

Doctrinal sermons and Scripture Study Lessons.

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Nazarene Israelite Two House congregation of Port Elizabeth

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What happens when we die?

Most of us are aware about the confusion that exist in religious circles regarding death, and what happens there after; some believe that they are born with immortal souls and at death their souls go to either heaven or hell, depending how they lived; whilst others believe that they are reincarnated after death and come back to earth as another human being or even an animal. The confusion about death may directly be attributed to a misunderstanding about what constitutes a soul. The question is; does the soul exist apart from the body? And does it continue to exist after death? The English word soul is translated from the Hebrew word *'nephesh'* and means creature. According to Genesis 1 we see that both animals (verse 21) and human beings (verse 27) were created *'Barah'* as opposed to *'Asah'* or to make in Hebrew, man became a living soul or being when YHVH Elohim breathed into his nostrils (Genesis 2: 7). Both animals and human beings have souls or are living creatures/beings.

So different to plants, animals have souls which provide them with instinct to survive; i.e. to propagate their species; to find food; to build shelters (nest), etc. The difference between animals and human beings is that mankind is also endowed with a spirit (*'neshamah'*) within him. This is confirmed in the second part of Zechariah 12: 1 as follows: ***"Thus declares YHVH who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him."*** A second more detailed description is given in Job 32: 8 in this way: ***"But it is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding."*** The underlined words tell us that it is the spirit in man that gives us the ability to understand, i.e. to evaluate various options open to us, and to make a decision as to which option to select, but also gives us the ability to express our thoughts in words. We are free moral agents, with the ability to choose to go Elohim's way – the way of giving and sharing, or the wrong way - which is the way of get. The soul is not immortal and if we sin, it is destined to die as is confirmed in Ezekiel 18: 4 as follows: ***"Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die."*** We know that after YHVH created man, He told them what to eat and what not to eat, saying to Adam in Genesis 2: 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."*** However contrary to Elohim's 'command', Satan deceived Eve by telling her that she would not die after eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and she took of the forbidden fruit, and also gave some to Adam, and they ate. Satan contradicted what YHVH said and deceived Eve, and most people even today still believe the lie that we will not die – that we are 'immortal'. Satan has not only deceived mother Eve, but has as it says in Revelation 12: 9 ***"deceived the whole world."*** Prior to their sin Adam and Eve were destined to live forever, provided they partook of the 'Tree of Life' which was also in the middle of the garden. At that time they were covered in light as depicted in the last part of verses 26 through 28 of Ezekiel 1, in this way: ***"and on that which resembled a throne, high up, was a figure with the appearance of a man. (27) Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around Him. (28) As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the esteem of YHVH. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking."*** This is talking about what Yahshua the likeness of Elohim looked like, prior to coming in the flesh. This is what He looked like at His transfiguration in Matthew 17: 2, ***"And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became white as light"***, but also what He will look like when He returns as described in Revelation 1: 13 – 15, as follows: ***'And in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. (14) And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; (15) and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in the furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters.'***

According to Genesis 1: 26 & 27 mankind was originally created in the image of Elohim, and we are told in Colossians 1: 15 (and 2 Corinthians 4: 4) that Yahshua is the visible image of the invisible Elohim. So initially

after the creation of man, we looked like Yahshua did, when He was transfigured and covered in light before His three disciples. When our original forefathers sinned, their light covering was removed and they were covered in skin and destined to die. We read about this in Genesis 3: 21, in this way: ***“And YHVH Elohim made garments of skin¹ for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.”*** Since Adam’s fall all men are destined to die once, as YHVH told Adam in verse 19 of Genesis 3, saying: ***‘By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.’*** Yes, because we are physical we age and eventually die. The Hebrew Tanach teaches that upon death, the soul dies, as we read from Job 14: 12, in this way: ***“So man lies down and does not rise. Until the heavens be no more, He will not awake nor be aroused out of his sleep.”*** In the Renewed Covenant a word similar to nephesh, i.e. ‘*psuche*’ meaning life or soul is used. In Matthew 16: 25 – 26 Yahshua said: ***“For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. (26) For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”*** Rav Kepha taught in Acts 2: 29 saying: ***“Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.”*** For those who at this point say that this verse is only talking about David’s tomb, should also read verses 34 & 35 to understand the full account, as follows: ***“For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: ‘YHVH SAID TO MY Lord (Maryah in Aramaic, meaning Master YHVH), “SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, (35) UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET.”’***

But some might argue, saying: what about Abraham - surely he was a righteous man; did he not ascend to heaven? Not according to Yahshua’s own words in John 3: 13, where He said: ***“And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, even the Son of Man.”*** Ask yourself; what was Abraham promised? We read the answer in Genesis 17: 8, ***‘And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their Elohim.’*** The question is: Did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob ever receive Canaan or the Promised Land in their lifetimes? We read from Hebrews 11: 8 – 10 & 39, ***‘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; (10) for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is Elohim. (39) And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised.’*** But, when will they receive what was promised? Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as well as all the other faithful believers, including those of us who will make it into the Kingdom of Elohim, will only receive this promise when Yahshua returns, as we read from verse 40 of Hebrews 11, in this way: ***‘Because Elohim had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they (our fathers in the faith) should not be made perfect.’***

From these Scriptural witnesses it is clear that man is a mortal soul and does not possess immortality at all, and upon death, life as we know it ends. It does not continue in some other realm – in either heaven or in hell. A dead person is also not reincarnated into another person or being. From the time of our original parents Adam and Eve, all men have died. However, death is not the end; YHVH has not left us without hope. Despite the fact that we will all eventually die, YHVH has planned more than only this temporary physical existence for us. Job knew this and asked many years ago in Job 14: 14, ***“If a man dies, will he live again? All the days of my struggle I will wait, until my change comes.”*** He answers the question himself in verse 15 as follows: ***“Thou wilt call, and I will answer Thee; Thou wilt long for the work of thy hands.”*** Job further wrote in Chapter 19: 26, ***“Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh I shall see Elohim.”*** This confirms that the skin used by YHVH to clothe mankind after Adam sinned, destined us to die. After Elohim

¹ Note: In Hebrew both the words light (אור) and skin (עור) are pronounced as ‘ohr’, however, the word light is written with an aleph and skin with an ayin. Many Christians, Messianic Jews and even Nazarene Jews/Israelites believe that in the account in Genesis 3: 21 YHVH slaughtered a lamb as sacrifice for Adam and Eve’s sin and dressed them in lamb skin. However, The Scriptures does not say that at all.

drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, He was eventually forced to destroy all mankind, because of their wickedness, saving only Noah, his family and the animals that Elohim sent to enter the Ark before flooding the earth. But Elohim's disappointment did not end there, as soon after He started afresh with Noah's family, mankind like Satan tried to go to heaven by building a tower whose top would reach into heaven. Again Elohim put an end to mankind's plans and scattered the people abroad over the face of the earth. Then Elohim started the process over again with one man named Abram. Without going into too much detail, it is crucial for us from the lost ten tribes who are returning to the faith once delivered to the saints (meaning true believers in YHVH), to remember that the blessings Elohim bestowed on Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were passed down to Jacob's twelve sons, with the first born blessing going to Joseph's two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, since Jacob's first born son Reuben sinned against his father. There were really only two major blessings bestowed upon Abraham; the first being, that his descendants through Isaac and then Jacob would inherit the Promised Land for ever, provided they like Abraham prove their faith in YHVH by obedience to Him, including to circumcise their male children at the age of 8-days old, as a sign to this eternal covenant. Foreseeing that YHVH will eventually divorce the house of Israel (as per Jeremiah 3: 8 and Isaiah 50: 1), the second part of the blessing, that He will bring a remnant of lost ten tribes scattered into the world because of idolatry and disobedience to Him, back to the covenant relationship they had with Him together with their Jewish Brothers, to again have an opportunity to become first born heirs of Abraham to inherit their part of the Promised land which they lost, through Abraham's one Seed, namely Yahshua, who will also eventually save the rest of mankind after learning Elohim's true way after the 2nd resurrection, and decide to follow it, as second born children into Elohim's eternal family. YHVH gave Joseph's descendants the first born portion of blessings, but reserved the authority to rule religious matters to the tribe of Judah, as witnessed in Psalm 60: 7 (KJV), as follows: ***'Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver.'*** So, even though Ephraim was given the birth right, Judah was given authority over religious matters. In fact considering what happened during the past two thousand years, we know that the British Commonwealth (including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa) and the United States of America, indeed had a double blessing since especially the 18th century, during which time the house of Judah remained faithful to Elohim and retained their faith, language and culture as Elohim's Lawgiver, despite the fact that they were persecuted severely for doing so.

The house of Judah consisting of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi, who always remained faithful to Elohim because they knew and obeyed the Torah teachings from the time our forebears received it as a covenant between YHVH and them at Mount Sinai, have been given the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim (*'Ruach HaKodesh'*)², because of obedience (as per Acts 5: 32³). Yahshua confirmed this in answering a Jewish Pharisee in Matthew 19: 16 & 17, as follows: ***'And behold, one came to Him and said, "Teacher (Rabbi in Hebrew), what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?" (17) And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments."*** Similarly have those of the ten lost tribes and others whom YHVH called during this lifetime and have been immersed in Messiah's name and received the Set-apart Spirit after laying on of the hands of teaching elders of the congregation (as per Acts 2: 38 - 39⁴ and Acts 8: 12 - 17⁵), provided they

² Jews like all men have souls (transliterated as 'nephesh' in Hebrew) and the spirit in man (transliterated as 'neshamah' or higher level soul), but in addition Torah observant Jews also have the Set-apart Spirit ('Ruach HaKodesh'). Since returning Israelites lost the Set-apart Spirit due to disobedience to Torah, they have to be immersed into the name of Yahshua (who came specifically to reconcile them to Elohim & Brother Judah to eventually re-establish the kingdom of Elohim over Israel), to receive the Set-apart Spirit.

³ Acts 5: 32, ***'And we (meaning Messiah's disciples) are witnesses of these things; and so is the Set-apart Spirit, whom Elohim has given to those who obey Him.'***

⁴ Acts 2: 38 & 39, ***'And Kepha 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. For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as YHVH our Elohim shall call to Himself."*** The underlined sentence shows that only those from the house of Israel whom YHVH shall call to Himself should be immersed, since the House of Judah have the Set-apart Spirit because of obedience.

⁵ 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***

overcome Satan, the world and their own human natures in obedience to Elohim's commandments from that time forward. It is because both these groups have the Set-apart Spirit indwelling them, that they will be resurrected as Spiritual children of Elohim at Messiah's return. We read how Yahshua redeemed those of us who are being called at this time, from the penalty due to us for disobedience to Elohim's Torah from Galatians 3: 13 & 14, in this way: ***"Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us – for it is written, 'CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE'- (14) in order that in Messiah Yahshua the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."*** Rav Shaul testified in first Thessalonians 5: 23 that human beings are composed of bodies, souls and spirits. When those of us from the lost ten tribes return to our Father and are immersed into the saving name of Yahshua, essentially accepting that His death removed the record of our transgressions, YHVH gives us a portion of His Set-apart Spirit. The Set-apart Spirit combines with the spirit in us and we are begotten anew. This gives us the opportunity to like Yahshua be resurrected at His return. When we die our bodies are buried, our souls come to an end and our spirits goes back to the Father who gave it, as is also confirmed in Ecclesiastes 12: 7, in this way: ***'Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to Elohim who gave it.'*** Whilst our spirits are in heaven, it will be perfected as we read from Hebrews 12: 23, as follows: ***"to the general assembly and the 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."*** When Yahshua returns He will bring back our perfected spirits and will resurrect our bodies and souls. Our imperishable bodies and souls will merge with our perfected spirits from heaven, and we will become kings and priests under Yahshua during His Millennial rule.

After we die we are unconscious, waiting for Elohim to call us from the grave and restore us back to life. When Yahshua our Messiah returns, a marvelous transformation will occur before we receive eternal life. The dead in Messiah will be raised imperishable, and those who are still alive will be changed from a perishable to an imperishable existence. Rav Shaul confirms this in 1 Corinthians 15: 51 – 52 ***"Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed."*** This brings us back to the skin we read about in Genesis 3: 21 once again. However, this time we read the conclusion from 2 Corinthians 5: 1 – 4, in this way: ***"For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from Elohim, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2) For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, (3) inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked. (4) For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life."*** Nevertheless, the Scriptures make it clear, that not all will be resurrected at the same time, as confirmed in 1 Corinthians 15: 20 – 23, as follows: ***"But now Messiah has been raised from the dead, the first fruit(s) of those who are asleep. (21) For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. (22) For as in Adam all die, so also in Messiah all shall be made alive. (23) But each in his own order: Messiah the first fruit(s), after that those who are Messiah's at His coming."*** Rav Shaul writes in Romans 8: 11 that we must have Elohim's Set-apart Spirit in us, if we want to be resurrected to life, 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."*** We also have this hope within us that if we have been immersed in Yahshua's saving name we have the Set-apart Spirit dwelling in us as is confirmed in Acts 2: 38 ***'And Kepha 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."***

apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of Elohim, they sent them Kepha and Yochanan, 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.'

There is no discrimination in death – both the righteous and sinners all die. We are perturbed when the life of a young child comes to an end, due to an accident, illness or a violent crime. We are also deeply shocked when tragedies like the tsunami, which occurred on 26 of December 2004, kills thousands of innocent people. It is clear that victims of such a tragedy was in the wrong place at the wrong time. YHVH did not single the people who died in this tsunami out for early punishment – it is pure happen stance. We are all subject to uncertainties. We read about this in Ecclesiastes 9: 11 & 12 as follows: ***“I again saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, and the battle is not to the warriors, and neither is bread to the wise, nor wealth to the discerning, nor favor to men of ability; for time and chance overtake them all. (12) Moreover, man does not know his time: like fish caught in a treacherous net, and birds trapped in a snare, so the sons of men are ensnared at an evil time when it suddenly falls on them.”*** Yahshua our Messiah taught his disciples in parables and when they asked Him why He used this method of teaching, He explained in Mark 4: 11 & 12, saying to them: ***“To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of Elohim; but those who are outside get everything in parables, (12) in order that WHILE SEEING, THEY MAY SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE; AND WHILE HEARING, THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND LEST THEY RETURN AND BE FORGIVEN.”*** Yahshua taught in John 6: 44 that: ***“No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him.”*** But Rav Shaul points out in Romans 11: 2 & 3 that when Elijah thought that he was the only worshipper in YHVH, (YHVH)’s response to him was as recorded in verse 4, in this way: ***“I HAVE KEPT FOR MYSELF SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.”*** We see from Romans 11: 5 that YHVH is at this time only calling a remnant from the lost ten tribes (including some Gentiles), to make our Jewish Brothers jealous and once the designated number has been reached, all Israel, including righteous Torah observant Jews will be saved. But only a small number of the total number of people around the world will be saved at that time. YHVH calls only a few to salvation during this age, as Yahshua explained in Matthew 7: 13 & 14, 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.”*** However, this is not (YHVH)’s approach in order to exclude most of mankind from salvation. The truth is that He has chosen this approach to extend His promise to all as it says in Romans 11: 32 ***“For Elohim has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all.”***

(YHVH)’s annual Set-apart Days depict His plan of Salvation for all mankind. Pentecost or Shavuot points to the initial harvesting of souls, a kind of first fruits unto YHVH. Romans 8: 29 speak of Yahshua Messiah as the ***“firstborn of many brethren”***. We who are called now are also considered to be a type of first fruits. In James 1: 18 we read: ***“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.”*** A second witness to this is found in 2 Thessalonians 2: 13 as follows: ***“But we should always give thanks to Elohim for you, brethren beloved by the Master, because Elohim has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.”*** The significance of the Scriptures calling us first fruits becomes evident when we consider John 14: 6, where Yahshua said: ***“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.”*** How many people throughout the ages, have really accepted and practiced the way Yahshua taught? Few people today know and understand that YHVH follows a plan depicted by his Set-apart Days, to save all humanity by offering them eternal life in His Kingdom. We are at this juncture only the beginning or foundation of the harvest for (YHVH)’s kingdom to come. The people who are called during this dispensation who overcome Satan, the world and self, will be given power to rule over nations, as per Revelation 2: 26. They will be those resurrected immediately at Messiah’s return and they will reign with Him on the earth for a thousand years, assisting in the teaching of Elohim’s truth to humanity as detailed in Revelation 5: 10 and Revelation 20: 6. Yahshua Messiah will return to set up (YHVH)’s everlasting Kingdom which will never be destroyed, according to Daniel 7: 14. In verse 18 of Daniel 7, we read: ***“But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.”*** In Acts 15: 15 – 18, Rav Yaa’cov taught that Yahshua will return to reestablish the nation of Israel (all twelve tribes): ***“And with this 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."

The resurrection we have discussed so far occurs when Yahshua our Messiah returns and it includes those who are in Messiah, known as the first fruits. But what happens to people who never had a chance to come to know and accept Yahshua as their Savior? What about little children who died without receiving the Set-apart Spirit and seeking (YHVH)'s Kingdom? What about those people who died in nations where they never even heard about the name of Yahshua? What is their eternal fate? In verse 6 of Revelation 20 we see that those who reigned with Messiah for a thousand years are part of the first resurrection. Rav Yochanan called those not resurrected at the time of Messiah's return **'the rest of the dead'** in Revelation 20: 5. Rav Yochanan said that they did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. The second resurrection occurs after the millennial rule of Messiah. The second resurrection is also known as the great white throne judgment. We read about this in Revelation 20: 12, **"And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened (The Scriptures); 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."** At that time YHVH will open the minds of those who are in the second resurrection, similar to the way Yahshua opened the minds of His disciples only after His resurrection from death, as we read from Luke 24: 45, in this way: **'Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.'** This is also spoken about in 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 away tears 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 (meaning Yahshua)."'** When will death be swallowed up for all time? We see according to Revelation 20: 14 that this will only happen after the second resurrection, in this way: **'And death and Hades (the grave) were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.'**

All who have not yet been dealt with in the previous steps of (YHVH)'s plan will appear before Him. For the first time in their lives they will correctly understand (YHVH)'s Word, the teachings of The Scriptures. These people will then have their first opportunity to understand and know (YHVH)'s way of life. They will be given a chance to make an informed decision as to whether they want to repent of their past sins. Their 'day of salvation', their period of judgment will begin at that time. In Isaiah 65: 17 & 20 we see that this period will last for one hundred years: **"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind." (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."** YHVH will give those resurrected after the millennium sufficient time to prove through their actions and decisions, that they believe in Yahshua the Messiah and want to do the will of the Father in heaven. The second resurrection is not a second chance for salvation; for those resurrected at that time, it is an opportunity to really get to know YHVH. They will be judged according to their deeds and decisions, by the things which were written in the books (The Scriptures). Judgment will take place over time and they will have the opportunity to understand (YHVH)'s way of life. There will be no premature deaths during this period. Those who repent and accept Yahshua as their Savior and overcome during the 100 year period of time will be immersed into Yahshua's saving Name. They will be given a portion of the Set-apart Spirit and have their names inscribed into the book of life.

