and phrases without fully understanding what they mean, and to lead other astray by distorting the Scriptures for their own evil principles. This is also the reason Elohim gave us teachers, as Rav Shaul wrote in Ephesians 4: 11 – 14, saying: ***'And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, (12) for the equipping of the saints for the***

work of service, to the building up of the body of Messiah; (13) until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of Elohim, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Messiah. (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. Yes, as called out believers in Messiah, our entire purpose should be to conform to the image of Elohim, as Rav Shaul confirmed in Romans 8: 28 & 29, saying: ***'And we know that Elohim causes all things to work together for good to those who love Elohim, to those who are called according to His purpose. (29) 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.'***

We should therefore make absolutely sure that those who teach us are people who not only know Torah, but also strive to keep it fully, and we should not listen to those who with special words and phrases want to get us to reject the one true Elohim and His Torah. It is as Rav Yochanan tells us in first John 3: 3 – 8, saying: ***'And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. (4) Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. (5) And you know that He appeared in order to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin. (6) No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. (7) Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; (8) the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of Elohim appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil.'*** Think about it!

Chapter 20: Romans 11 viewed in the light of Torah.

There are two Torah portions that mention the '*chukim*', meaning laws with no logical explanation prohibiting the mixing of seeds, wearing garments made from two different types of thread, or plowing with animals of two different species at the same time. These two laws are found in:

- Leviticus 19: 19, ***'You are to keep My statutes. You shall not breed together two kinds of your cattle; you shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor wear a garment upon you of two kinds of material mixed together';*** and
- Deuteronomy 22: 9 - 11, ***'You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest all the produce of the seed which you have sown, and the increase of the vineyard become defiled. (10) You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together. (11) You shall not wear a material mixed of wool and linen together.'***

Most Nazarene/Messianic Torah teachers rightly usually explain these two '*chukim*' by mentioning 2 Corinthians 6: 14 – 18, in this way: ***'Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? (15) Or what harmony has Messiah with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? (16) 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. (18) And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me." Says YHVH Almighty.'*** A previous teacher who had much to do with my calling out of darkness into Elohim's marvelous light, once said at one of the few meetings during which we had the privilege to hear him speak in person, *"Half of you (those present at the service) are not getting it; if you want to be the Israel of Elohim, you will have to start living like Israelites (Keeping the Sabbath and Feast Days of Elohim, eating only kosher food, and live like those Israelites who remained close to YHVH in their customs and beliefs)." Few at the time realized that he meant we should become Jews, keeping all of the Torah applicable to each one of us. That is in fact also what Rav Shaul was saying in 2 Corinthians 6.*

These '*chukim*' or seemingly meaningless laws in Torah teach us to serve YHVH the way He prescribes in the Torah, and not to worship Him the way the pagans around us serve their gods. This is exactly how our forebears worshiped YHVH after they were taken into captivity by the Assyrians during 721 and 718 BCE, as we read in 2 Kings 17: 33, ***'They feared YHVH and served their own gods according to the custom of the nations from among whom they had been carried away into exile.'*** There are many so-called believers who compromise in the way they want to follow YHVH. They hold that we are all following truth, whether we keep the Feast Days of Elohim according to the Hebrew calendar, or any other calendar, as long as we follow a shadow of what is to come. However, there is only one way to serve YHVH our Elohim and it is a very difficult and lonely road of no compromise. In the end if we are not in worship services when our Jewish Brothers keep Rosh Hashanah and Yahshua returns to them on that day as witnessed in Zechariah 12: 7 – 14, we could be too late to enter the marriage chambers as depicted in Matthew 25: 11 & 12. We read one of Messiah's parable from Matthew 13: 45 & 46, as follows; ***"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."*** The lesson that this parable is teaching, is that once we have found the truth, we should never give up or turn away from it. Once we started on the way of Elohim, we should never look back, as also witnessed from Luke 9: 62, in this way: ***'But Yahshua said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of Elohim."***

However, these Torah commands about mixtures also have a deeper meaning for those Israelites of the lost ten tribes currently being called out of the churches of the world. The first time we read about seeds in the Scriptures in Genesis 1: 11, where Elohim said: ***“Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind, with seed in them, on the earth”; and it was so.*** It is clear therefore, that when YHVH brought forth fruit trees, they were to produce fruit and also seed after their own kind or species. Yes, YHVH our Elohim created the world with certain distinct species, and he wanted them to remain so, without any change. YHVH in His Torah forbids mankind from altering the species or order of His creation. It is often necessary for us to look at the natural to understand the Spiritual. It is for this reason that we read from Romans 1: 19 & 20, ***‘Because that which is known about Elohim is evident within them (mankind); for Elohim made it evident to them. (20) For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes (according to first Timothy 1: 17 YHVH is invisible), His eternal power (according to first Corinthians 1: 24 Yahshua is the power of Elohim, through which He also made the heavens and the earth as per Jeremiah 32: 17) and divine nature (the Set-apart Spirit is Elohim’s divine nature of which we may become partakers of as per 2 Peter 1: 4), have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.’*** For example, we are told that we, meaning mankind were created in the image and likeness of Elohim. As mankind each one of us consists of a body, a soul and a spirit. Our bodies are made of flesh and blood and are visible to other humans and animals with the ability to see with their eyes. The word soul simply means our lives, which we all know comes to an end when we die, since as we are told in first Timothy 6: 16, only YHVH Elohim possesses immortality. We are also aware that only human beings are endowed with spirits in us (as per Zechariah 12: 1) which give us understanding as per Job 32: 8.