Yahshua explained about a time during which people from all generations will be judged at the same time in Matthew 11: 21 – 24 as follows: **"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. (22) Nevertheless I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. (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 also read from Matthew 12: 41 & 42, *‘The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment, and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. (42) The Queen of the South shall rise up with this generation at the judgment and shall condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.’* However, there might be some that will never accept (YHVH)’s way of life. Their fate is to be burned up once and for all. They will not be tormented forever. Only spiritual beings such as Satan and his demons have that fate facing them. Human beings who are made from flesh and blood will burn until they are turned to ashes as explained in Malachi 4: 1 – 3 and according to Revelation 20: 15 *“And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”* The final event to happen will be when the New Jerusalem will come down out of heaven from Elohim and YHVH Himself will come and Tabernacle among us as witnessed in Revelation 21: 3.

Scripture Study – (1) What is Death? (2) What is hell? (3) Do we go to heaven at death?

Is man an immortal soul in a material body? What does science have to say about it?

Absolutely nothing supports the concept. Science simply has no evidence for the existence of an immortal soul. Science deals only with physical, material substance and behavior – physical matter and energy. Modern science is limited entirely to the material world that can be weighed and measured – to that which can be perceived by the five senses.

The spiritual is totally outside the realm of physical science and therefore not subject to it; i.e. the scientific method. Science cannot measure any life apart from matter. And therefore all that man can know, apart from ‘spiritual’ revelation, is material. But what science has learned can nevertheless help enormously in understanding the composition of man.

Science has discovered that all living matter, in its simplest form is protoplasm; a substance which compose the ‘living stuff’ of the cells of plants and animals as well as man. This much also is definitely known: Individuals who died on the operating table and were then quickly revived through direct heart massage and other means, remembered absolutely nothing about the intervening time. They ‘went’ nowhere! They were simply unconscious. They merely reawakened on the operating table as if they had been sleeping soundly. But since brain deterioration occurs very quickly, if deprived of some of his thought, reasoning and memory faculties.

These facts would surely indicate that an ‘immortal soul’ if there is one, is completely unable to think, remember or reason apart from the body.

Science therefore tells us that it has no evidence of an ‘immortal soul’ in man. Even the experience of people on the operating table who ‘died’ temporarily provides no evidence of an immortal soul. Where, then, can we find reliable evidence one way or the other?

What is Man?

The Scriptures is the foundation of knowledge. In it the Creator Elohim has revealed much knowledge that is totally beyond man’s capability to discover for himself; including the knowledge and understanding of what man is, as well as what he is to become. Let’s therefore open the Scriptures to truly discover what man really is.

What did Yahshua Messiah say man is composed of? John 3: 6, first part. And is that which is ‘born of spirit’ of a totally different substance? Same verse.

Comment: Man is composed of flesh; of protoplasm. Yahshua plainly says that if one is born of, and therefore composed of flesh, he cannot also at the same time be born of (composed of) spirit. He must be one or the other. So this verse alone is strong evidence that man is not an immortal spiritual 'soul' in a body of mortal flesh.

Was Rav Shaul an immortal soul clothed with a body of flesh; or did he speak of himself and his flesh as being the same thing? Romans 7: 18.

Comment: Rav Shaul did not distinguish between himself and his flesh in this verse. He indicated that they were one and the same. (We will deal with some of Rav Shaul's other statements later.) Although these verses do not conclusively prove man has no immortal soul, they should open one's mind to the possibility that such does not exist.

In order to understand whether man has an immortal soul, let's go back to creation; the time when the first man was formed, to discover exactly what happened.

The Creation of Man

Elohim created the first man. And He tells us what He made him from, so there would be no doubt as to what we really are.

Out of what did Elohim form man? Genesis 2: 7. Note that it was the man; not only the body, that was formed. Was it the whole man that was composed of dust? Genesis 3: 19

Comment: Adam was made from dust and therefore composed of earth!

What would eventually happen to the conscious man? Genesis 3: 19, last part.

After Elohim had formed the man and made every cell in his body, what did He do to give him life? Genesis 2: 7

Comment: Elohim blew air; 'the breath of life' containing oxygen, into the man's lungs through his nostrils, and the man began to live. The verse does not say that Elohim breathed an immortal soul into the man.

Is the 'breath of life' the same thing which passes through the nostrils of animals? Genesis 7: 21 – 22. Is it therefore the breath of life that is cut off when a human being or an animal drowns? Verse 23. Then the source of life in man and all animals is the same, isn't it?

Comment: If the 'breath of life' even remotely meant that man has an immortal soul, then so do animals, birds and even insects; flies, mosquitoes and fleas.

What kind of 'Soul'?

When Elohim had breathed the breath of life into Adam's nostrils, what did he become? Genesis 2: 7, last part.

Comment: Man does not have a soul; man IS a 'soul'. The original Hebrew word for 'soul' is *nephesh*. *'Bagster's Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon'* defines it as *'breath'*, and *'anything that breathes, an animal'*. It can also refer to a 'person' or even 'one dead, a dead body'. In Genesis 1: 21, 24; 2: 19; 9: 10, 12, 15, 16 and Leviticus 11: 46 the same word *nephesh* is translated 'creature' when referring to animals.

And so man is a creature; man is a soul. Animals are creatures or souls, too! Note that the same word *nephesh* is translated as 'dead body' or 'the dead' in Leviticus 19: 28; 21: 1; 22: 4; Numbers 5: 2; 6: 11 and 9: 6, 7, 10. The 'soul' then, is merely animal life that is subject to death and decay. It is not immortal!

The soul is composed of the 'dust of the ground'; it is material substance, not spiritual. When man breathes, he is a living soul. When man ceases to breathe, he becomes a dead soul. That's what the Scriptures reveal. Are you willing to accept what the Scriptures plainly say?

Can the 'soul' die? Ezekiel 18: 4, 20. If the soul were immortal; eternal, could it die? Is man plainly said to be 'mortal'? Job 4: 17.

Comment: Since man is a soul, and the soul is mortal; then man is mortal, subject to death. That is why the Scriptures call human beings 'mortal man'.

Was Adam subject to death? Genesis 2: 17, last part. Was it the body only that would die, or was it the whole conscious man; Adam, that would die?

What one thing befalls both man and beast? Ecclesiastes 3: 19. Is this because they all have the same source of life; the breath of air? Same verse.

Do all men and animals alike go to the same place at death? Ecclesiastes 3: 20

Comment: When an animal dies, it is dead. When a man dies, he is completely dead too. All men and animals return to the dust from which they came.

Now what does Ecclesiastes 3: 21 ask?

Comment: Far from proving an immortal soul, Solomon's question actually ridicules the 'immortal soul' doctrine which was believed by pagans even in his day. Plato (428 – 348 BCE.) a famous student of Socrates wrote in his book entitled: *'The Phaedo': 'Death is merely the separation of soul and body.'* Solomon therefore asks a question which no pagan can answer.

The transliterated Hebrew word *ruach*, translated as 'spirit' in this verse, also means air, wind or breath. It is translated 28 times as 'breath' in the King James Version. These examples are Genesis 6: 17; 7: 15 and Lamentations 4: 20. It is also translated 90 times as 'wind'. Thus we can see 'ruach' has a very broad meaning, and may be applied to a variety of things whose common denominator is invisibility. It may even mean 'attitude' as well as 'spirit', and with the word 'holy' preceding, it means the Holy or Set-apart Spirit of Elohim.

Solomon asks, therefore, since death occurs to both man and beast, "who knows whether a man's spirit goes up, while a beast's goes downward?" There is, however, a vast difference between man and beast, as we will see shortly; and that difference involves the Hebrew word 'ruach'.

What is the Life of Man?

Man is a living; breathing Mortal creature; a nephesh or living soul in whose nostrils is air. What happens to the breath of air that goes into our lungs?

When you take a breath of air, it passes through your trachea, into the lungs and into little sacs called alveoli. There oxygen is absorbed from the air and goes into the blood vessels from the lungs on the way back to the heart, and then is pumped again throughout the body, the oxygen is carried by red blood cells throughout the body, to the individual cells. Each of your 60 trillion cells uses oxygen to 'burn' your food to make energy required to power your organs and muscles, and to maintain body heat. The life of man clearly depends on the blood, and blood needs 'the breath of life' to keep the body active and alive.

According to the Scriptures, is both life of man and animals found in the bloodstream; or in an immortal soul? Leviticus 17: 11, 14. Does Deuteronomy 12: 23 validate this?

Comment: In these verses the Hebrew word *nephesh* is translated as 'life'. Thus 'nephesh' can refer to a fleshly man or the life of man which depends on his blood.

Did Messiah make His 'soul' an offering for sin? Isaiah 53: 10. How did He accomplish this? Verse 12.

Comment: Messiah voluntarily offered up His body to be crucified and allowed His life's blood ('soul') to be poured out.

How clear that when a man ceases to breathe the breath of life, his heart stops beating and pumping his life's blood, and he dies. But then what happen?

Is there life After Death?

When a person dies; does he still have a conscious existence because of an immortal soul within him? Ecclesiastes 9: 5 & Psalm 146: 4.

Comment: Since the Scriptures state plainly that the dead are not conscious of anything, we can logically conclude that man is not born with an immortal soul which is conscious and aware of things happening around it after death.

Are the dead able to praise Elohim? Psalm 115: 17. But if Christians (and Muslims) have immortal souls, wouldn't they be praising their Elohim after they die, thankful to be with Him in paradise? Here then is more concrete evidence that human beings do not have immortal souls.

Is there any remembrance of Elohim in death? Psalm 6: 5.

Comment: Death is the opposite of life. Death is the cessation of life. That is the reason dead people can remember nothing! That is certain!

According to Matthew 10: 28, is the 'soul' something which can be destroyed? Then didn't Yahshua plainly show that the soul is not immortal? Let's understand exactly what Yahshua was talking about.

Comment: Although some people use this text to support their belief of the immortality of the soul, it clearly says that the soul is something that can be destroyed in hell. Therefore, whatever the 'soul' is, it could not be immortal.

The Greek word here translated 'soul' is *psyche*. It refers to the same thing as the Hebrew word *nephesh*. It simply means life or existence.

In Matthew 10: 28, Messiah obviously used this word to refer to 'life' that man cannot destroy; but which Elohim can. What kind of life could this be? Obviously life which Elohim restores by resurrection. Man cannot 'destroy' a life that Elohim turns right around and renews. But Elohim can destroy it permanently; by casting the resurrected person into the 'lake of fire', never to be resurrected again!

Luke makes this scripture plainer in Luke 12: 5, as follows: ***"But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who after He has killed has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!"*** Elohim not only has the power to take our present physical life, but also has the power to resurrect us and if we have proved disobedient and irredeemable; to cast us into the lake of fire from which there will be no future resurrection. (Revelation 20: 14 – 15 & 21: 8.)

Although men may kill their physical bodies, true believers know that men cannot take from them their hope of eternal life.

Is man merely an Animal?

Since man does not have an immortal soul, does this mean that he is merely an animal – here today and gone tomorrow? Not at all!

What is it that makes man different from the animals? Let's consider this amazing truth.

Were animals created in Elohim's image; or were they created each after its own kind? Genesis 1: 21, 24, 25. But was man created in the 'image' and 'likeness' of Elohim? Genesis 1: 26 & 27. Was man to rule over all other creatures? Verse 26.

Comment: The Hebrew words of Genesis 1: 26 & 27 reveal Elohim's great plan and ultimate purpose for mankind. When Elohim molded Adam out of dust, he was shaped in the 'likeness' or outward shape of Elohim Himself. Elohim didn't form any other creatures to be an exact clay image of Himself, His unique form and shape was given to man alone!

Note again that Elohim said in Genesis 1: 26, ***"Let Us make man in Our image...."*** The Hebrew here indicates more than merely the outward form and shape of Elohim, His likeness – far more. 'Image' refers to mind and character! Elohim intended for man; to whom He gave the gift of a thinking, reasoning mind – to develop the very mind and character of Elohim!

Each animal was created with a brain suited for each animal kind. But animals do not have the potential of mind and character which Elohim gave only to man. No animal was ever given the gift of mind power!

It is this very special attribute of mind and character that separates men from animals!

Animals do not have reasoning, self-conscious minds. Animals follow instinctive habit patterns in their feeding, nesting, migration, and reproduction. Elohim has 'programmed' their brains, so to speak, with particular instinctive aptitudes. Thus beavers build dams, birds build nests, etc. These aptitudes are inherited; they are not the result of logical cognitive processes.

For example, thousands of birds flock south each year as winter approaches in the northern hemisphere. They don't stop to reason why, they don't ask themselves whether they should, they don't plan ahead an itinerary for the trip. At a given signal they leave their summer feeding grounds in the north and travel thousands of miles south. Scientists don't fully understand why; they merely observe the operation of this animal instinct.

Each species or kind of bird builds different nests, feeds on different foods, and migrates in different ways at different times to different places. But none of these actions is planned by the birds. They are merely the capability and tendency which Almighty Elohim built into the instinct of each kind at creation.

However, man is totally different. Man is able to perceive and understand various ways of doing any one thing. Man can reason from memorized facts and knowledge, draw conclusions, make decisions, and will to act according to a thought-out plan. Each man may build a different house, eat different foods; live an entirely different way of life, from every other man. If a man wants to change his life – he can! Man is not subject to instinct. He is not governed by a set of pre-determined habit patterns as animals are.

Man can choose, as he is a free moral agency. He can devise codes of conduct and exercise self-discipline. Man can originate ideas and evaluate scientific knowledge because he has a mind which is patterned after Elohim's own mind! Man can devise, plan and bring his plans to fruition because he has been given some of the very creative powers of Elohim.

Man alone can wonder, 'Why was I born? What is life? What is death? Is there a purpose for human existence?' Man, unlike animals, not only 'knows' how to do certain things, but he also knows he knows – that is, he is aware that he has 'knowledge'. He is conscious of the fact. He is self-conscious, aware of his own existence as a unique being.

The attributes of mind and character make man Elohim's unique physical creation. Elohim has shared some of His own qualities with man and expects him to develop the 'image' of Elohim's perfect mind and set-part character!

What Makes man's Mind Unique?

Many animals have physical brains as large or even larger than man's brain, and with similar cerebral cortex complexity; but none has the powers of intellect, logic, self-consciousness and creativity.

What gives man's brain these unique abilities? And what will Elohim use, after the death and complete dissolution of the physical body and brain to reproduce each individual at the resurrection?

Since man has no immortal soul within him which enables him to live on apart from his body after death, does the scriptures speak elsewhere of a 'Spirit in man'? Job 32: 8; Zechariah 12: 1 & 1st Corinthians 2: 9 – 14. Notice especially verse 11 of 1st Corinthians 2. Is this spirit 'in' man clearly distinguished from the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim? Same verses in 1st Corinthians 2.

Comment: This spirit is not the man – it is something that is IN the man. Joined with the physical brain of the man, it forms human mind. It imparts to man's brain, his unique powers of intellect and personality – the ability to think rationally and make free-will decisions. It imparts the ability to learn mathematics, languages or any type of philosophical knowledge.

But that is all. The spirit that is in man has no consciousness of itself. It is not an 'immortal soul'. The spirit is not the 'man'.

Because of this spiritual element, the Scriptures often use the word 'spirit' simply to mean man's mind, intelligence or attitude. To distinguish this kind of spirit in man and the kind of spirit that is Elohim's Set-apart Spirit from mere physical breath, the book of Job continues in context to use two separate Hebrew words – 'ruach' for spirit, 'neshamah' for breath (Job 33: 4 & 34: 14).

When a person dies, does this totally non-conscious 'spirit in man' return to Elohim who gave it? Ecclesiastes 12: 7.

Comment: This spirit in each individual, of necessity, does more than merely impart the power of intellect to the physical brain. It becomes a spiritual 'mold' of the entire person – even to preserving memory, knowledge and character. And so when a person dies that spirit 'recording' returns to Elohim and is 'filed' away until the time Elohim will 'replay' it to bring about the resurrection of the identical personality to life and consciousness.

Why haven't you heard this truth before? Simply because the whole world has been deceived!

Can the human mind – having only this human spirit of man – understand the spiritual things of Elohim? 1st Corinthians 2: 11. What must be added before a man can understand spiritually revealed knowledge? Same verse.

Comment: Spiritual things cannot be seen with the eye, heard with the ear, felt with the hands. The human mind, which can receive knowledge only through these physical channels, can really never understand spiritual concept and principles without the Set-apart (Holy) Spirit of Elohim. The greatest minds – scientific and philosophical – cannot really come to understand SPIRITUAL truths with their natural minds.

Just as surely as no animal brain – such as of a cow, can understand human affairs, so no human mind can have comprehension of spiritual things on the Elohim plane, unless and until it has received the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim!

Origin of the 'Big Lie'

The truth about the 'spirit in man' is so important that Satan tried to twist and warp and pervert it long ago. He clouded the minds of men and got them to believing his 'big lie' as long ago as the time of Adam and Eve.

Notice what happened in the Garden of Eden. What did Satan tell Eve? Genesis 3: 4.

Comment: Here was the 'origin' of the 'immortality of the soul' doctrine preached today. Satan told Eve she would 'not surely die' – in other words, she had an 'immortal soul' that would live forever. Eve swallowed this lie, hook, line and sinker!

Has Satan deceived the WHOLE world? Revelation 12: 9.

Comment: The devil has deceived the whole world on nearly every point of Elohim's truth. And virtually the entire world today believes some variation of the ancient 'big lie'. Millions have been deluded to believe in reincarnation or the transmigration of souls as a result of the false doctrine of an ever-living soul.

Satan has deceived the world with a counterfeit doctrine – a doctrine which perverts the truth about the 'spirit in man'. With his cunning counterfeit, Satan has withheld from the minds of millions the truth about the 'spirit in man' and the need for a resurrection from the dead!

Only Elohim is Immortal!

We have clearly seen that the Scriptures do not teach the immortality of the soul. But what, then do the Scriptures teach about immortality?

According to 1st Timothy 6: 15 – 16 who alone has immortality inherently?

Is Elohim also incorruptible? 1st Timothy 1: 17, and see comment.

Comment: The Greek word translated 'immortal' here is *aphtharos*, meaning 'incorruptible'. Elohim is incorruptible. Man is not.

Now turn to 1st Corinthians 15: 53 & 54. Do these two verse say that man is already immortal? What must man put on? Verse 53. When will man be 'clothed' with immortality? Verse 52. Does this happen at the time of the resurrection? 1st Thessalonians 4: 16.

Who brought to mankind the knowledge of how to receive eternal life and immortality (incorruption)? 2nd Timothy 1: 10. Doesn't this verse plainly show that immortality is something man does not already have? Then is the Gospel also good news about how to receive immortality? Same verse.

Is immortality to be sought for? Romans 2: 7. Is eternal life a free gift bestowed on those who seek immortality? Same verse and Romans 6: 23.

Was David still alive as an immortal soul after he died? Acts 2: 29, 34. Will David, King of Israel, be raised from the dead? Jeremiah 30: 9.

Why a Resurrection?

If man were an immortal soul in a material body – and if the death of the body released the soul – then there would be no need for a resurrection to immortal life. Man would merely continue living after death. But the very fact the Scriptures teaches the resurrection from the dead further proof that man has no immortal soul!

If Messiah had not risen from the dead, would faith in a future life by a resurrection be all in vain? 1st Corinthians 15: 14 – 17. If there will be no resurrection, have those who are dead in their graves perished forever? Verse 18.

However, did Messiah himself warn that the unregenerate – unrepentant – man is to perish? John 3: 16 and Luke 13: 3, 5. If man were an immortal soul, could he actually ‘perish’? (See in your dictionary that the word ‘perish’ means to cease living.)

Who will hear the voice of the Son of Elohim at the resurrection? John 5: 25. Do they then ‘rise’? 1st Thessalonians 4: 16.

Comment: The dead cannot ‘hear’ unless they are first restored to LIFE! The dead are pictured throughout the Scriptures as being asleep in their graves, awaiting the day of the resurrection. Notice Yahshua’s words when describing the death of Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, in John 11: 11 – 14, as follows: ***‘This He said, and after that he said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, that I may awaken him out of sleep.” (12) The disciples therefore said to Him, “Master, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.” (13) Now Yahshua had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep. (14) Then Yahshua therefore said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.”***

Death is pictured as a sleep. Death, like sleep is a condition in which people are not conscious and from which they shall be ‘awakened’!

Notice the plain evidence in the Scriptures. We read from Daniel 12: 2, in this way: ***‘And many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake....’*** Continuing in Matthew 27: 52, we read: ***‘and many tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised.’*** Finally we also read from 2nd Samuel 7: 12, as follows: ***“When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers....”***

Death is described as a sleep dozens of times in the Scriptures when referring to the kings of Israel and Judah, one of which is found in 1st Kings 2: 10, in this way: ***‘Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David.’*** Notice that it does not say ‘the body slept while the soul was conscious.’ It plainly states ***‘David slept.’*** It was the conscious person who fell ‘asleep’ in death!

Certainly here is conclusive evidence that the dead are not conscious – that they have no conscious ‘immortal souls’!

Man to become Spirit

Job once asked the question in Job 14: 14, ***“If a man dies, will he live again?”*** What was Job’s answer to his own question? Job 14: 14 (the last part). What was the change Job spoke about, and when will it take place? 1st Corinthians 15: 51 – 53.

What will Job, David and all those in the resurrection be like? Will they be like Elohim? Psalm 17: 15. Is Elohim spirit? John 4: 24. Are they therefore to be composed of spirit then? 1st Corinthians 15: 42 – 49. Compare this with 1st John 3: 2.

Why were a Adam and Eve not permitted to eat the fruit of the ‘tree of (eternal) life’ after they sinned? Genesis 3: 22 – 24, especially the last part of verse 22.

Comment: Adam and Eve could have eventually gained eternal life and become spirit by eating of the fruit of the ‘tree of life’. This plainly shows Adam and Eve did not have immortality inherent in themselves!

The ‘tree of life’ symbolized the Holy (Set-apart) Spirit of Elohim in order to live forever. If Adam had eaten of the fruit of that tree, rather than of the forbidden tree, he would have received the Set-apart Spirit (the very life and nature of Elohim) and would not have died!

Adam however, had to choose whether or not he would accept the free gift of the Set-apart Spirit. He chose (1st Timothy 2: 14, first part), by disobeying Elohim, not to receive the Set-apart Spirit and was consequently cut off from access to the tree of life! Here is yet another proof that no man has eternal life inherent within himself.

When Did Rav Shaul Expect to be With Messiah?

Some who believe that Christians (and Muslims) have immortal souls use Philippians 1: 23 & 24 as proof. Do these verses overthrow all the plain scriptures that we have studied? Let's understand what Rav Shaul meant?

Did Rav Shaul have a desire to be with Messiah? Philippians 1: 23.

Comment: All believers should have the same desire. But does this verse state when Rav Shaul would be with Messiah? Absolutely not! But people try to read certain ideas into this verse! Let's notice when Rav Shaul expected to be with Messiah.

Did Rav Shaul expect to receive something from Messiah when he met Him? 2nd Timothy 4: 6 – 8. And when would that be – the time when Yahshua returns and all the saints (true believers) are resurrected? Verse 8. Notice the words *'at that day.'*

When Messiah returns will He bring His rewards with Him? Isaiah 40: 10 & Revelation 22: 12. When will all (both dead and living) believers *'meet the Master'*? 1st Thessalonians 4: 16 & 17.

Comment: Those who are dead in their graves are not conscious; they have no knowledge of passing time. The very next moment of their consciousness will be the time of the resurrection! That is what Rav Shaul wrote in 2nd Corinthians 5: 9 – 10, as follows: ***'Therefore also we have as our ambition (whilst we are alive), whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. (10) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Messiah, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.'*** When? Verse 10 tells us – at the judgment when Messiah returns! That is when Rav Shaul expected to receive the reward of his labors and to be with Messiah. Elohim will judge us at Messiah's coming (2nd Timothy 4: 1) – at the resurrection from the dead – the awesome event every true believer eagerly awaits!

'Body, soul and Spirit'

We as Nazarene Israelites believe that according to 1 Thessalonians 5: 23 a human being is composed of body, soul and spirit. When we repent and are immersed into the saving name of Yahshua, essentially accepting that His death removed the record of our transgressions, YHVH gives us a portion of His Set-apart Spirit. The Set-apart Spirit combines with the spirit in man and we are begotten anew. This gives us the opportunity to like Yahshua be resurrected at His return, 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 life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.'*** When we are immersed into Yahshua's saving name we are given a deposit of our inheritance of eternal life, as we read from 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.'*** When we die our bodies and souls are buried and our spirits goes back to the Father who gave it, as is also confirmed in Ecclesiastes 12: 7, in this way: ***'Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to Elohim who gave it.'*** Whilst our spirits are in heaven, it will be perfected as we read from Hebrews 12: 23, as follows: ***"to the general assembly and the ecclesia 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."*** When Yahshua returns He will bring back our perfected spirits and will resurrect our bodies and souls. Our imperishable bodies and souls will merge with our perfected spirits from heaven, and we will become kings and priests under Yahshua during His Millennial rule.

Man is mortal with a temporary life. He has no eternal life inherent within himself – no ‘immortal soul’. But Elohim has sent His Son to make it possible for us to receive the gift of immortality and eternal life at the resurrection from the dead! Will you qualify to receive that gift?

What is hell?

Millions are in confusion about ‘hell’. What is it? Where is it? Who goes to hell? And why?

Is ‘hell’ a literal place? Almost everyone assumes one of two extremes concerning ‘hell’. One group totally denies that it exists. The other group, including most so-called Bible fundamentalists, pictures hell as a terrible place of never-ending torment, where Satan rules and his demons ‘roast’ sinners like millions of wieners on a barbecue spit. There is bitter weeping and wailing, cursing and screams from those being tormented. This is the idea mostly held by Christians, Hindus, Egyptians, Persians and Muslim theologians.

But why do people believe what they do? A few prominent Christian religious leaders of the Middle Ages left teachings and writings which were universally believed and became accepted doctrine of the professing Christian world. Two of the most important of these influential writers were Augustine (234 – 430 CE.), and Dante Alighieri (1265 – 1321 CE.). Dante wrote a very popular poem called: ‘The Divine Comedy’, in three parts – hell, purgatory and paradise. Dante had a great influence on the course of civilization and his poem caught the attention of the world. It had a tremendous influence on Christianity. His ‘Inferno’ was based on Virgil and Plato. Virgil was a pagan poet (70 – 19 BCE). Plato was born in Greece (427 BCE) and became a student of Socrates. Plato’s famous literary work ‘Phaedo’ taught the immortality of the soul. So the world’s concept of ‘hell’ is admittedly a product of Human thinking.

Before we examine the Scriptures to see whether the common ideas about hell could be true, let us consider where this concept of hell, if true, would lead us.

Literally billions of people on this earth have lived and died without having known anything about “salvation”, without ever having studied The Scriptures. The most populous countries on the earth are China, India, and other parts of Asia. But in spite of the efforts of Western missionaries, more than half of all the people on the earth have never so much as heard the only name by which men may be saved (Acts 4: 12), the name of “Yahshua Messiah”.

Now think what that means. If all the “unsaved” go immediately to a fiery hell upon death, then more than half the people who have ever lived on this earth have been consigned to this terrible punishment without ever having had a chance to escape it. Can you really believe that is the method an all-wise, all-merciful loving Elohim is using to work out His purpose for us?

The Scriptures describes two resurrections in the future; the first resurrection to life for those who are called and chosen at this time, and who remain faithful until Yahshua returns; and the second resurrection to judgment. The resurrection to judgment will be one thousand years later. At that time the wicked and unsaved dead will be resurrected at the Great White Throne Judgment. YHWH our Elohim does not have double standards – the countless unsaved billions deserve to have the same chance as those who are called at this time. They will only be judged on what they did, after they learned about the Truth of Elohim. Yet, numerous theologians and ministers, being deceived themselves, try to imagine that Elohim will only save their ‘friends’ and relatives who were Christians, but will let the multitudes from ages past perish, without them ever coming to real repentance and true surrendering to the Living Messiah. These religious leaders could not be more wrong.

The damnations that we read about in the Scriptures apply to the wicked and those of us who are being called during this age. We are being judged during this age and if we do not make it, will burn to become

ashes under the feet of the righteous. For the unsaved billions of Buddhists, Muslims, Shintoism and those who believed in a false messiah, who came to do away with his Father's laws, both at present and in the past, the Scriptures will be opened to their understanding after the second resurrection. This is not a second chance – since they were blinded by YHVH Himself in the past. This is truly the second harvest of souls (human beings) into the everlasting kingdom.

(YHVH)'s purpose remains, He is not trying to save everyone during this age; If He was they would not all be saved. He is only calling out first fruits to rule under Yahshua during the Millennium and into eternity. The vast majority of blinded individuals will be brought back to life during the Great White Throne Judgment. Then He will call them to spiritual understanding and will fill those who are willing with His Set-apart Spirit as may be read from Isaiah 25: 7 - 9. He will grant them salvation in His kingdom. Those who reject Elohim's way of life will be burnt to ashes, with the wicked and those who sinned willfully after being called and given knowledge of truth, during this age. There is no second chance as witnessed in Hebrews 10: 26 & 27.

But, what does YHVH say about "hell" in the Scriptures? You may be surprised. So be sure to read all of the scripture references given in this lesson, and prove the truth from the Scriptures with your own eyes.

Yahshua Spoke of 'Hell Fire'

What punishment did Messiah warn would happen to those who would not stop sinning? Mark 9: 43.

Comment: "Hell" is an English word. When Mark recorded Messiah's words, he wrote them in the Greek language. The Greek word translated "hell," which Mark was inspired to write down, is gehenna. Since in this verse Messiah says the sinner is "to go into hell, into the fire," it follows that those who go to gehenna will receive punishment by fire. Keep in mind then that Messiah associated the Greek word gehenna with fire.

What did Yahshua say in Mark 9: 45 to emphasize what He said in verse 43?

Comment: Mark wrote down the same Greek word gehenna here in verse 45 that he used in verse 43. The translators of the Authorized or King James Version of the Scriptures of 1611 CE. Selected the English word "hell" to represent this Greek word gehenna. We will learn more about the real meaning of this word later.

How did Yahshua re-emphasize what He said about "hell fire?" Verse 47.

Comment: Again, the Greek word which Mark used in this verse is Gehenna. Gehenna clearly refers to fire! But there are other words in the Scriptures also translated "hell."

English Word "Hell" Misapplied

Let's read what A Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings, says about the use of the word "hell" in the Tanach and Renewed Covenant. Keep in mind, as you read this, that the Tanach was originally written in the Hebrew language, and that the Renewed Covenant was originally translated in the Greek language.

Hastings says: "In our Authorized Version the word hell is unfortunately used as the rendering of three distinct words, with Different Ideas [or meanings]. It represents, **1.** The 'sheol' of the Hebrew Tanach, and the 'hades' in the Renewed Covenant. It is now an entirely misleading rendering, especially in the Renewed Covenant passages. The English revisers, therefore, have substituted 'hades' [going back to the original Greek word] for 'hell' in the Renewed Covenant. In the American revision the word 'hell' is entirely discarded in this connection.

The word 'hell' is used **2.** as equivalent to [the Greek word] 'tartaros' (2 Peter 2: 4), and **3.** As the equivalent of [the Greek word] 'gehenna'." So we see that the real meanings of three different Greek words – hades (equivalent to the Hebrew sheol of the Tanach), tartaros and gehenna – have been confused with each other because translators have attempted to make the one English word "hell" cover the definitions of all three words! No wonder confusion has reigned in the minds of millions.

What do these words really mean? The original Tanach Hebrew word sheol and the Renewed Covenant Greek word hades mean the same thing, simply the grave. These original words have been translated “grave” in many places in the Scriptures. “Hell” is an old English word, and over 350 years ago when the Authorized Version was translated, the people of England commonly talked of “putting their potatoes in hell for the winter”, a good way of preserving potatoes, for the word then meant merely a hole in the ground which was covered up, a dark and silent place, a grave! But pagan teachings gaining popular acceptance have caused people to misapply the old English word “hell” to the lurid imaginations of Dante.

The second Greek word, tartaros, which has also been translated into the English word “hell,” occurs only once in the Renewed Covenant (2 Peter 2: 4) and does not refer to humans, but to the restrained condition of fallen angels. Its meaning, translated into English, is “darkness of the material universe,” or “dark abyss,” or “prison.” But what about gehenna? This Greek word, as all authorities admit, is derived from the name of the narrow, rocky Valley of Hinnom which lay just outside of Jerusalem. It was the place where refuse was constantly burned up. Trash, filth, and the dead bodies of animals and despised criminals were thrown into the fires of gehenna, or the Valley of Hinnom. Ordinarily, everything thrown into this valley was destroyed by fire, completely burned up. Therefore Yahshua used gehenna to picture the terrible fate of unrepentant sinners!

Two Different “Hells”

In most of the passages of the Renewed Covenant where we see the word “hell,” the original Greek word is not gehenna. Most often it is hades, which does not refer to fire at all, but to a grave, a hole in the ground. Yet the translators have confused and obliterated the two entirely separate meanings of these words by indiscriminately rendering them both by the same English word “hell.”

Let’s study the proof. What can we learn from Luke 12: 5 about “hell”?

Comment: If you were to look up the original Greek word that is here translated into the English word “hell,” you would find it is gehenna. Gehenna, then, is plainly a place where bodies are thrown and, as Messiah indicated, destroyed by fire! But now notice the same English word “hell” in Acts 2:31.

Comment: The original Greek word which is translated by the English word “hell” in Acts 2: 31 is hades. Hades means “grave,” as its usage in this verse clearly shows! We can plainly see that the English word “hell” can have different meanings! So when we come to the word “hell” in the Renewed Covenant, we must keep in mind these two vastly different meanings and carefully determine by the context whether it refers to destruction by fire, or the grave where the dead lie buried. Whenever you are in doubt about the intended meaning of the word “hell” in the Renewed Covenant, look it up in an exhaustive concordance, such as Strong’s or Young’s, to see which Greek word it was translated from, and hence it’s true meaning.

Where To After Death?

In the preceding lesson we learned that when a person dies and is buried in his grave, he knows absolutely nothing (Ecclesiastes 9: 5). He merely lies quietly and silently there as in a “sleep,” totally oblivious to everything.

Let’s briefly review this important truth. What one thing befalls both men and beasts? Ecclesiastes 3: 19. Do they all go to one place, the same place, when they die? Verse 20 and Genesis 3: 19.

Comment: Have you ever heard of beasts going to “hell” to be tortured?

What place does Elohim say man goes to when he dies? Ecclesiastes 9: 10. Did Job realize he would go to the grave after death? Job 17: 13. Was the One who became Yahshua Messiah “made flesh”? John 1: 14. Did Messiah take upon Himself the same mortal flesh of which we are composed? Hebrews 2: 14. And didn’t He also have to go to the grave as other mortal men do? Turn to Acts 2: 31 once again.

Comment: The original Greek word in Acts 2: 31 is *hades* which, as you now know, means the “grave.” Yahshua’s “soul” (body) did not see corruption (did not decompose in the grave) because He was resurrected after three days! Some theologians, however, maintain the tradition that Yahshua was preaching to departed human “spirits in prison” (1 Peter 3: 19) while He was in “hell.” That idea is absolutely false. Verse 20 makes it plain that those to whom Messiah preached (concerning their rebellious activities on earth) were demon spirits, and that He preached to them during the days of Noah! This verse is not talking about the three days and nights Yahshua was dead in the grave at all!

Resurrected to “Judgment”

You may have heard ministers preach that sinners go directly to the fiery tortures of “hell” when they die. But this would mean they are condemned to “hell” before they are even formally judged and sentenced!

Let’s notice when the wicked dead are judged by YHVH. When will the dead be judged? John 5: 28, 29.

Comment: Yahshua said the judgment of the wicked dead, who are now in their graves, is yet in the future. “The hour is coming,” said Yahshua. Then how could they now be receiving punishment when they have not, as yet, even been judged? The two ideas clearly contradict each other!

When will the dead be judged? Obviously after they come up from their graves in a resurrection!

While they are in their graves, until the day of their resurrection, are those who have already proved themselves to be unjust “reserved” for a future time of formal sentencing and punishment? 2 Peter 2: 9. Does Revelation 20: 13 also prove there is to be a future resurrection to judgment?

Comment: Notice that those who are in watery graves (the “sea”) are to be resurrected; and those who were killed by other means and left unburied (“death”) are to be resurrected; and those who are in earthy graves (“hell”, the Greek word here is *hades* which means the grave) are also to be resurrected at this time.

So all the wicked dead on land or in the sea, wherever they may be, are to be resurrected to “Judgment” in the future. That is when YHVH will formally sentence them! No one is, or ever has been, down in a fiery “hell” dancing around on hot coals, shrieking in terror and torment! Elohim’s time for judging and condemning the wicked has not yet arrived! How clear!

The whole question of “judgment” will be thoroughly dealt with in a future lesson. Suffice it to say, for now, the Scriptures clearly shows that the time the wicked are condemned to their fate is in the future. The idea that wicked “souls” are right now suffering torments in a fiery hell is a pagan myth!

Death by Fire!

What is the ultimate penalty, the “wages,” or reward of sin? Is it eternal life in torment? Or is it eternal extinction? What is the ultimate Fate of the wicked? The Scriptures makes the truth very clear.

What is the “wages of sin”? Romans 6: 23.