Once those of us called out of the world are suitably immersed in Yahshua’s saving name (as per Acts 2: 38) and had the hands of a teaching elder laid upon us, we are promised the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim to indwell us. After this process the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim merges with the spirit in us and we are begotten children of Elohim, to be born-again as Spiritual children of Elohim if we remain faithful to the end, at Messiah’s return as promised according to Romans 8: 11, in this way: ***‘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.’*** When we die, the spirit given us goes back to the Father, whilst our bodies return to dust (as per Ecclesiastes 12: 7). However, we read the fantastic promise in Hebrews 12: 23, as follows: ***‘To the general assembly and congregation of the first-born, who are enrolled in heaven (in the book of life), and to Elohim, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect.’*** We read a further promise when Messiah returns from first Thessalonians 5: 23, in this way: ***‘Now may the Elohim of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and bodies be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Master Yahshua Messiah.’*** It is because we have now through studying the word of Elohim, discovered our own makeup; we should also know the Oneness of Elohim, as Rav Shaul explained in Romans 1: 19 & 20 – we have no excuse.

But let’s return to Elohim’s Torah regarding plants. When we look at a cultivated fruit tree, we see a single plant, but in reality we are in most cases looking at two trees that have been combined into one. In the case of a cultivated tree, the root system comes from one part of one tree, known as the rootstock and the branches come from another tree. However, there are also instances where a third tree is used for the short section of the trunk, called the stem. The reason for combining different varieties of trees is to produce top-quality fruit with a superior root system. In a successful graft, new xylem (woody tissue) cells from one part of the tree joins with those from the other parts, forming an unbroken water and nutrient conducting system. However, what must be remembered when crafting a cultivated tree, is that the individual plants of the clonal rootstock, must be genetically identical, and as a result the grower is able to predict the characteristics of the new tree

with a fair amount of accuracy. So it is clear from the natural order to have a successful grafting, a good root system, a scion consisting of a branch of a different tree, and if necessary a third inter-stem, from the same species are used to form a new tree. The cultivated tree or root system of Romans 11 is genetically the same (from Judah) as the wild branches (from Ephraim) in that they are both Israelites. The inter-stem or Gentiles who accept (YHVH)'s Torah covenant and Sabbaths (as per Isaiah 56: 6 – 8), who have accepted Messiah as their personal Passover have clothed themselves with Messiah, becomes Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise (as per Galatians 3: 26 – 29 & Romans 9: 6 & 7). However, to have a successful grafting they must all have constant contact with one another for water and nutrients (life) to flow to all the crafted parts. This will essentially take quite a lot of work and effort, but the end result will be a cultivated tree that will bear fruit to Elohim, similar to when the natural olive tree (the united nation of Israel) used to be one under the rulership of King David.

Let's now consider the olive tree of Romans 11 in the light of the law of prohibiting the mixing of species. An olive tree has a potential lifespan of more than a thousand years of bearing olives; and has as a result become a symbol of immortality. The olive tree propagates by putting forth branches that ensure its survival even after the main trunk becomes hollow. The olive tree left such an impression on the Psalmist that he wrote in Psalm 128: 3, ***'Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine, within your house, your children like olive plants around your table.'*** The olive is one of the most common trees in the Land of Israel and the uses of the tree are many; it is also for this reason that the olive tree is used as a figure for Israel. The olive tree (Israel) is a wonderful symbol of the promise Elohim made with father Abraham of a continuous offspring that are a product of a marriage between YHVH and Israel. According to first Kings 6: 23 & 31, the wood of the olive tree was used to make the two cherubim in the inner sanctuary, as well as the doors, lintel and five sided doorposts of the entrance of the inner sanctuary, in the time of King Solomon. In Jeremiah 11: 16 & 17 YHVH calls the united nation of Israel a green olive tree, in this way: ***'YHVH called your name, "A green olive tree, beautiful in fruit and form"; with the noise of a great tumult He has kindled fire on it, and its branches are worthless. (17) And YHVH of hosts, who planted you, has pronounced evil against you because of the evil of the house of Israel and the house of Judah, which they have done to provoke Me by offering up sacrifices to Baal.'*** YHVH planted one Israel (olive tree) and because the nation split in two after King Solomon's sins, and subsequent sins of King Jeroboam of Israel and King Manasseh of Judah, that both nations were laid bare before the nations, as branches both cultivated and uncultivated were cut off.