Comment: The “wages of sin is death.” “Death” is the opposite of “life”! The final wages the irredeemable wicked will receive, then, is simply the complete cessation of life!

What does Paul warn will be the judgment or sentence of those who, knowing Elohim’s commands and having tasted of His way of life, willfully sin against Him? Hebrews 10: 26 – 27. Will such persons live on in torment in fire, or will they be “devoured” by it? Verse 27. Notice that this judgment comes on people because they sin willfully.

Does Yahshua compare false ministers who don’t bring forth good works to trees that don’t bring forth “good fruit”? Matthew 7: 15 – 19. What did He say would happen to such people? Verse 19. Is wood put into

a fire to be tormented, or to be burned up? Did Messiah clearly indicate that all people who do not bring forth good fruit will likewise be cast into fire? Matthew 7: 17 – 19

What did Yahshua say to the unrepentant scribes and Pharisees of His day? Matthew 23: 33.

Comment: The original Greek word translated here as “hell” is Gehenna, meaning the Valley of Hinnom. Yahshua used the fire that burned up refuse in the Valley of Hinnom as a type of the final fate, complete destruction of the wicked by fire. Those rebellious and stubborn religious leaders could well understand Messiah’s analogy. They knew they were being threatened with complete destruction as just so much rubbish!

What did Yahshua warn would happen to those who will not repent of their sinful ways? Luke 13: 3.

Comment: “Perish” means to cease existing. It does not mean to continue living. Life in eternal torment is not what YHVH has decreed for irredeemable sinners!

The punishment revealed in the Scriptures is death, cessation of life forever. Eternal life is something we were not born with. It is a gift of YHVH which He will bestow at the resurrection to those who obey Him. Eternal life and death are contrasted all through your Scriptures!

Did Yahshua show by His parable of the tares that there is to be a future harvest? Matthew 13: 30. Did He say the evil people; the “tares” will afterward be burned? Same verse.

Comment: In this parable Yahshua likened the earth to a “field” (verse 24), the obedient people to “wheat” (verses 25, 29), and the disobedient to “tares” (verses 25, 29, 30).

Does Psalm 37: 20 also show the ultimate fate of the wicked will be destruction by fire? Is there coming a time that will be extremely hot, so hot that it will burn up, consume, the wicked? Malachi 4: 1. What will be left of the wicked? Malachi 4: 3. Who will burn the wicked up, Satan and his demons, or the Eternal Elohim? Same verse.

Comment: The “hell fire” that the Scriptures speak of will be thousands of degrees hotter than the imaginary “hell fire” of most preachers which is only hot enough to torment. The Scriptural “hell fire” will totally consume the disobedient! Never to exist again.

The Scriptures plainly shows that those who have known Elohim’s truth and still refuse to obey it, or willfully disobey, will reap the wages of sin, eternal death! (Romans 6: 23). This scripture means what it says. The attempts of many theologians to “explain away” death and to “interpret” it as mere “separation from Elohim” cannot be reconciled with Scripture. Death clearly does not mean “eternal life” in the horrifying torments of an eternal “hell.”

The author of this pagan deception is none other than the father of lies, Satan the devil! (John 8: 44). If you have innocently believed his doctrine and have suffered mental torment because of it, thank YHVH that He has opened your mind to understand the truth!

What Is the “Lake of Fire”?

And now comes a most interesting revelation! Exactly what is the Gehenna fire that will consume the wicked? When and where will it occur?

Forget all the ideas you may previously have been led to believe. Read now in your own Scriptures what Elohim reveals. For “hell fire” does not even exist yet!

Are whoremongers, murderers, liars all who break Elohim’s commandments ultimately to find themselves in a “lake of fire and brimstone”? Revelation 21: 8.

Comment: We have already seen that the fate of the wicked is Gehenna fire. So Gehenna and the lake of fire are the same. A very large fire would have the appearance of a fiery lake, hence its description.

Will it cause the death of the wicked? Notice Revelation 21: 8 once again. Which death will it cause? Same verse.

Comment: Mortals die once, because we just “wear out” (Hebrews 9: 27). But if anyone dies the second death, that individual will have been judged by YHVH to be guilty of persistent disobedience and incorrigible rebellion. The second death will be for all eternity!

Does Revelation 20: 13 – 14 verify the fact that all who are irredeemable will be cast into this future lake of fire not now, but after the coming judgment? Will all mortals whose names will not have been written in the book of (eternal) life be cast into the lake of fire? Verse 15.

When does the lake of fire actually begin, at Messiah’s second coming? Revelation 19: 20. Will the two chief enemies of Messiah be cast into it at that time? Same verse.

Comment: We will learn more about these two individuals in a future lesson.

How long will this fire last? Matthew 25: 41.

Comment: The word “everlasting” is aionion in the Greek. Aionion comes from the root aion which often means “age.” In this case, the correct translation into the English language should be “age-lasting fire.” This lake of fire is going to be burning all during the Millennium, the “age” of Messiah’s rule.

During the millennial reign of Messiah and His saints, the Valley of Hinnom will once more be kept perpetually burning, and the incorrigibly wicked ones who set their will to persist in rebellion against (YHVH)’s laws will be thrown into this “lake of fire” as a stern witness to all the rest of the world! (Isaiah 66: 24).

Much later after the Millennium will the flames of the “lake of fire” purify the earth’s surface, burning in one vast worldwide holocaust? 2 Peter 3: 10. Will all the things man has created be burned up, as well as all those people who will not have received salvation and eternal life because of willful rebellion against Elohim? Same verse and Revelation 20: 15 once again.

Comment: Here is (YHVH)’s not man’s description of what the final “hell fire” will be like. It is yet in the future. It has not yet occurred. Nothing is said anywhere in the entire Scriptures about “souls” descending beneath the earth into “hell fire”, or of torture for all eternity. All other teachings to the contrary have come to us from paganism.

Are the wicked to be reduced to ashes by the fire which will destroy the earth’s surface? Turn to Malachi 4: 3 once again. Can ashes be tormented for ever and ever? Of course not! The death they will have suffered will be an eternal, everlasting punishment, not an everlasting punishing by torment. There is a big difference between punishment and punishing. “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6: 23), not eternal life in hell fire.

What is meant in Revelation 20: 14 by the words, “death and hell were cast into the lake of fire”?

Comment: The original Greek word here translated “hell” is hades. Only unrepentant sinners, those who refuse to obey YHVH will still be mortal at the time of this resurrection. There will be no one else who could die. Therefore, death and grave will both cease to exist when the lake of fire engulfs the entire surface of the earth.

What will Satan’s part be in this coming “hell fire”? Revelation 20: 10.

Comment: Satan will be cast into the same inferno that will destroy all irredeemable mortals. But since he is a spirit being, he will not be destroyed by the flames (See Luke 20: 36).

Notice that Satan himself will be in “hell fire”. He will not play the role of torturing people as he is often represented by the doctrines of this world. Revelation 20: 10 shows Satan himself is to be tormented unto the ages of the ages – “Forever and Ever”! His torment will last forever. But not this fire. It will only last as long as combustible material remains to be consumed. Satan’s torment, however, will continue forever as a mental anguish resulting from seeing all he has striven toward, worked for, plotted for, burned up as the earth is purified by fire.

Will the “beast” and the “false prophet” still be in this fire? Revelation 20: 10.

Comment: Some Scriptures use italics to show that the word “are” in this verse was supplied by the translators. It is not found in the Greek manuscripts. The phrase should read, “Where the beast and the false prophet were”, the unwritten verb being understood to be in the same tense as the verb in the first half of the sentence. The Amplified Scriptures has it correct. These two mortal individuals will have been destroyed over 1000 years before the time Satan is put into these flames.

Hell Fire “Never Quenched”?

Did John the Baptist ever speak of “unquenchable fire”? Matthew 3: 12; Luke 3: 17.

Did Yahshua say that hell fire will never be “quenched”? Mark 9: 43 – 48.

Comment: Yahshua repeated this statement five times for emphasis. From this, people have carelessly assumed that “fire that never shall be quenched” (verse 43) is a fire of torture which has been in existence for centuries, and will continue to exist for eternity.

We have proved that this idea is absolutely false. Notice (YHVH)’s own inspired explanation of unquenched hell fire.

Did YHVH (over 2500 years ago) warn the inhabitants of Jerusalem that He would kindle a fire in Jerusalem’s gates that would not be quenched? Jeremiah 17: 27. But what would that fire do to the city’s palaces? Same verse.

Comment: This fire occurred a few years later, and it destroyed all the houses of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 52: 13). Since Elohim said this fire “shall not be quenched” and since it is not burning today, it obviously went out by itself after accomplishing its purpose, after devouring all combustible material.

What punishment befell the notorious cities of Sodom and Gomorrah? Genesis 19: 24. Was it literal fire that destroyed human beings? Luke 17: 29. What do we read in Jude 7 about this event? Is there still a fire burning in those cities which YHVH destroyed long ago? Of course not.

Comment: The expression “eternal fire” used in Jude 7 means a fire whose results are permanent or everlasting, obviously not a fire that burns forever. Sodom and Gomorrah were utterly destroyed centuries ago, they are not burning today.

The fire which burned these cities simply died out after consuming all combustible material. These scriptures prove the “fire that shall not be quenched” will not torment people forever and ever.

Messiah, as we have seen, often referred to the fires that burned in the Valley Hinnom at the edge of Jerusalem to illustrate the final “hell fire” or Gehenna which is to consume the wicked. But did those fires ever go out? The fact is, they were kept burning as long as there was refuse to burn. Then they burned themselves out.

They were never quenched or put out prematurely by anyone. The flames merely died out when they had nothing more to consume. Even so it will be with the final Gehenna fire. It will be unquenched, but it will finally burn itself out.

“Worm That Dieth Not”

A startling statement is found in Mark 9: 44, 46 and 48. In these verses, Yahshua spoke of a worm that “dieth not”. Are there really immortal worms?

Some people think Yahshua referred to people as worms, and that He was trying to say that these “people” never die but live on forever in agonizing torment. However, those who believe this fail to notice that what Yahshua spoke of was “their worm”. So the wicked themselves are not the “worm”.

What is this mysterious “worm” that does not die? Notice what Yahshua really meant.

Yahshua clearly had reference, as the marginal notes of many Scriptures show, to Isaiah 66: 24, where a similar statement is made about “their worm”, the worm of dead “carcasses”.

Now what is the “worm” of a dead, decaying carcass? If you have ever seen a decaying carcass, the answer should be obvious. To put the matter beyond all doubt, we find that the lexicons define as grub or maggot both the Greek and the Hebrew words translated as “worm” in Mark 9: 44 and Isaiah 66: 24.

When a dead body occasionally lodged on one of the rocky ledges above the garbage fires of the Valley of Hinnom, it was soon infested by many worms or maggots which hatched out of eggs laid by flies. It was simply these worms to which Messiah referred when He said, “their worm dieth not”.

But Yahshua did not mean that each individual worm continued to live forever. Actually, the larvae, maggots, would hatch from eggs, eat the flesh, continue in the larval form only a few days, then go through metamorphosis and finally emerge as flies. The worms did not die, they became flies. Later, the flies died.

These are facts known by any student of biology. And Yahshua was not ignorant of them.

By contrast, the misunderstanding of Yahshua’s simple statement by some people should be an object lesson to always be careful to use wisdom and common sense in studying (YHVH)’s Word. The Set-apart Spirit is the spirit of a sound mind (2 Timothy 1: 7). The Scriptures is one book that makes good sense. Let us study these perplexing scriptures carefully and not jump to hasty, erroneous, weird conclusions.

The Story of “Lazarus and the Rich Man”

Yahshua’s story of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16: 19 – 31) is perhaps one of the most outstanding texts used by those who attempt to prove there is an eternal hell fire.

What lesson did Yahshua intend to illustrate by this parable? Let us carefully study this story word by word, comparing it with other crystal-clear scriptures.

Did Lazarus, a poor but righteous beggar die? Luke 16: 22. Was he later carried by angels to “Abraham’s bosom”? Same verse.

Comment: If we are Yahshua’s, YHVH considers us Abraham’s “seed”, descendants or children, and we become heirs with Abraham to receive the promises Elohim made to him (Galatians 3: 29). Through faith we all may become “children of Abraham” (Galatians 3: 7). This is an intimate relationship, a close or bosom relationship, spiritually speaking, with Abraham. We are to be in close contact with him in sharing the promises. This is the sense in which righteous Lazarus was taken to “Abraham’s bosom”.

When then, will Abraham and the Lazarus of our story actually receive the fulfillment of the promises? The answer of the Scriptures is that Abraham and the saints, his “seed” will inherit the promises at the

resurrection of the just when Yahshua Messiah returns to earth to establish the Kingdom of Elohim (Hebrews 11: 39 & 40)..

And what about the sinful rich man of Yahshua's parable? Did he also die? Luke 16: 22. And do we next see him lifting up his eyes, indicating his having been resurrected, and calling to Abraham for a few drops of water to cool his tongue, being in mental torment? Luke 16: 23 – 24.

Comment: The word “hell” used here is translated from the original Greek word *hades*, which we know means the “grave”. It is not from the Greek word *Gehenna*, which represent the future lake of fire that will destroy the wicked forever. The rich man is pictured at the very moment of his coming up out of his grave in a resurrection.

Abraham and Lazarus will have already inherited eternal life in the Kingdom of Elohim (Matthew 25: 34). They will have been immortal for over 1 000 years before the wicked rich man is resurrected to be burned in the lake of fire (Revelation 20: 4 – 5, 15). Until then, the rich man will have been dead in his grave, having no consciousness of the passing of time. (Ecclesiastes 9: 5).

At his resurrection, the rich man will see the flames of the lake of fire beginning to surround him. He knows these flames will destroy him forever. Being in great mental agony, he asks for just a little water to cool his tongue which has become dry from his mental anguish. He does not ask for buckets or oceans of water to put the fire out. He knows such a request would be denied.

What did Abraham then answer the rich man? Luke 16: 25 – 26.

Comment: The great “gulf” between the two will be the difference between mortality and immortality. Those who will have been made immortal shall never die because they will have been born of Elohim (Revelation 20: 6). Abraham and the beggar will be on the immortal side of this gulf, the mortal rich man on the other side, facing imminent eternal death by fire.

Many of the condemned, like the rich man, will want their relatives warned (Luke 16: 27 – 28), not realizing how much time has passed since they died, and that all other people will already have had their chance to receive salvation.

The story or parable of “Lazarus and the rich man” does not prove eternal punishing by YHVH in hell fire. Rather, Yahshua used this short illustration to picture to his listeners the reality of the resurrection from the dead of both the righteous and the wicked. He was picturing the resurrection to Eternal Life as contrasted with the ultimate fate of the wicked, the resurrection to Eternal Death.

YHVH is Love and Justice!

Why do so many people have a false conception of “hell”? Because they fail to understand (YHVH)'s overall purpose in putting man on this earth.

(YHVH)'s purpose for man is to develop set-apart, righteous character which will make him fit to receive the precious gift of eternal life. But YHVH created man of the dust of the ground, subject to death, so that if he failed to develop right character he could be released from his misery by death.

YHVH has no desire to torment or to torture anyone. YHVH is love (1 John 4: 8). He created us mortal for our own good. He will condemn no one because of ignorance, and will see to it that every single one will ultimately learn the truth and have a real chance for salvation. But if YHVH granted eternal life to those who persistently rebel and fail to develop righteous character, they would simply bring misery on themselves as well as others for all eternity.

Certainly the kindest thing YHVH can do, for all involved, is not to allow such a rebel to continue living. So YHVH will simply put the irredeemable rebellious to death, not mercilessly torture them forever.

YHVH is also an Elohim of justice. The obedient will be given the free gift of eternal life. But the disobedient must also be paid the wages they have earned. The final or second death, eternal death in the lake of fire, will be the penalty their own sins have incurred.

This truth should inspire no unreasoning terror such as the pagan, satanic doctrine of eternal hell fire has caused to so many innocent people. On the other hand, the lake of fire should stand as a fearful warning to all who know (YHVH)'s truth and still stubbornly refuse to obey it.

Only those who obey YHVH, those who become and remain believers in the true sense of the word, will inherit eternal life (John 3: 16). All others who willfully live in disobedience to YHVH will die the second death.

Those are the two alternatives YHVH places before each of us, eternal life on the one hand, and everlasting death on the other hand.

The idea of an ever-burning "hell" is clearly a pagan myth and superstition. It is merely a fable that has crept into professing Christianity. But the Scriptural hell fire, the one Yahshua spoke of, will be very real. It will consume the irredeemable wicked, reducing them to mere ashes.

Let us strive to qualify for eternal life so we will not have to pay the penalty of eternal death, extinction in the lake of fire.

Do we go to heaven at death?

Will you go to heaven? If the righteous go to heaven when they die, why did Rav Kepha write that King David, a man after Elohim's own heart (Acts 13: 22), is both dead and buried, and that his grave is with us unto this day (Acts 2: 29). He further wrote that David did NOT ascend into heaven in verse 34 of Acts 2. Rav Yochanan recorded Yahshua's own words in this regard in John 3: 13, in this way: ***"And no one has ascended into heaven, but He (Yahshua) who descended from heaven, even the Son of Man."*** What an inconsistency! Millions today believe that the 'saved' go to heaven when they die. Yet, David did not. If the saved go to heaven when they die, why is there a need for the resurrection from the dead? Why must people be resurrected, if they have already received their reward?

Belief in heaven after death is not limited to Christianity. People throughout the world have always believed in some sort of afterlife; a reward after death. Christians, Hindus, Muslims and pagans all believe in some sort of reward of the righteous after they die. History tells us that many ideas of professing Christianity comes from the ancient Egyptians. But amazing as it may seem, neither Yahshua nor His apostles taught that the righteous go to heaven.

In fact the early ecclesia did not teach the concept of going to heaven at all. Such teachings only became popular long after the death of the apostles. Even so, largely under the influence of Greek thought, ancient Egyptian mythology began to replace the teachings found in the Scriptures, as a source of doctrine. Prevailing concepts such as the immortality of the soul came directly from ancient pagan mythology. Today the idea of heaven being the 'reward of the saved' is universal among Protestant churches. The majority of professing Christians look forward to going to 'heaven' where the righteous sit on clouds, plucking harps, and beholding the face of the Master for all eternity!

What is the basic truth about heaven? What do the Scriptures teach about the 'reward of the saved'?

'The Promised Land'

The book of Galatians contains a statement which actually summarizes the very purpose and plan of Elohim for mankind. A believer's hope depends totally on the subject covered in that greatly misunderstood passage. While speaking to the Galatians, Rav Shaul was inspired to say in Galatians 3: 16, 26 – 29, ***'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. (26) For you are all sons of Elohim through faith in 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 the promise.'***

The true believer is not yet a possessor of his reward, but is now only an heir. What believers shall inherit, if 'saved' - wherever they shall spend eternity, is a definite promise of Elohim. That promise was made to Abraham, called in this same book of Galatians, the *'father of the faithful'* (Galatians 3: 7). If one comes to believe in Yahshua the Messiah as your personal savior, then one becomes an heir of the promises made to Abraham.

What precisely did Elohim promise Abraham? Genesis 12: 2 - 3 & 6 – 7.

Comment: The word 'seed' in the Scriptures mean descendants. So the promises made to Abraham and his descendants were the land of Canaan.

Abraham went to Egypt for a short time (Genesis 12: 10). When he returned to Canaan, did Elohim repeat His promises to Abraham and his descendants? Genesis 13: 14 – 15. What are the boundaries of this land? Genesis 15: 18.

Comment: The land of Canaan, much of which is occupied by the Jews of today, was promised to Abraham and his descendants. That is why it is called the *'Promised Land'*. Notice that the Promised Land is on earth and not in heaven.

How long did Elohim promise Abraham that he and his seed would possess the land? Genesis 13: 15.

Comment: Since the inheritance is to be an eternal inheritance, it of necessity involves and includes everlasting life.

Was this promise expanded until it ultimately included inheritance of the whole earth? Romans 4: 13.

Comment: There is not a single word about heaven in this promise. Through Abraham, all true believers in Yahshua Messiah are promised the earth!

Were the same promises made by Elohim to Abraham, also made to Isaac? Genesis 26: 1 – 5. And were the same promises then given to Jacob, Isaac's son? Genesis 35: 9 – 12. And to Jacob's children, the Israelites? Romans 9: 4.

Comment: Jacob whose name was changed to 'Israel', had 12 sons. Each son gave rise to one of the twelve tribes of Israel, known collectively as the 'children of Israel' or Israelites.

Obedience BEFORE Inheritance

In making this promise to Abraham, Elohim conditioned it on obedience. What did Elohim tell Abraham to do? Genesis 12: 1.

Did Abraham resist, or argue with Elohim about leaving his homeland? Or did he just do what he was told by Elohim? Genesis 12: 4 & Hebrews 11: 8. Into what land did Elohim lead Abraham? Genesis 12: 5.

Comment: Elohim called Abram (as his name was then) out of Ur of the Chaldeans, the land of his birth. That land was under the sway of the political system that began at Babel, symbolic of the spiritual 'Babylon' in which we live today. (Revelation 18: 1 – 4).

Abraham did obey. First, he left his native land, his friends and relatives, his old ways of life, and followed where Elohim led. Elohim did not stop here in testing Abraham's willingness to obey Him.

How did Elohim further test Abraham? Genesis 22: 1 & 2.

Comment: The proper translation of the word 'tempt', as used here is 'try'. Elohim tempts no man (James 1: 13). When the King James translation of the Scriptures was made, the word 'tempt' meant to 'try' or 'test'. That is why the translators used the word 'tempt' in Genesis 22: 1.

Did Abraham when facing this test, stop to reason it out, make excuses, or rebel? Or did he faithfully obey Elohim, by rising early in the morning to obey His command? Genesis 22: 3.

Did Elohim allow Abraham to kill his only son? Genesis 22: 10 – 12.

Comment: Elohim did not really want Isaac's life, but He wanted to test Abraham's willingness to obey Him in faith. Because Abraham was faithfully obedient to Elohim, the Scriptures refer to him as 'the father' of all who live by faith (Romans 4: 11 & Galatians 3: 7).

After Abraham obeyed the test and was found faithful, were there any conditions to Elohim's original promise? Genesis 22: 15 – 18. Note the words 'because thou hast done this thing', in verse 16; and the words, 'because thou hast obeyed My voice' in verse 18.

Comment: The promise was now UNCONDITIONAL! Abraham had performed his part of the covenant agreement.

What other scripture shows us that this promise is ABSOLUTELY SURE? Genesis 26: 5

All Can Become 'Heirs' to the Promise!

Let's notice how people of all nations can become 'heirs' to the same promises made to righteous Abraham and his descendants.

Did Elohim promise Abraham that all nations of the earth would be blessed through his 'seed'? Genesis 12: 3 & 22: 18. Who is this 'seed'? Galatians 3: 8 & 16.

Comment: The word 'seed' in Genesis 22: 18 refer specifically to One Seed, namely Messiah, rather than to Abraham's multiple offspring mentioned in Genesis 13: 16 & 17: 8.

Does Luke 3: 23 & 34 prove that Yahshua was a direct descendant or 'seed' of Abraham? Did He clearly spring from the tribe of Judah, one of the sons of Jacob or Israel? Verses 33 & 34. Also see John 4: 22 and Hebrews 7: 14.

Comment: Luke records Yahshua's genealogy through His mother Miriam. Joseph, mentioned in Luke 3: 23, was actually the son-in-law of Heli, the father of Miriam. And so Luke shows that Miriam was directly descended from Abraham (verse 34).

How does one who is not a direct descendant of Abraham by birth become an 'Heir' to the promises made to him? Galatians 3: 28 & 29.

Comment: All people who have not descended from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob (Israel) are called 'Gentiles' in the Scriptures. And so Rav Shaul went on to show these Gentile-born Galatians that the only

way in which they could become heirs to the promise made to Abraham, was by becoming children of Abraham by spiritual adoption through Messiah!

What did Rav Shaul say the Ephesian Gentile believers were before their conversion? Ephesians 2: 11 – 12.

Comment: As Gentiles, they had been *'strangers from the covenants of promise, having NO HOPE, and without Elohim in the world.'*

But through Messiah and His sacrifice were they brought near to the promise? Ephesians 2: 13. And were they strangers and foreigners anymore? Verse 19. Were they then part of the 'spiritual' household of Elohim? Same verse.

Comment: And so today whoever will from every nation may become an 'heir' of the promises Elohim made to Abraham by becoming his 'seed' through Messiah! We read from Galatians 3: 7, ***'Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.'*** If you are a converted believer, regardless of race, Abraham is your 'father' and you will inherit whatever Elohim promised to him. Isn't that clear? And so all true believers are heirs with Abraham to inherit (1) ETERNAL LIFE and (2) ETERNAL INHERITANCE OF THE ENTIRE EARTH. 'Heaven' was not included in the promises Elohim made to Abraham!

Promises Yet to Be Fulfilled

But when will Abraham and his 'children' receive their inheritance? When will they receive the promises? Has Abraham already 'gone' to his reward – has he already inherited the promises? Acts 7: 2 – 5. Notice especially verse 5.

Comment: These inspired words of Stephen plainly state that Abraham never received the promised inheritance – even though Elohim's promises were made UNCONDITIONAL because of his obedience.

Were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob merely sojourners to the land that Elohim had promised to them? Hebrews 11: 8 – 10. Had they, at the time the book of Hebrews was written, received the promises? Verses 13, 39 & 40. Was Abraham still dead during the time of Messiah and the apostles? John 8: 52 & 53.

Comment: Do you grasp that these inspired Scriptures of Elohim are saying? They say in plain language that all these men died, in faith, NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISES! The fathers to whom the promises were made did not 'go to their reward at death! Nor had they 'gone to their reward' years after the resurrection and ascension of Messiah to heaven!

What about David, an heir of Abraham and one of Elohim's prophets during Tanach times? Did he inherit the promises, or is he still dead in his grave? Acts 2: 29.

Comment: We read in the Renewed Covenant that Abraham and the patriarchs have not received the promised inheritance, even to this day! They, and all Nazarene believers who become Abraham's children through Messiah, are now only HEIRS to the promises. An 'heir' is one who has not yet come into his inheritance. And so they have not yet become 'inheritors'!

To Inherit the 'Kingdom of Elohim'

In order to understand when the promises will be inherited, let's learn more fully what Abraham and his heirs are to inherit.

What did Yahshua Messiah 'confirm' during His ministry on earth? Romans 15: 8. And what message did He proclaim? Mark 1: 14 & Matthew 9: 35.

Comment: In confirming the promises of eternal inheritance Elohim made to the ‘fathers’ in the faith, namely Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Messiah always preached the good news of the coming Kingdom of Elohim which is to occupy and govern the earth.

Will all the righteous men of old be ‘in’ the Kingdom of Elohim? Luke 13: 28 & Matthew 8: 11.

Comment: The promises Elohim made to the fathers included ENTRANCE into the Kingdom of Elohim! And so their inheritance will include (1) ETERNAL LIFE in (2) the Kingdom of Elohim and (3) the Earth on which that Kingdom will reign - the same INHERITANCE you and I may receive through Messiah!

What did Yahshua Messiah say believers should strive to enter? Matthew 6: 33 & 7: 21.

Comment: Notice in Matthew 7: 21 that it is the Kingdom ‘of’ heaven – not ‘in heaven! ‘Of’ does not mean ‘in’. It is the Kingdom of, or owned and ruled by, heaven in the same sense that ‘the Bank of Morgan’ in the USA was not in Mr. Morgan, but was owned and ruled by him.

Matthew’s Gospel always uses the term ‘kingdom of heaven’ to express exactly the same thing that Mark, Luke and John express as ‘Kingdom of Elohim.’ It does not mean a kingdom in heaven, any more than it means a kingdom in Elohim. But it does mean a kingdom owned and ruled by Elohim whose throne and dwelling place is in heaven.

What did Yahshua, in His ‘sermon on the Mount,’ say the ‘meek’ shall inherit? Matthew 5: 5. But what did He say about the ‘poor in spirit’? Matthew 5: 3. Is this a contradiction?

Comment: Of course not! The ‘meek’ and ‘the poor in spirit’ - humble believers – shall inherit the earth for an everlasting possession, and shall enter the ‘Kingdom of heaven’ which will be established on earth! That Kingdom, as we learned in a previous lesson, is the government of Elohim which Messiah will establish right here on earth at His return.

To enter into the Kingdom of Elohim is a destiny of such esteem that the human mind cannot fully understand it! Men today have no idea of what is in store for the obedient. The inheritance that awaits every true believer surpasses anything you have ever fantasized about in your mind!

As we read from 1st Corinthians 2: 9, ***“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 LOVED HIM.”*** The full extent of the inheritance Elohim has promised the righteous cannot even be remotely imagined by the natural mind of man, but Elohim does reveal it to us ‘by His Spirit’ (verse 10). Precisely what Elohim reveals will be covered in the next lesson.

What does Matthew 6: 10 also tell us about Elohim’s Kingdom?

Comment: Nazarene believers today pray earnestly: *“Thy Kingdom Come!”* Obviously then, it has not come to earth yet.

Where is the believer’s inheritance being kept? 1st Peter 1: 3 & 4; Matthew 5: 12 & Luke 6: 23.

Comment: These verses do not say, ‘Great is your reward when you get to heaven.’ They do not tell us when or where believers will receive their inheritance and rewards – only that they are being reserved for them in heaven!

When will the righteous inherit the Kingdom of Elohim – receive their inheritance and rewards? Matthew 25: 31 – 34. Clearly it is WHEN MESSIAH RETURNS that Abraham and his children will become inheritors of the promises! What else will happen at Messiah’s return?

Importance of the Resurrection

Can anyone inherit the Kingdom of Elohim while still a mortal flesh-and-blood human being? 1 Corinthians 15: 50.

Comment: No human can inherit the Kingdom of Elohim. The Kingdom of Elohim is not a human kingdom – there are no humans ruling in it.

What did Rav Shaul say must happen to our mortal bodies in order to inherit and actually become part of that Kingdom? 1st Corinthians 15: 51 & 53. When will our bodies be changed from flesh to spirit? Verse 52. Does that trumpet sound at the second coming of Messiah? 1st Thessalonians 4: 13 – 16. Is this when Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David and others will inherit the promises? Same verse. What did Yahshua call this change, while explaining it to Nicodemus? John 3: 6 & 8. And if we are ‘born of the spirit’, can we finally enter the spiritual Kingdom of Elohim? Verse 3.

Comment: At the second coming of Yahshua Messiah all the dead in Messiah will be raised with NEW SPIRIT BODIES; and those mortal believers still alive at His return will be instantly changed into the same kind of SPIRIT BODIES which can inherit the Kingdom of Elohim. Our present flesh is corruptible, subject to death and decay. But spirit beings are eternally new – immortal, incorruptible, never subject to death and decay!

Did Yahshua declare that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be resurrected in order to be in the Kingdom of Elohim? Matthew 22: 31 & 32.

Comment: This text is often twisted around and perverted in an attempt to prove that Abraham is not dead – that he has already gone to his promised reward without having to be resurrected – just the exact opposite of what Yahshua used this illustration to point out.

Elohim is the Elohim of the living, not the dead. Yahshua was speaking of their future resurrection to immortal life! For He plainly said, “As touching the Resurrection of the dead....”

We can now see why Abraham and his children through Messiah have not, as yet, inherited the promises. They simply cannot come into this ETERNAL INHERITANCE until they receive eternal life! This, as Rav Shaul explained, will happen at the resurrection from the dead!

Without a resurrection, the dead would never live again (1st Corinthians 15: 16, 18). Therefore, the resurrection of the dead is central to Elohim’s plan. And unless Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all deceased believers are resurrected from the grave at Messiah’s coming, they cannot inherit the promises!

Let’s summarize the pertinent points: The resurrection of the dead shall occur at the second coming of Messiah. When He comes to set up His Kingdom, then Abraham and his spiritual children in Messiah shall be given immortality, and inherit the Kingdom of Elohim – a world-ruling government headed and ruled by Messiah, occupying the very land promised to Abraham – the land stretching from the Nile to the Euphrates River. This Kingdom or government composed of IMMORTALS shall rule over all the nations of earth composed of flesh and blood mortals!

How Messiah made ETERNAL Inheritance Possible.

Yahshua Messiah came to ‘confirm’ the promises made to the fathers (Romans 15: 8). We need to understand what this means. Let’s notice how Messiah made it possible for all mankind to inherit these promises.

What is sin? 1st John 3: 4. Will anyone who sins inherit the Kingdom of Elohim? Ephesians 5: 5 & 1st Corinthians 6: 9 -10. What is the penalty of sin? Romans 6: 23. Have all people sinned? Romans 3: 23.

Comment: Elohim is Creator of the entire universe. He is also the great Lawgiver. Whoever is not obedient to Him commits sin. Sin causes sorrow, suffering, anguish and death! And so the Scriptures show that anyone who disobeys Elohim is worthy of death. Since all have sinned, all have come under the same

penalty. If each one of us were to pay the penalty of our own sins, none could receive eternal life – none could inherit the promises made to the fathers.

But did Yahshua Messiah voluntarily give His sinless life as a sacrifice for us so we would not have to pay the penalty of our own sins, and thus be deprived of eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of Elohim? John 10: 17 – 18; 1st Timothy 2: 5 – 6 & Romans 5: 8 - 10.

Comment: Elohim, the Father, created all things by Yahshua Messiah (Ephesians 3: 9 & John 1: 1 – 3). Yahshua was Elohim incarnate – Elohim made flesh (John 1: 14), Therefore, as Elohim and our Maker, Yahshua's physical life was of greater value than the sum total of all human lives ever born! So by dying Yahshua was able to pay the penalty of death for all the sins of all mankind! Messiah 'confirmed' the promises Elohim made to Abraham by preaching the gospel of the Kingdom and then by dying for our sins. His death makes it possible for us to receive eternal life! (John 3: 16).

But what conditions must we fulfill before Messiah's sacrifice can be applied to pay the penalty our past sins have incurred? Acts 2: 38. What must we become? Galatians 3: 29, first five words & Roman 8: 9.

Comment: Whether a direct descendant of Abraham or a Gentile, all must become 'Messiah's' – (Nazarene) believers – in order to become eligible to receive eternal inheritance!

Has Yahshua become the 'Captain' or forerunner of our salvation through His suffering, death and subsequent resurrection to glory? Hebrews 2: 9 & 10? Of what has Yahshua been appointed 'heir' by the Father? Hebrews 1: 1 – 2. And will we, if we become 'Messiah's' and overcome, INHERIT ALL THINGS with Him as co-heirs? Romans 8: 16 – 17 & Revelation 21: 6 & 7.

Comment: Yahshua Messiah, at His resurrection, inherited all the promises made to Abraham! And by living a sinless life He made it possible for all who accept His sacrifice to become co-HEIRS of the same promises with Him!

Did Messiah leave a will, or last testament? Hebrews 9: 15. (A 'testament' is a will.) What kinds of inheritance will the heirs of this will, or 'testament', receive? Same verse. When a person makes a will, must he die before it comes into force? Verses 16 – 17.

Comment: Messiah left a will. This is why the last fourth of the Scriptures is called the Renewed Covenant. It teaches us what we must do to become co-heirs with Him of the promise of eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of Elohim.

But a will is of no effect unless the one making it dies. So Messiah died that we may inherit the promises through Him. But He lives today at the Father's right hand, ready to intercede for us (Hebrews 7: 25), to help us to give us strength so we can all overcome sin and inherit the glorious promises of Elohim!

Has anyone Gone to Heaven?

There is absolutely no scripture in the entire Scriptures that promises heaven as the reward of the saved. NO Scripture speaks of true believers going to heaven when they die!

And yet most people seem to be ignorant of the plain teaching of the Word of Elohim and have carelessly taken for granted, without question, the false idea of 'going to heaven'! Let's notice a few more scriptures which have been either overlooked or carelessly interpreted by those who want to believe in this false doctrine.

What did Yahshua tell His disciples, as recorded in John 13: 33 & 36?

Comment: Some have assumed that Messiah taught His disciples they would follow Him into heaven 'afterwards'. All the scriptures we have studied so far in this lesson show that this clearly is not what

Messiah was saying. Rav Kepha later also died and still lies unconscious in his grave. He will rise at Messiah's return, in the resurrection with the rest of the true believers, and become an immortal member of the Kingdom of Elohim!

Does the Scriptures give us a clear indication of where the resurrected believers will be and what they will be doing after Messiah's return? Revelation 5: 10. What did Messiah say He is preparing for them? John 14: 2 & 3.

Comment: 'Mansions' is an improper translation. The correct rendering is 'abodes' or 'dwelling places'. In this case the abodes refer to rooms in the Father's house or Elohim's Temple. In the Renewed Covenant times the rooms in the temple were occupied by Elohim's priests. These rooms represent positions of authority – those position which the saints will be given in Elohim's ruling Kingdom at Messiah's return!

These positions will not be in heaven, Messiah plainly said that He was going to heaven to 'prepare' a position of authority for each true believer. But it is only when He comes to earth again that these positions will be awarded.

When Yahshua returns to earth, as king of kings, He will tell the true believers the words recorded in Matthew 25: 34, saying: ***'come, you who are blessed of My father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'*** And the Scriptures declare that they will rule all nations here on earth, having POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY in Elohim's Kingdom.

Does the Scriptures dogmatically state that NO ONE, except Yahshua Himself, has ever ascended up into heaven? John 3: 13. Could anything be clearer?