Because (YHVH)'s olive tree in Jeremiah 11 contained both houses of Israel and Judah, so does the olive tree in Romans 11. According to verse 17 of Jeremiah 11 and verses 19 & 20 of Romans 11 branches were broken off because of unbelief or disobedience. We read further from Jeremiah 2: 21, ***"Yet I planted you a choice vine, a completely faithful seed. How then have you turned yourself before Me into the degenerate shoots of a foreign vine?"*** Even so, it does not matter where the house of Israel lives or what he or she believes, he or she is still an Israelite. However, Jeremiah teaches that because Israel travelled on the Assyrian road (as per Jeremiah 2: 18) he or she degenerated into a foreign vine. They became like Gentiles among the Gentiles. The olive tree of Ephraim became so degenerate that it took on the cultures, behaviors and features of the non-Israelite nations amongst whom they live. These scriptural witnesses make it clear that the olive tree is both the house of Judah and the house of Israel. When Judah and Israel split they became the two olive trees described in Zechariah 4, which Zechariah could not identify at the time of writing this prophecy. The rootstock out of the house of Judah is Yahshua, and the scion which became scattered into all the nations and became a degenerate vine or wild olive shoot is Ephraim. The house of Judah preserved the covenants, the Torah and the timing of the temple services and promises (as per Romans 9: 4). Ephraim became a wild olive tree, forgot Torah and adopted pagan

gentile ways, however, because YHVH will never forget the promises He made with our forefathers in the faith, He send Yahshua to bring the lost ten tribes back to the covenant that He made with our fathers in the faith. (YHVH)'s plan as prophesied by the prophets was to bring the two trees back together in Messiah, or the greater King David, as we read from both Ezekiel 37, but also from Ephesians 2.

There are many misconceptions about the olive tree in Romans 11 and the root. Most people believe the olive tree and the root to be the Jews. It is for this reason that many in Churchianity as well as in the Messianic Jewish movement spend so much time and effort to evangelize Jews. They claim that the wild olive branches are Gentiles, and that Messianic Jews who came to believe in Y'shua as well as the adopted Christians are now crafted into the Jewish Olive Tree and have become the Israel of G-d. Many new believers to the Messianic faith spend hours to prove somewhere down the line they have Jewish ancestors, to gain acceptance by the Messianic Community. They are either blinded to, or do not want to recognize the two house doctrine, which is evident throughout the Scriptures. But the Torah concerning mixtures proves that the wild olive branches of Romans 11 are not Gentiles as many teach, but are Israelites from the house of Israel who were scattered into the world because of disobedience. Yahshua said that He came specifically to bring back lost sheep of the house of Israel (in Matthew 24: 15) to YHVH, but also to the commonwealth of Israel. They are through the process of grafting, being placed back into the olive tree of united Israel containing all twelve tribes. Because they were former Israelites who became wild olive branches since they have forgotten their roots and started adopting the cultures and pagan religious practices of the nations amongst whom they were scattered. As a result of the law that forbids the grafting of two different species together into one tree, there is no problem crafting them back into the original olive tree. The natural olive branches are Jews from the house of Judah, the rootstock. Yahshua Himself from the rootstock being the root of the olive tree. The transliterated Hebrew words 'sheres' from the root 'sharash' means 'the root', origin, source, offspring or shoot. Yahshua is called the 'root of Jesse' in Isaiah 11: 1; Revelation 5: 5; and 22: 16 and in the last part of Romans 11: 16 we read about Him, in this way: **'And if the root be holy (set-apart), the branches are too.'** The natural cultivated branches are indeed the Jews, but the wild uncultivated branches are Israelites from the lost ten tribes, whom YHVH is calling to return to their original culture and faith through Yahshua our Messiah. The branches were broken off because of unbelief, as per Jeremiah 11, but the uncultivated branches are now being grafted back into the original olive tree.