But what about the 'thief on the cross'? Didn't he go to heaven with Yahshua that very day? Luke 23: 43. The very simple answer is NO! let understand why,

Comment: In the first place, Messiah Himself did not go to heaven that day. Instead He was placed in the grave – in 'hell' – where He remained dead for the next three whole days and nights. Secondly, the word 'paradise' does not mean heaven at all. The word actually describes the earth when Elohim will dwell on it. "Paradise" simply means a beautiful garden, such as for example the Garden of Eden.

Thirdly, in many versions of the Scriptures, this verse is mis-punctuated. There were no commas in the Greek when the Renewed Covenant was translated into Greek. So when the translators supplied the commas in English, they were placed where the translators thought they should be. Actually, Messiah did not say, *"Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise,"* but rather, *'I say unto thee today, shalt thou (or thou shalt) be with me in paradise.'*

By using the word 'today', Yahshua was stressing the time of His promise – not the time He would be in paradise. Yahshua discerned the man's repentant attitude and was able to tell him that he would actually live again, with Messiah, in a beautiful world. That paradise', however, has not yet come to this earth and the repented thief is still dead.

What will those who 'wait upon YHVH' inherit? Psalm 37: 9. What shall the 'righteous' inherit, and how long shall they dwell there? Verse 29. And what does Elohim promise to those who 'keep His way'? Verse 34.

Comment: Is there anything wrong with having the earth as an eternal inheritance? Would you settle for earth? The earth would be an entirely beautiful place – a paradise – there will be no more sin - rebellion against Elohim and His eternal spiritual laws that bring peace, happiness and joy! Happiness and joy are not a matter of geographical location. Happiness is a state of mind – a spiritual condition!

There will be NO SIN in the Kingdom of Elohim. No liars, no murderers, no thieves or robbers. Think about it - there will be no devil to deceive people, no locks on doors, no jails, no hospitals, and no poorhouses! No strife, no war – no sickness or disease – no poverty, no hunger, no want! What a wonderful inheritance!

When we put all the Scriptures together, it becomes crystal clear that the reward of true believers is not playing on harps up in heaven for all eternity. It is infinitely more exciting than that!

Heaven on Earth!

We have already studied in a previous lesson what the millennial rule of Messiah on the earth will be like. We discovered that the whole world will then become a glorious paradise. But what will the earth be like when the millennium is over – when all the righteous will have been given immortality and eternal life, and all the wicked will have been burned to ashes?

Will there be a NEW earth and New heavens after the present earth's surface is purified? 2nd Peter 3: 7 – 13 & Revelation 21: 1.

Who will dwell on the NEW earth? Revelation 21: 24 – 27. Will these 'nations' be the resurrected, immortal sons of Elohim – the saved? Verse 24. Are their names written in the book of life? Verse 27.

What will be the capital city of the new earth? Revelation 21: 2, 10 – 14. How big will this city be? Verses 15 – 17. Will it be a sparkling, glorious city with streets of real gold? Verses 18 – 21. Where will this city come from? Verses 2, 10.

Comment: How clear, therefore, that although believers do not go to heaven when they die or when they are resurrected, the "HEAVENLY JERUSALEM" is coming to earth.

Will Elohim the Father, at that time, come and dwell on the earth in person and make the new Jerusalem the location of His THRONE? Revelation 21: 3; 21: 23; 22: 3. Will those who enter this city be able to look upon Elohim's face? Revelation 22: 3 & 4.

Comment: The new Jerusalem with streets of gold will descend to this earth and will become Elohim's headquarters for all eternity! The Earth is destined to become the center of all activity in the universe!

Understanding the plans Elohim has made for the earth, and seeing that the Father Himself will ultimately move His headquarters to earth, why should anyone desire to go to heaven? To be with Elohim? Why, Elohim will be right here on earth.

When Yahshua Messiah returns, will He say to you, ***'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'*** Will you be among those who will inherit the Kingdom of Elohim, along with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?

Messiah is coming soon.

Yahshua our Messiah warned that there will come a time when people will say that He already came, saying in Matthew 24: 26, ***'If therefore they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness, do not go forth, or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them.'*** In fact we see from 2 Thessalonians 2: 1 – 2 that false teachers started proclaiming the idea ever since His death and resurrection, 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 the Master has come.'*** We see further from verse 3 how Rav Shaul refuted this false assumption, saying: ***'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.'*** Reading verse 3 carefully, we realize that Rav Shaul warned that there must yet come a further falling away from the truth, before the return of our Messiah Yahshua.

Yahshua Messiah also spoke about a type of deception to occur before His return in Matthew 24: 5, 11, 24 and Revelation 6: 2, as follows: ***"For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Messiah,' and will mislead many. (11) And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many. (24) For false Messiahs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. (Revelation 6: 2) And I looked, and behold, a white horse (false horse), and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer.'*** The last verse reminds me about the way the Crusaders use to try and spread Christianity – proclaiming a different gospel to the one Messiah proclaimed and killing those opposed to it! In addition Yahshua the Revelator (as per Revelation 1: 1), used a symbol of a rider on a white horse to depict false ministers and prophets claiming to represent Messiah or His ecclesia, trying to convert everyone they came across. This is what happened during the middle ages when people were forced into *'baptism'* to become Christians. In Germany and in Portugal, Jewish people were baptized and given new German or Portuguese sounding names such as Schultz, Schiltz and Scholtz; or Ferreira, Perreira and Merreira.

The real Messiah will also come on a white horse, but instead of a bow in His hand, He will be returning with a sword coming from His mouth, as witnessed in Revelation 19: 11 – 15, in this way: ***'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.'*** The sword coming from Messiah's mouth will be the word of Elohim (the Scriptures) as recorded in Hebrews 4: 12, as follows: ***'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 thoughts and intentions of the heart.'*** It is important to understand that the perversion of Elohim's truth marks only the beginning of a long succession of events covering more than 1900 years, concluding when Messiah returns to establish the Kingdom of Elohim.

Prior to His resurrection, Yahshua made it clear that His Kingdom was not during the time that He was on earth, nor would ever be *'of this world'*, in John 18: 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 up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm."*** Therefore could any or all of the churches of the world constitute Elohim's Kingdom as they claim? History reveals that the churches are very much a part of this age! They are busy in political struggles and caused the shedding of much innocent blood. Therefore if the churches of this world constitute the Kingdom of Elohim, then that kingdom is part of this world, and Yahshua Messiah was a liar! When Yahshua's disciples asked Him if He is going to restore the Kingdom of

Israel in their day in Acts 1: 6, He replied in Acts 1: 7 – 8, saying: ***“It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; (8) but you shall receive power 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 the remotest part of the earth.”*** We see from Yahshua’s answer that the power His disciples were to receive was not of a political nature, but of a spiritual nature, because the Kingdom of Elohim was also not to be set-up at that time. Whilst Messiah was away in Heaven to receive His crown, He gave them and their successors the Set-apart Spirit, because He promised that He will be with them until the end of this age. We see from first Corinthians 15: 50 that the Kingdom of Elohim could not have been established during this age, 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.’***

Some modern day Christians believe that Messiah will only return after peace and harmony filled the earth for a thousand years. However, this cannot be true since Messiah Himself said in Matthew 24: 21 & 22 that He will return during a time of the greatest tribulation known to mankind, to come and save us from ourselves, as follows: ***“For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. (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.”*** The earth will be in utter chaos, not at peace, before Messiah’s return. Messiah will come to put an end to mankind’s misrule to establish the Kingdom of Elohim on earth. Even though Messiah’s disciples anticipated that the Kingdom of Elohim would be established in their time, as witnessed from Luke 19: 11, in this way: ***‘And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of Elohim was going to appear immediately.’*** Yahshua answered them in verse 12, saying: ***“A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return.”*** Obviously the nobleman in this parable refers to Messiah Himself and the far country refers to heaven where He returned to after His resurrection.

Yahshua told His disciples clearly that He will only receive the kingdom whilst He is in heaven, as is also depicted in 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.”*** The parable in Luke 19 includes the time from Messiah’s ascension to heaven, until He returns one day on a Feast of Trumpets (Yom Teruah) to rule the world from Jerusalem. We understand from reading the parable that whilst Yahshua is away, His servants must remain profitable using and increasing the talents which He gave them, as witnessed in verse 13 of Luke 19, as follows: ***“And he called ten of his slaves (the lost ten tribes which He came to bring back to the Father), and gave them ten minas, and said to them, “Do business with this until I come back.””*** What business should we be about until Messiah returns? We read the answer in Matthew 24: 14, in this way: ***“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.”***

A short time prior to Messiah’s ascension to heaven, He made it clear that He would only return after a fixed sequence of events. He outlined these events to His disciples on the Mount of Olives in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. According to Luke 21: 34 & 35 Yahshua told His disciples that Elohim’s intervention in world affairs will come suddenly catching most people unawares, saying: ***“Be on guard, that your hearts may not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day come on you suddenly like a trap; (35) for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth.”*** In fact Yahshua compared the time of His return to Noah’s day in Matthew 24: 37, saying: ***“For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.”*** People before Noah’s day did not expect Elohim’s intervention in their lives, as Yahshua explained further in verses 38 & 39, saying: ***“For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, (39) and they did not understand until the flood came and took***

them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.” It is clear from this that nobody will know the exact timing of Messiah’s return. Even though we know that His return will be one day on the Feast of Trumpets, but we do not know the year of His return. Since we cannot know the year or the exact hour of His return, Yahshua said we will nevertheless know very close to the actual time of His return in verses 32 & 33 of Matthew 24, saying: ***“Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender, and put forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; (33) even so you too, when you see all these things (the things Yahshua mentioned in the preceding verses of Matthew 24), recognize that He is near, right at the door.”***

Yahshua will return as a thief in the night, as Rav Shaul wrote in first Thessalonians 5: 2 & 3, saying: ***‘For you yourselves know full well that the day of Master will come just like a thief in the night. (3) While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.’*** However, Rav Shaul indicated that true believers should remain alert, so that it doesn’t catch them unawares in verses 4 – 6, saying: ***‘But you, brethren are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; (5) for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; (6) so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.’*** Messiah is also pictured as coming as a thief in Revelation 16: 15, in this way: ***“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame.”*** This does not mean that Messiah will come invisibly, but it indicates that He comes at night when the household is asleep and catches the residents off their guard. People never know **when** a thief is coming, but if they knew they would be prepared for him.

Messiah’s coming would therefore be similar to that of a thief. He will not come invisibly, but He will come unexpectedly. No one will know exactly when He is going to come! This is why Yahshua explained in Matthews 24: 42 – 44, saying: ***“Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Master is coming. (43) But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. (44) For this reason you be ready too; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.”*** So Messiah compared His coming to that of a thief in respect of the time of His arrival with an element of surprise. But we see from Matthew 24: 30 & 31 that Messiah’s return will definitely not be invisible, as follows: ***“And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. (31) And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”*** From verse 27 of Matthew 24, we see that Messiah’s coming will be like lightning, coming from the east and flashing to the west.

We see further from Revelation 1: 14 - 16 why His coming is compared to lightning, in this way: ***‘And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; (15) and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. (16) And in His hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.’*** The phrase ‘those who pierced Him’ as used in Revelation 1: 7 does not mean that the Roman soldier who pierced Yahshua’s side, or the Jews of His day will see Him, but all of humanity alive at His return will – since it was because of the sins of all of humanity that He had to die. So obviously, nobody will be able to miss his coming. Messiah’s return to earth will be visible for all to see, but there is not a single word mentioning a secret, preliminary rapture of believers to heaven. Even though some believe that the visible loud coming is a second phase of Messiah’s return. When Yahshua returns on the Feast of Trumpets one day in the near future, the dead in Messiah will be resurrected as described in first Thessalonians 4: 15 & 16, as follows: ***‘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 the archangel, and with the trumpet of Elohim; and the dead in Messiah shall rise first.’***

The trumpet blown here in first Thessalonians 4: 16 is the very same trumpet blown in Revelation 11: 15, where we read: ***'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 (YHVH) and His Messiah; and He will reign forever and ever."*** In fact we see from verse 18 of Revelation 11, that Rav Yochanan was inspired to write that the blast of the seventh trumpet will be the time of the first resurrection. Those who believe in the rapture theory claim that the Greek word *'parousia'* translated as coming in Matthew 24: 27 does not mean *'coming'* at all. They believe that it refers to Messiah's *'secret nearness'* and when His disciples asked him about His coming, they were actually asking for a sign of the *'rapture'*. This brings us to the word *'parousia'* - which leads to the question: Does it specify a preliminary secret coming after all? The Greek word *'parousia'* simply means presence or coming and is translated as *'coming'* in many different scriptures, first Thessalonians being one example. Think for a moment; if Messiah had gone into such integrate details to answer His disciples' question in Matthew 24: 3, would He not have mentioned the *'rapture'* or His *'invisible presence'* to them? The fact is Messiah is coming to execute judgment at His *'parousia'* – His visible coming in power and glory to earth!

So far we've seen that prior to Messiah's return, a great tribulation is going to occur on earth. But we see further from verse 29 of Matthew 24, that His return will also be preceded by heavenly signs, in this way: ***"But immediately after the tribulation of those days the SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."*** Yahshua told His disciples in Luke 21: 20 & 21, saying: ***"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand. (21) Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city."*** Even though this is what Nazarene believers in Messiah did when Jerusalem was destroyed during 70 CE, the prophecy is also for believers in Judea at the end of the age. If there would be a *'secret rapture'*, Messiah's followers would not have to be worried about invading armies or anything else for that matter. However, Messiah did promise to keep true believers in His ecclesia safe during the coming tribulation in Revelation 3: 10, saying: ***"Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth."***

A woman symbolizes an ecclesia in the Scriptures. We read accordingly from Revelation 12: 14 – 16, in this way: ***'And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. (15) And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood. (16) And the earth helped the woman and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth.'*** We see that the earth helps the woman, and no mention is made of a secret rapture here. This means the ecclesia of Elohim will be on earth during the great tribulation – not in heaven as supporters of the secret rapture believe. Even so, when Messiah returns in the same way as He left when He ascended to heaven, His saints – true believers – will come with Him, as recorded in Zechariah 14: 4 & 5, as follows: ***"And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. (5) And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then YHVH, my Elohim, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!"***

This agrees with what Rav Shaul wrote in first Thessalonians 3: 12 & 13, saying: ***'And may the Master cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all men, just as we also do for you; (13) so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our Elohim and Father at the coming of our Master Yahshua with all His saints.'*** But reading from first Thessalonians 4: 13 & 14, we see that Rav Shaul wrote about Messiah's saints who are sleeping in death, in this way: ***'But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no***

hope. (14) For if we believe that Yahshua died and rose again, even so Elohim will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Yahshua.’ As we’ve read before from verses 15 & 16, those who have fallen asleep in Messiah will be resurrected with the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of Elohim. Continuing in verse 17, we read: **‘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.’** Both the resurrected dead and those alive (changed to immortal beings) will meet Messiah in the air, but will like Messiah who went up in a cloud when He was resurrected will descend in the same way on the Mount of Olives, as the two angels said in Acts 1: 11, in this way: **“Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Yahshua, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”** We see from Mark 8: 38 that Messiah will also be accompanied by His angels when He returns, as follows: **“For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”** So not only will Messiah’s saints accompany Him when He returns, but He will also be accompanied by a great army of angels.

When Messiah came almost 2,000 years ago, He came as a lamb to be slain for the sins of the world. But when He comes again, He will be angry and wrathful against all evil, as witnessed in Revelation 6: 15 – 17, in this way: **‘And the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; (16) and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the lamb; (17) for the great day of their wrath has come; and who is able to stand.”’** For almost 6,000 years Elohim has given mankind a chance to repent and turn to Him and His ways of peace and happiness. But, even though many say they believe in Messiah, they have refused to follow the perfect example that the Father gave us to follow. Instead men waxed worse and continued to devise forces which are now threatening to destroy all life on earth. As a result, in a similar way as a parent punishes his children that will not obey him, so Elohim is going to punish the world to bring it back to its senses. We read from Zechariah 14: 1 – 3 that Messiah will fight the world’s hate-filled armies when He returns and stand upon the Mount of Olives opposite Jerusalem, as follows: **‘Behold, a day is coming for YHVH when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. (2) For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the woman ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. (3) Then YHVH will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.’**

We see further from Revelation 14: 14 - 20 that much blood will be spilled on this day of battle, in this way: **‘And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man having a golden crown on His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand. (15) And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, “Put in your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe.” (16) And He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth; and the earth was reaped. (17) And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. (18) And another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, put in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe,” (19) And the angel swung his sickle to the earth, and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of Elohim. (20) And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses’ bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.’**

The Scriptures show clearly that Messiah will come back for all those alive at that time to see. Yes, He is coming back with great power to a world that have rejected Elohim’s way of life, to save them from themselves. His spectacular return to earth will usher in the beginning of His millennial rule on earth. Mankind will finally learn to lead happy, abundant lives under Messiah’s righteous rule. That will be the time when the entire world will receive Elohim’s plentiful blessings. Halleluyah!

Scriptures Study: The return of Messiah to come and rule the world from Jerusalem.

Has Messiah already come?

Let's see the warnings of Messiah Himself regarding His promised return.

Did Yahshua warn that some would claim He had already come before His true return would take place? Matthew 24: 26 & Mark 13: 21.

Did false teachers proclaim that very idea after His resurrection? 2nd Thessalonians 2: 1 & 2 (The King James rendering, "*is at hand*," in verse 2 is misleading. Other translations render this more accurately as '*has come*.') Did Rav Shaul emphatically refute this false assumption? Verse 3.

Did Rav Shaul go on to warn that there must yet come a further falling away – an apostasy from the truth – before the return of Yahshua Messiah? Same verse. Did Yahshua also speak of this as something which had to occur before He returned? Compare Matthew 24: 5, 11, 24 with Revelation 6: 2.

Comment: Yahshua, the Revelator (Revelation 1: 1), used the symbol of a rider on a white horse to picture false teachers and prophets claiming to represent Messiah or His ecclesia. The real Messiah comes on the white horse described in Revelation 19: 11. Notice that Messiah pictures Himself as returning with a sword – the Word of YHWH (Revelation 19: 15; Hebrews 4: 12) – whereas Satan's counterfeit is pictured with a bow in his hand (Revelation 6: 2).

Notice, too, that the perversion of Elohim's truth marks only the beginning of a long sequence of events (covering over 1900 years) culminating in Messiah's return and the establishment of the Kingdom of Elohim.

Before His resurrection, did Yahshua make it clear that His Kingdom was not at that time, nor ever would be, "*of this world*"? John 18: 36. Therefore, could any or all of the churches of this world constitute Elohim's Kingdom, as so many seem to think? Same verse.

Comment: This "world" or system (Greek cosmos) encompasses all that is characteristic of the age of man. And certainly, as history reveals, the churches are a PART of this age! They have engaged in political struggles, ruled empires, and caused the shedding of much blood, especially in the middle Ages. Therefore, if the churches of Christendom constitute Elohim's Kingdom, then that kingdom is a part of this world, and Yahshua did not know what He was talking about!

Yahshua stated plainly: "***But now is my KINGDOM not from hence*** [did not begin at that time]." His ecclesia started in the wilderness as confirmed in Act 7: 38. So Yahshua Messiah emphatically denied, in advance, the false concept that later formed the basis for church-political dominance in the middle Ages.

When asked by His disciples if He would restore the Kingdom in their day, what did Yahshua reply? Acts 1: 6 – 8. But were they shortly to receive power that was NOT of a political nature? Verse 8. What were they to do with this power? Same verse and Matthew 28: 18 -20.

Comment: Notice that the apostles were not given to know the time of the establishment of the Kingdom, but were to be filled with the Set-Apart Spirit on Pentecost.

Yahshua's disciples did not at that time receive political power to rule the nations. The Kingdom of Elohim was not then to be set up. But they were to receive spiritual power that would enable them to be "*WITNESSES*" to the world of Messiah's resurrection, and to "*teach all nations*" the ways of Elohim.

While Yahshua Himself was AWAY IN HEAVEN, He promised He would be with them (and their successors) in spirit only until the end of this age – until the end of this present world of human misrule – until His return to set up the Kingdom of Elohim on earth.

What scripture proves conclusively that the Kingdom of Elohim could not have been established on earth yet? 1 Corinthians 15: 50. Would you say the people attending the various congregations are still flesh and blood?

When Messiah WON'T Return

Another and more modern concept is that Yahshua will come AFTER peace and harmony permeate the earth for a thousand years, with all the nations in perfect accord. Could this possibly be true in the light of the Scriptures?

What does Acts 3: 21 tell us concerning the restoration of all things?

When Yahshua returns, what will the ambassadors of peace be doing, and what will the general condition of the earth be like. Isaiah 33: 7 & 8.

Comment: Obviously the earth will be in utter chaos – not at peace – before Messiah returns.

What scriptures prove beyond all doubt that Messiah returns before, and not after, peace and harmony fill the earth for a thousand years? Revelation 5: 10 & 20: 4.

Comment: The Scriptures shows that Messiah does not come after a millennium (1000 years) of perfect human rule. To abolish human misrule and establish the Kingdom – the rule of Elohim is the reason Yahshua returns a second time. Since resurrected believers will reign with Messiah for a thousand years, He obviously must come before the 1000 years commence.

End-Time Commission Must First Be Fulfilled

Before His crucifixion, did Yahshua's followers anticipate that the Kingdom of Elohim would be established very soon? Luke 19: 11. What did Yahshua say in answer to this mistaken idea? Verse 12.

Comment: In this parable the '*nobleman*' refers to Yahshua. The '*far country*' is heaven, to which He returned after His resurrection, and the '*servants*' are true believers.

Will Messiah receive a kingdom while away in heaven? Compare Luke 19: 12 with Daniel 7: 13 – 14.

Comment: The parable in Luke 19 covers the time from Messiah's ascension to heaven until His return to establish the Kingdom of Elohim on earth.

While the nobleman is away, must the servants become profitable by increasing their talents? Luke 19: 13 & 15, and Matthew 25: 15 – 19.

What duty must the servants especially fulfill before the end of this age and the second coming of Messiah? Matthew 24: 14 & 28: 18 – 20.

Comment: Yahshua made it plain that the gospel of the Kingdom must go to all nations before His return.

Can We Know the Exact Time?

Shortly before His ascension to heaven, Yahshua also made it very plain that He would return after a fixed sequence of events. He gave an outline of these events to His disciples upon the Mount of Olives. In Lesson 2 we studied that outline as it is recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. You should reread Matthew 24 and note all the events which were prophesied to occur prior to Messiah's return.

Can we really determine from these prophecies the exact time of His coming? Will Elohim's intervention in world affairs and the second coming of Messiah be universally expected? Luke 21: 35.

To what period in earth's history did Yahshua compare His return? Matthew 24: 37. Did the people before the flood really expect Elohim's supernatural intervention? Verses 38, 39. Will people today expect Elohim's intervention and the second coming of Messiah? Same three verses.

Will those who are watching and preparing know the day and hour of Messiah's return? Matthew 25: 13.

Comment: These utterances of Yahshua have often been taken to mean that only the apostles would not know the day or the hour, but that we in these last days would know it. This is emphatically NOT true!

Notice Rav Kepha (Peter) ask Yahshua if He meant only the apostles would be unable to know the day or the hour, or if He meant all – even those of us today – would not know? Luke 12: 40 -41. What was Yahshua's reply? Verses 42 – 43. Is Yahshua's warning especially for our generation – those alive *"when he comes"*? Notice again Yahshua's reply in verse 43.

Comment: How plain that Yahshua meant His servant of this generation would NOT know the day or the hour!

Since we cannot know the day and hour, can we nevertheless know very near the actual time of His return? Matthew 24: 32 – 33.

Comment: Recall that Yahshua had already given in this chapter the signs that would precede His second coming.

How Messiah Will Return

How will Messiah return? Will He come silently, invisibly, as a *"thief in the night"*? Is He returning to secretly "rapture" away His ecclesia?

Is Messiah coming in two phases – once "for" His saints to secretly take them to heaven – and then "with" them to set up His Kingdom?

Scriptures gives us the clear, concise answers.

What does 1st Thessalonians 5: 2 – 3 say is to come on the world as a *"thief in the night"*? Are Believers to be vigilant so this period of upheaval – the *"day of YHVH"* – doesn't catch them unawares? Verse 4 – 6.

And yet is Messiah also pictured as coming as a "thief"? Revelation 16: 15. Does this mean He will return secretly – invisibly – in a clandestine manner?

Comment: That's a fair question. But here's another question to ponder: When thieves or burglars rob a home, do they come INVISIBLY? Of course not!

A thief, however, usually comes at night when the household is away or asleep. He catches them unaware, off their guard – SURPRISES them! You never know WHEN a thief is coming. If you did, you would call the police and be prepared for him. The big question you would want answered if you already knew a thief was planning to rob your home; would be when?

So it is with the coming of Messiah! He will not come invisibly – any more than a thief comes invisibly. But He will come UNEXPECTEDLY! No one will know exactly when He is going to come.

Yahshua Himself explained: ***"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Master doth come. But know this that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also READY; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh"*** (Matthew 24: 42 – 44).

And so Yahshua likened His coming to a “thief” in respect to the time of His coming and the element of SURPRISE! How plain!

Now turn to Matthew 24. Does Yahshua describe a tremendous noise which will rend the air at His coming? Matthew 24: 30 – 31, Isn’t this the time when He “*gathers together His elect*”? Verse 31.

Will Messiah’s return from heaven also be accompanied by a tremendous shout? 1 Thessalonians 4: 16. Is this the time the saints are “*caught up*” to be with Him? Verses 16, 17.

Comment: Obviously Messiah’s coming will NOT be a clandestine, secretive event at all!

To Come VISIBLY!

When Messiah returns will He be visible to everyone? Matthew 24: 27; Revelation 1: 7.

Comment: The Greek word ‘*astrape*’ used in Matthew 24: 27 may mean the lightning of thunderstorms, or any brilliant illumination. Now what brilliant light “comes out of the east and shines even unto the west”? The SUN, of course! Messiah’s presence will be “as the Sun Shineth in his strength” (See Revelation 1: 16). It will be obvious – nobody will be able to miss it!

The expression “*and they also which pierced him*” in Revelation 1: 7 does not prove that the ONE ROMAN SOLDIER who literally pierced Yahshua’s side, or the Jews who were living then, will be able to see His coming. It actually refers to the entire human family – all of us! Our sins took Messiah’s life. Revelation 1: 7 simply indicates that all who are alive when He returns will be able to see Him. All the rest of humanity will see Him later, when they are resurrected.

Did the angelic messenger who spoke to the disciples right after Messiah’s ascension from the Mount of Olives affirm that He would return “IN LIKE MANNER” as He left? Acts 1: 10 & 11. What was the manner of His leaving? See verse 9. Will He at His return again become visible “*in the clouds*”? 1 Thessalonians 4: 17.

Finally what does Zechariah 14: 4 have to say about Messiah’s return to that same Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem, from which He ascended? Then He will not make a “near miss” and turn right around and go back to heaven for three and a half or seven years, will He? Obviously not!

Comment: Messiah’s visible, advertised, unmistakably coming is plainly described in Scriptures – in great detail – but there is not one word mentioning a secret, preliminary “Rapture” of Christians to heaven!

Only ONE “Second Coming”!

Some will still contend that this visible and audible coming is the second phase of Messiah’s return. Here is more proof that this idea is utterly false.

Does the resurrection of the dead in Messiah clearly take place at His return? 1 Thessalonians 4: 15 & 16. Does it occur at the exact moment the trumpet (“trump”) mentioned in verse 16 blows? 1 Corinthians 15: 51 & 52.

Is the trumpet mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4: 16 and 1 Corinthians 15: 52 the same as the one blown in Revelation 11: 15? Revelation 11: 18.

Comment: Some will claim that the last trumpet mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15: 52 is different from the seventh or last trump mentioned in Revelation 11: 15. But notice in Revelation 11: 18 that Rav Yochanan was inspired to write that the seventh trump is the time of the resurrection! Rav Yochanan is describing the same momentous event Rav Shaul did in 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15. Therefore we see that Messiah will return and the believers in Him will be resurrected at the mighty blast of the great trumpet which will be heard by all the earth!

The Story Flow of Revelation										
The Seven Seals	1st Seal	White Horse: False Prophets - Revelation 6: 1 - 2 & Matthew 24: 3 -5								The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse
	2nd Seal	Red Horse: War - Revelation 6: 3 - 4 & Matthew 24: 6 - 7								
	3rd Seal	Black Horse: Famine - Revelation 6: 5 - 6 & Matthew 24: 7								
	4th Seal	Pale Horse: Pestilence - Revelation 6: 7 - 8 & Matthew 25: 7 - 8								
	5th Seal	The Great Tribulation - Revelation 6: 9 - 11 & Matthew 24: 9 - 10 & 21								
	6th Seal	The Heavenly Signs - Revelation 6: 12 - 17 ; Matthew 24: 29 & Joel 2: 30 - 31								
7th Seal	The Seven Trumpet Plagues - Revelation 8: 6									The Day of YHWH - One year period of Elohim's wrath.
	Silence in heaven for half and hour (Revelation 8: 1 - 6)									
	1st Trumpet	Hail, fire and blood; one third of trees & grass burnt (Rev. 8: 6 -7)								
	2nd Trumpet	One third of sea becomes blood (Rev. 8: 8 - 9)								
	3rd Trumpet	One third of fresh water becomes bitter (Rev. 8: 10 - 11)								
	4th Trumpet	One third of light obscured (Rev. 8: 12)								
	5th Trumpet	Satan inspired war (Rev 8: 13 & 9: 1 - 12)							1st Woe	
	6th Trumpet	200 million army; one third of mankind killed (Rev. 9: 13 - 21)							2nd Woe	
	7th Trumpet	Return of Yahshua Messiah -1st resurrection; all 7 vials begin within 24 hrs. Rev.11: 15 - 19, 19: 1 - 21, Matt. 24: 30 - 31, 1 Cor. 15: 51 - 52, 1 Thes. 4: 16, Zech 14: 3 - 4							3rd Woe	
		1st Vial	2nd Vial	3rd Vial	4th Vial	5th Vial	6th Vial	7th Vial		
		Inflicted by awful sores	Sea turns to blood	Fresh water turns to blood	Scorching by Sun	Darkness and pain	Euphrates dried up	Greatest Earth quick ever; hail		
	Revelation 16: 2 - 21									

Significance of the Greek Word “Parousia”

Those who insistently adhere to the rapture theory claim the Greek word “parousia”, translated as ‘coming’ in Matthew 24: 27, does not mean coming at all. They say it refers to His ‘secret nearness,’ so that when Yahshua’s disciples asked Him for the ‘sign’ of His coming, they were actually asking for a sign of the rapture.

However, the scriptures that we have already studied clearly show the manner and approximate time of Messiah’s return. But what about this word ‘parousia’? Does it really indicate a preliminary secret coming after all?

The Greek word ‘parousia’ (number 3952 in ‘Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible’) is translated ‘coming’ in many different scriptures. 1 Thessalonians 3: 13 is one example. Does this verse say Messiah’s parousia is ‘with’ all His saints? Then could it possibly be referring to a secret coming for His saints three and a half or more years before He returns openly ‘with’ them?

Comment: Wouldn't you think that after Messiah had gone into such detail to answer the disciples' questions (Matthew 24: 3), that He would have at least mentioned the 'rapture' or His 'invisible presence'? But no such mention is found in this chapter of the Scriptures.

Even so, notice another scripture. At His 'coming' (parousia), what will Messiah do to 'that Wicked (one)' who has seated himself 'as Elohim' in the temple of Elohim? See 2nd Thessalonians 2: 4, 8.

Comment: Clearly, Messiah's coming to execute judgment is His parousia – His visible and powerful return to the earth.

Notice that not only does this verse show that the wicked one is to be destroyed at the parousia of Messiah, but it also speaks of the BRIGHTNESS of His parousia. Clearly, the parousia of Messiah is not a secret, clandestine, INVISIBLE event at all!

Where Will the Believers Be Protected From the Tribulation?

What did Yahshua say is to happen shortly before His one and only second coming? Matthew 24: 21, 29. And what happens next? Verse 30.

Comment: Here we find that before Messiah's coming a Great Tribulation is going to occur on earth. These verses show that Messiah will not return until after the Great Tribulation and after great heavenly signs occur!

What did Messiah tell His followers in Judea to do when they see a particular '*abomination of desolation*' set up? Matthew 24: 15 – 20 and Luke 21: 20 – 21.

Comment: This is exactly what true believers did before Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 CE. But this prophecy is dual. It also gives believers in Judea at the end time instructions about what to do when the 'abomination of desolation' is set up. If there were to be a 'secret rapture', Messiah's followers would not have to be concerned about either the winter or the Sabbath or invading armies!

Does Messiah promise to keep the overcomers of His ecclesia safe during the 'hour of temptation' – the coming Great Tribulation? Revelation 3: 10.

In Scriptural language, a '*woman*' symbolizes a Church (see 2nd Corinthians 11: 1 -2, Ephesians 5: 23 – 29 and Galatians 4: 26). Will Elohim provide a '*place of safety*' for the end-time true ecclesia, where they will also be protected from Satan (the 'dragon' of Revelation 12: 9)? See Revelation 12: 14 – 16. Where will this place of safety be – in heaven, as the rapture theory says? Same verse.

Comment: Notice that the 'earth' helps the 'woman'. There is no mention of a rapture or heaven here! Obviously, then, the 'saints' – true believers of Elohim's ecclesia of called out believers – will be on the earth during the Great Tribulation – not up in heaven as proponents of the rapture theory believe. But Messiah promises the 'saints' a place of safety – on the earth. However, note that not every believer will have qualified himself for this protection, and many will have to go through that Tribulation!

Who Returns With Messiah?

When Messiah returns to the Mount of Olives in the same manner as He departed (Acts 1:11), He definitely will not be alone. Notice who will come with Him: Will all the 'saints' (true believers) be with Yahshua Messiah when He returns to the Mount of Olives? Zechariah 14: 4 – 5. Observe the last few words of verse 5.

Did Rav Shaul speak of Messiah coming with His 'saints', who are now 'sleeping' in death? 1st Thessalonians 3: 13; 4: 13 -14. Do they return from heaven or merely from the atmosphere of the earth – the clouds into which they will have risen to meet Him? 1st Thessalonians 4: 15 – 17.

Comment: Both the resurrected dead in Messiah and the living believers (then made immortal) will not only rise to meet the returning Messiah in the air, but will then come down immediately with Him to the earth.

Will they stay with Messiah forever? 1st Thessalonians 4: 17. Where will He be? Turn to Zechariah 14: 4 and Revelation 5: 10; 20: 4 once again.

Who else is scheduled to come with Messiah at this time? Mark 8: 38 and Revelation 19: 14.

Comment: When Messiah came to earth the first time, He was scourged, mocked and abused (John 19: 1 – 3). But when He returns as King of kings to set up the Kingdom of Elohim, He will return with GREAT POWER AND GLORY (Matthew 24: 30), and a great army of angels will accompany Him!

What Messiah Will DO When He Returns

Yahshua Messiah came over 1900 years ago as a meek lamb to be slain for the sins of the world. But when He comes again, He will be wrathful – angry – against all evil! He will use His mighty power to change the ways which have caused all the sorrow and suffering on earth.

What does Revelation 6: 16 – 17 foretell concerning the time of Elohim's wrath on this world? Did Zephaniah foretell this same time? Zephaniah 1: 14 – 15; 2: 2 – 3. Also turn to Isaiah 13: 6 – 7 and Ezekiel 7: 19.

Comment: Most people have heard little or nothing about '*the day of YHVH*' – and yet the day of YHVH is described in more than 30 different prophecies scattered throughout both the Tanach and Renewed Covenant.

At the very time when the last (the seventh) trumpet sound (Revelation 11: 15), and Messiah returns, is Elohim wrathful? Revelation 11: 18.

Comment: The wrath of the 'day of YHVH' manifests itself are unleashed consecutively over a period of months (Revelation 8; 9; 11: 15 – 19) and culminates in the second coming of Messiah and the administering of the seven last plagues (Revelation 16).

Is the great personage mentioned in Revelation 19: 11 to make war? What is His title? See verse 16. What else is he called? Revelation 17: 14. Who is the '*Lamb*' of Elohim'? John 1: 29.

Comment: These verses clearly show that Messiah will come with an army of angels to punish and conquer the rebellious nations of the earth.

Exactly why will Elohim have to punish mankind? Revelation 11: 18, last few words, and Zephaniah 1: 17.

Comment: Messiah will be angry at the sins of mankind. To save the human race alive (Matthew 24: 22), He is coming to punish in love! Otherwise, man would destroy all life upon the earth!

For nearly 6,000 years Elohim has given stubborn, rebellious, misguided human beings every chance to turn to His ways of peace and happiness, Instead, we have turned our backs on our Creator. We have refused to follow the ways which would result in the fulfillment of our desires for peace. Men continue to devise forces which now threaten the annihilation of all life!

Consequently, as any loving parent will punish his disobedient child, so Elohim will have to punish this world to bring it to its senses. The glorified Messiah is coming in all the splendor, power and glory of Elohim to stop escalating wars, nuclear mass destruction, human pain and suffering. He is coming to usher in peace, abundant prosperity, happiness and joy for all mankind.

Will the nations of the world also be angry at this time? See Revelation 11: 18 once again.

Comment: This world doesn't want to change. Man desperately wants to preserve the society he has established upon this earth. Men do not want Elohim to intervene and teach them the way to world peace and prosperity. Instead, they want peace on their own terms – even though man's ways to 'peace' lead inevitably to more wars and eventually to self-destruction.

When Yahshua Messiah comes to stop world suicide, the nations will quickly drop their own quarrels. The joint military forces of the world will then turn their efforts against Messiah and attempt to fight and destroy Him!