Even so, we read from Romans 11: 24 – 29: ***'For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were crafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree? (25) 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; 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.'*** Rav Shaul was revealing the mystery of the olive tree to the congregation in Rome. He was fully aware that all Israel from both houses will eventually be saved. The Ephraimites are being called back into the fold by Yahshua, as He told our Jewish Brothers in John 10: 14 – 16, saying: ***"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 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."***

YHVH being the Eternal cannot lie and remain true to His word forever, as He said in Malachi 3: 6, ***“For I, YHVH, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.”*** We read His promise in Deuteronomy 4: 24 – 31, in this way: ***“For YHVH your Elohim is a consuming fire, a jealous Elohim. (25) When you become the father of children and children’s children and have remained long in the land, and act corruptly, and make an idol in the form of anything, and do that which is evil in the sight of YHVH your Elohim so as to provoke Him to anger, (26) I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you shall surely perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to possess it. You shall not live long on it, but shall be utterly destroyed. (27) And YHVH will scatter you among the peoples, and you shall be left few in number among the nations, where YHVH shall drive you. (28) And there you will serve gods, the work of man’s hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. (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. (30) 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. (31) For YHVH your Elohim is a compassionate Elohim; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.”*** The Torah helps us understand that the fruit of an olive tree bears seed after its kind and the commands about not mixing seeds help us understand that the wild branches of Romans 11 have to be blood descendants of the original tree. But the Question is: How do genuine Gentiles come into the olive tree? How are they grafted into the olive tree of Israel?

We read from Galatians 3: 26 – 29; Galatians 6: 16 and Romans 9: 6 & 7 how this becomes possible, as follows: ***‘For you are all sons of Elohim through faith in Messiah Yahshua. (27) For all of you who were immersed into Messiah have clothed yourselves with Messiah. (28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Messiah Yahshua. (29) And if you belong to Messiah, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise’***³². (Gal.6: 16) ***‘And those who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of Elohim.’*** (Rom 9: 6 & 7) ***‘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.”*** So Gentiles become citizens of Israel through Yahshua our Messiah. Once they have put on Messiah, they have become part of the root Yahshua and have become of the same specie as Israel and can be crafted in with the wild olive branches contrary to nature. The Gentiles or non-Israelites are not olive branches at all. But they are used as inter-stems to serve as a bridge between the cultivated root and uncultivated branches. If the Gentile joins himself to YHVH through Messiah Isaiah tells us in Isaiah 56: 6 – 8, saying: ***‘Also the foreigners who join themselves to YHVH, to minister to Him, and to love the name of YHVH, to be His servants, everyone who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, and holds fast My covenant; (7) even those I will bring to My holy mountain (government), and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all***

³² Genesis 17: 7 – 12, ***“And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout your generations for an everlasting covenant, to be Elohim to you and to your descendants after you. 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.”*** Elohim said further to Abraham, ***“Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a servant who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not your descendants.”***

peoples.” (8) YHVH Elohim, who gathers the dispersed of Israel, declares, “Yet others I will gather to them, to those already gathered.”

We see that Gentiles who give up all their former ways including forefather worship as the custom of many are in especially Africa, and join themselves to YHVH through Yahshua Messiah are acceptable to the rootstock olive tree and can be crafted in as inter-stems into the olive tree as the third tree. This happens especially if those who YHVH calls in from the lost ten tribes refuse to answer the call as explained in the parable of the wedding feast in Matthew 22. We see from verse 3 that some of those whom the king invited to the wedding, refused to answer the call and as a result later in verse 9 he told the slaves that those who were invited were not worthy, and that they should go out into the highway, and as many as they find there they should invite to the wedding. So the slaves went out and invited both evil and good from the highway, to come and attend the wedding feast. However, when the king came to look over the guests he found there a man not dressed in wedding garments (meaning a person who came in to serve Elohim, without giving up all his traditions from the past), and the king told his slaves to bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness.

We also read the parable of the wheat and the tares in Matthew 13: 24 – 30. Yahshua explained the principle of sowing two kinds of seeds in one field. This is a two-house parable with deeper truths hidden in it. The wheat in this parable represents the true believing remnant of called out believers, sown into the world, by Yahshua. But who are the tares? As explained in this parable they are sown by Satan, while the watchmen slept. Tares are a poisonous grass specie that looks a lot like wheat, whilst growing, until its fruit appears. It is only then that the difference becomes obvious. Yahshua tells us in verse 41 of Matthew 13 that the tares are stumbling blocks and those who commit lawless deeds in our midst, sown by Satan. In verses 42 & 43 Yahshua concludes the parable, saying that He: ***“(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.”*** Those in our community who are given the same knowledge of truth about Elohim’s plan of salvation for all mankind during this age, but go on sinning because of unbelief, will like Satan and those who refuse to bow the knee before Yahshua after the millennium in the great white throne judgment, be thrown into the lake of fire to become ashes under the feet of the righteous (as per Malachi 4: 1). With this better understanding of the Torah commands forbidding the mixing of different species, we can prove that the wild olive branches of Romans 11 are Israelites and not Gentiles as the Christian church and Messianic Judaism teaches. Yahshua used this law to explain the parable of the wheat and the tares, proving only those who are or become Israel through Yahshua and who leave all their previous customs and beliefs behind will be gathered into Elohim’s granary. Think about it!

Bibliography and contact details of the publisher:

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1. **New American Standard Bible quoted throughout, unless otherwise indicated.**
2. **'Come out of her My people' by C J Koster.**
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