The returning Messiah will be forced to deal with the nations of this rebellious world in the only language they will understand – overwhelming force! What an irony that man will at first have to be forced into trying the way of Elohim that leads to happiness, prosperity and abundance!

What Is "Armageddon"?

'Armageddon' is a term associated with the wrath of Elohim. Almost everyone has heard of it. World leaders and scientists frequently use the Scriptural term when speaking of the inevitability of nuclear warfare, and the destruction of all life on earth.

Yet few know what 'Armageddon' really is. Like most other topics of Scriptural prophecy, what is popularly taught about this subject has been generally accepted without question, and as with most other Scriptural subjects, people have been turned away from the truth and led to embrace fables.

When World War 1 broke out, many excitedly proclaimed 'This is the Armageddon war'! Then a generation later many assumed that World War II was the war that would end with 'Armageddon.'

Later the commonly accepted idea was that 'Armageddon' would be the last battle of a coming war between the Western democracies and Communism. It was supposed to be a battle between atheistic Communism on the one side, attacking Jerusalem; with the British, American and allied forces on the other side, defending it. And at that precise instant of this battle, it is believed, the second coming of Messiah occurs.

But is this really what Scriptural prophecy foretells? You may be surprised at who will be fighting whom at Messiah's coming, and where!

Make no mistake. World War III is on the way! World Wars I and II were merely small forerunners of the utter destruction which will break suddenly upon the nations. This time it will be so hellish, only the second coming of Messiah will be able to save mankind from extinction.

That is why Elohim commands us to 'watch' (Luke 21: 36) – to watch world conditions and news in order to be aware of fulfillment of Scriptural prophecy, and to be accounted worthy to escape the nuclear holocaust about to be unleashed upon a careless and negligent world.

In what is the wrath of Elohim 'filled up'? See Revelation 15: 1.

Comment: The seventh or last trumpet (Revelation 11: 15) completes Elohim's wrath. How? By announcing the terrifying 'seven last plagues'! The New American Standard translation renders the last part of Revelation 15: 1, ***"because in them (the seven last plagues) the wrath of Elohim is finished."***

What are these plagues of wrath compared to? Revelation 15: 7 (Some translations use the word 'bowl' instead of 'vial'.) Upon what will they be poured? Revelation 16: 1. Will they cause great suffering upon unrepentant men? See verses 2 – 11.

Comment: Despite this severe punishment, the nations will adamantly refuse to repent of their sins!

What will occur when the sixth symbolic vial of Elohim's wrath is poured out? Revelation 16: 12. Notice from which direction these kings will come. What else happens at this time? See Verses 13, 14 & 16. Let's carefully examine what is being depicted by these verses.

World's Armies Assemble

Against whom will the kings of the earth fight? Revelation 17: 14. We have already seen that the 'Lamb' is Yahshua Messiah.

Who will incite the nations to fight against their Creator? Revelation 16: 13 – 14. Who is the dragon? Revelation 12: 9. Are these 'spirits' therefore Satan's demons?

Comment: The word 'devils' in the King James Version ought to be rendered demons. There is one fallen archangel (Isaiah 14: 12 – 14 and Ezekiel 28: 12 – 17) called the 'devil', but there are many fallen angels (Jude 6 and Revelation 12: 7) of lesser rank called 'demons' in the Scriptures.

Are these demons responsible for gathering the armies of all nations together? Revelation 16: 16.

Comment: At this time, the demons mentioned in verse 14 will stir up worldwide resistance to Messiah. The proper translation of the Greek used in Revelation 16: 16 should be as follows: ***"And they gathered then together..."*** This verse is sometimes rendered incorrectly *"And he gathered them together..."* Notice the battle is actually stirred up, not by men or nations alone, but by three spirit demons of Satan the devil.

What will these evil spirits do to cause the armies to gather? Revelation 16: 14.

Comment: Notice that these spirits directly influence the leaders of nations – deceiving them with miracles – stirring them to a fever-pitch of hatred to fight this 'invader from outer space' – namely Messiah!

Exactly where do the devil's demons cause the armies of the nations to be GATHERED TOGETHER in preparation for the great battle against Messiah? Turn again to Revelation 16: 16. Then where does the actual battle take place? Zechariah 14: 2.

Comment: The nations will marshal their armies at a place called Armageddon. 'Armageddon' is not an English word. Rather it comes from the Greek rendering of the Hebrew name transliterated as 'Har Megiddo' – the Hebrew prefix 'Har' means mountain or hill.)

Megiddo was a strong fortification dating from ancient times, situated approximately 55 miles north of Jerusalem. The mound that remains is a few miles southeast of Haifa – a natural port and industrial center providing ideal facilities for landing troops.

The ruins of Megiddo are located on the edge of the plain of Megiddo; an oval-shaped valley once called the Plain of Esdraelon, but now commonly called the Valley of Jezreel. It is a large flat area ideal for the assembling of military equipment and personnel.

The hill of Megiddo was strongly fortified as long ago as the days of King Solomon (1 Kings 9: 15). It was a literal fortress rising above the surrounding plain. The fortress hill Megiddo serves as a type, or forerunner of the bristling armaments that shall soon envelop the whole surrounding area.

Historians have said that more battles have been fought in the Valley of Jezreel than anywhere else on earth. However, when Messiah returns, the armies will only gather here. From this natural staging area they will advance southward toward Jerusalem to fight against Him. The final battle will then take place in the surroundings of Jerusalem!

The Great "Battle of Elohim Almighty"

What is the name of the climactic battle that determines WHO will rule the earth? Revelation 16: 14, last part.

Comment: The battle that ensues will reveal whether MAN or ELOHIM shall rule the earth for the next thousand years. It is called the “Battle of That Great Day of Elohim Almighty” – often misnamed the “Battle of Armageddon”!

This battle is described in Revelation 19: 11 – 21. Who shall fight whom? Verses 14, 19. Will the U.S.S.R. and her Communist satellites fight against British and American armies, as so many have assumed? Or will it be the armies of a union of nations from the “east” (Revelation 16: 12) **and** the armies of “the whole world” – many of them led by the symbolic “dragon,” “beast” and “false prophet” – attempting to fight against Messiah? Turn to Revelation 16: 13 – 14 once again.

Comment: The nations, already engaged in an all-out struggle for world dominion, will be angry and furious when they see a heavenly “invader” has come to intervene in human affairs. In a frenzy of rage, these nations will prepare to do battle with and attempt to destroy Messiah and His armies!

Exactly where do the Scriptures say this battle will take place? Joel 3: 1 – 2, 9 – 14. Compare verse 13 with Revelation 14: 18 – 20; 19: 15.

Comment: “Jehoshaphat” means “Judgment of YHVH” The focal point of the battle will be in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, also called the “Valley of Decision” in the Scriptures. This valley is a deep ravine having very steep sides. It borders the city of Jerusalem on the east. According to Unger’s Dictionary of the Bible, the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which is situated between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, is now known as the “Kidron Valley”.

Zechariah 14: 1 – 4 plainly says the Messiah will fight earth’s hate-filled armies when He returns and stands upon the Mount of Olives, just east of Jerusalem. And notice that Revelation 14: 20 specifically states that the blood of these enemies – symbolically represented by the juice of grapes being pressed out in a winepress – will flow “without [outside] the city.” There will be so much bloodshed that the blood will rise (in some places) as high as horses’ bridles!

Messiah Is Coming Soon!

Awesome times are ahead. It may seem incredible, but prophecy in the Scriptures is very plain.

This IS indeed the very END TIME of prophecy in the Scriptures! You have seen that Elohim, through His prophets, apostles and servants, has revealed a sequence of events leading up to the dramatic return of Yahshua Messiah.

These events are as certain to occur as the rising and setting of the sun!

Therefore, you need to “watch” (Luke 21: 36) world events as never before! Be vigilant. Keep abreast of world news. Try and read at least a news magazine every week. **But also watch yourself, aligning the way you live, with Torah and the way of Elohim!**

You have clearly seen in your Scriptures that Messiah will come visibly, and with great POWER to an Elohim-rejecting world to save it from itself. His dramatic coming will usher in the beginning of the Millennium – 1 000 years of peace and prosperity for all mankind!

People will finally learn to lead brimful, happy and abundant lives under the righteous rule of Messiah. Under His guidance and rulership the whole world will receive Elohim’s abundant blessings.

How do we choose the right teacher?

Salvation is a very serious subject, and once YHVH has started calling us to become part of His chosen royal priesthood, we need to make sure that we qualify for that purpose at the end of our lives, or when Messiah returns one day. YHVH calls His first fruit believers from the religions of the world, to start following Him the way He prescribes in His word. He calls us out of the many counterfeit religions of the world, to come and have a personal relationship with Him. However, because Satan's main purpose is to keep the world deceived and from knowing Elohim's truth, he makes sure that as soon as many new believers come out of the religions of the world, they get deceived into following just another counterfeit.

The question of how to make sure we follow the right teacher is therefore very important, as Satan has many agents disguising themselves as apostles⁶ of Messiah, as Rav Shaul also warned about in 2 Corinthians 11: 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.'*** Rav Shaul wrote a further warning about Satan's deceiving work 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 (Satan) 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.'*** The gospel of the Kingdom of Elohim is definitely not the false gospel that the churches of this world preach about the life, death and resurrection of Messiah, but it is the good news about the coming Kingdom of Elohim, during which Messiah will rule with His saints for a thousand years from Jerusalem, and then the Universe into eternity.

The fact that most of the groups who have been called out of the religions of the world, proclaim the good news of the coming Kingdom of Elohim, is not enough to make sure that we are taught the true good news about what Elohim has planned for all mankind. The good news of the coming Kingdom of Elohim does not end at the Feast of Tabernacles, which pictures the wedding reception of the Marriage of the Lamb and His bride the ecclesia of first born children of Elohim, resurrected at the return of Messiah on the Feast of Trumpets, one day in the near future. It also includes the rebirth of all people who ever lived after the thousand year rule of Messiah from Jerusalem. However, these people will be resurrected as flesh and blood human beings, who will be given a period of one hundred years during which to make an informed decision about accepting Yahshua as their personal Passover or not, after the Scriptures will be opened to their understanding (as per Isaiah 25: 7 – 9 and Isaiah 65: 17 – 20). Because some of the leaders of a number of Messianic/Nazarene Jewish/Israelite groups have never themselves been through the discipleship programs started by Messiah, not all of them are aware of what the Last Great Day of the Feast of Tabernacles depicts, let alone knowing about the existence of the 8th Day of the Feast of Tabernacles. Such teachers teach like most in Christianity that only those who are answering (YHVH)'s call at this time will eventually be saved, and the rest of mankind will be thrown into the 'eternal' lake of fire.

But, nothing could be further from the truth – as is actually depicted in the annual Feast Days of Elohim, commanded to be kept by all those who worship Him. By keeping the Feast Days of Elohim, we get to know Elohim's plan of salvation for all mankind. Whereas, the original Passover was specifically instituted to save the first born children of Israel, the Feast of Weeks also known as Shavuot pictures the time when the first fruits chosen from both houses of Israel are presented before Elohim, to be accepted to be born again as the first born children of Elohim, at Messiah's return one day soon. As part of the reward of the first fruits of Elohim, because of sacrificing their lives for the way of Elohim during this age, they will become kings and priests under Yahshua at His return on the Feast of Trumpets. It is also on the same Feast of Trumpets that Yahshua will save the tents of Judah, as witnessed in Zechariah 12: 7 – 10 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***

⁶ Apostles – the word apostle simply means someone who has gone through the same discipleship program as Messiah's original disciples did and is now sent forth to teach Torah and to proclaim the coming Kingdom of Elohim.

Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah. (8) 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. (10) And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born.” This will be when our Jewish Brothers will like Messiah’s disciple Thomas, see His hands and accept Him as their Master and Elohim! If after reading the remainder of Ezekiel 12 and you do not recognize that this will happen when the Jews will be in their synagogues on Yom Teruah (known by them as Rosh Hashanah), when Yahshua returns at the sound of the last trumpet, and you still believe and keep a different calendar to what YHVH has ordained through Judah, then you are undoubtedly blinded to Elohim’s truths. This is indeed a glaring witness to the Hebrew calendar, which will ensure that those who are too anti-Semitic to keep to it, will like the five foolish virgins of Matthew 25, be too late for the wedding feast of the Lamb. Rav Shaul wrote about this event in Romans 11: 13 - 15, talking about the fact that our Jewish Brothers are presently blinded to the identity of Messiah, saying: ***‘But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, (14) if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. (15) For if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?’*** Yes, at the moment when our Jewish Brothers accept Yahshua as their Master and Elohim, the dead in Messiah will be raised. It is at the sound of the last trumpet, that the remnant of first fruits from both houses of Israel will be born again as the Spiritual children to rule as kings and priests of Elohim, under Yahshua Messiah for a thousand years.

But, the designation first born children of Elohim also logically imply that there will be second born children of Elohim. This is essentially inferred by the annual Feast Days of Elohim commanded in Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16. Similar to there being two harvest seasons in the Promised Land, so there will be two harvests of Human Beings into Elohim’s eternal Kingdom. Whereas the first annual harvest in Israel occur around the Feast of Weeks, 50 days after the First Day of Unleavened Bread (the first annual Sabbath of the year), the second great harvest occurs on the Feast of Ingathering after the Feast of Tabernacles, depicted by the Last Great Day of the Feast. The first fruit harvest around the Feast of Weeks consists of wheat depicting the first fruits unto YHVH, and the second great harvest is made up of grapes, olives, vegetables and other products propagated in the Land of Israel, depicting the rest of mankind to be resurrected during the period known as the Great White Throne Judgment, during which time the Scriptures will be opened to the minds of all mankind, allowing them to make an informed decision as to follow the way of Elohim or not. Having read many different teachers’ views on Elohim’s plan of salvation for all mankind, I came to the realization that not many teachers are aware and teach the truth about the Last Great day of the Feast Days of Elohim. These are therefore the first two ways to distinguish between a true and a misinformed teacher.

Having dealt with those who question the validity of the Hebrew calendar as well as with those who are totally oblivious of the meaning of the Last Great Day, we will now discuss the third area where many so-called teachers in our community are misinformed and deceive our people, namely the question of what it means to be born again. If we believe that the last named problem is unique to our time, we are wrong, since the same problem is discussed in John 3: 1 – 8, in this way: ***‘Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; (2) this man came to Him by night, and said to Him “Rabbi, we know that You have come from Elohim as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless Elohim is with him.” (3) Yahshua answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of Elohim.”(4) Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?” (5) Yahshua answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of Elohim. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ (8) The wind blows where it wishes and you***

hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” In verses 9 Nicodemus answered and said to Yahshua: **“How can these things be?”** In verse 10, Yahshua said to Nicodemus: **“Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not understand these things?”** So we see that this problem has been around from Yahshua’s time.

The truth is that Yahshua is the first ‘human being’ to be born-again from the dead as the Son of Elohim, as may be seen by reading Romans 1: 1 – 5 and Colossians 1: 15 – 18, as follows: **“Shaul a bond-servant of Messiah Yahshua, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of Elohim, (2) which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, (3) concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, (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.”** (Colossians 1: 15 – 18) **‘And He is the image of the invisible Elohim, 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 ecclesia; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.’** The government that Yahshua is coming to establish upon the earth with Jerusalem as headquarters will be a ‘Spiritual Government’, by fully converted, Torah observing believers, who will be changed into Spirit beings, at Yahshua’s return. Those born again of Elohim’s Set-apart Spirit will be spirit beings, as much as those born of a human father are human beings. They will be born again at the first resurrection and will enter the Kingdom of Elohim as immortal spiritual beings. This is as Yahshua told Nicodemus; flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Elohim, as we must be born again as spirit beings to enter.

Elohim’s plan of salvation requires that we, who were separated from Him because of sin, be reconciled to Him, through the penalty that Yahshua paid, by dying in our stead. Subsequently to dying for us, Yahshua was resurrected so that we may receive Elohim’s gift of the Set-apart Spirit, as a deposit with a view to Eternal life, but also to show us how we will one day be born-again as Elohim’s spiritual children, at His return, as witnessed in Romans 8: 29 & 30, in this way: **‘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; (30) and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.’** Yahshua ascended to the third heaven to become our High Priest, during which time we are being trained and developed, as fellow heirs of Elohim to assist Yahshua in the administration of Elohim’s Government. Whilst Yahshua was on earth, His disciples and others could not understand why He could not set-up the Kingdom of Elohim at that time. Similarly the Jewish leaders in Yahshua’s time expected Him to take over the rulership of the world, as prophesied about Him in Numbers 24: 17, in this way: **“I see him, but not now; I behold him but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, and a scepter shall rise from Israel, and shall crush through the forehead of Moab, and tear down all the sons of Sheth (or tumult).”**

Nicodemus a Pharisee who believed in Yahshua came to Him privately; since he and other Pharisees understood Yahshua’s message about the Kingdom of Elohim and that it will replace all human governments. But, they feared because Yahshua, a Jew like them, was proclaiming the Kingdom of Elohim: They thought that He was planning to overthrow the Roman government immediately, which could result in them losing their power and perhaps be put to death for threatening to overthrow the government. That is why Yahshua clearly stated that the Kingdom of Elohim is not of this world, but of the world that is to come. We should not forget that Yahshua told Nicodemus that unless a man is born again from above, he cannot enter the Kingdom of Elohim. Nicodemus did not understand what Yahshua meant. He knew what it meant to be born as a little baby, but he did not understand the concept of being born again. Yahshua clearly told him that the Kingdom of Elohim will not be something which we as flesh and blood human beings could enter, but confirmed that if we are born again one day, we may enter.

Similar to when a baby is born, it is delivered from its mother's womb into this world, so will a person being born again of the Spirit be delivered into the Kingdom of Elohim, at the resurrection of the dead. Rav Shaul explained in 1 Corinthians 15: 47 - 52 that even though we are presently flesh and blood beings, we will be changed into spirit beings when we are born again, as follows: ***"The first man is from earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. (48) As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. (49) And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. (50) 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, 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 shall be changed."*** Verse 53 of 1 Corinthians 15 witness how this change will come about: ***"For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality."*** We will only inherit eternal life in the Kingdom of Elohim, after the first resurrection. Continuing in the second part of Romans 8: 9, we read: ***'But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Messiah, he does not belong to Him.'*** It is only by immersion into Yahshua's saving name (as per Acts 2: 38) and after the laying on of hands by the elders (as per Acts 8: 12 – 16) that we receive a portion of Elohim's Set-apart Spirit.

The Set-apart Spirit entering us could be compared to a sperm cell impregnating an ovum, thereby giving us spiritual life, later to be born again as spirit beings. A fertilized ovum is not yet a born human being; at conception life is passed on from the human father and in this way the father has begotten a new life, but at that point neither the embryo nor the fetus is ready to be born as a person yet. In similar way a spirit begotten human is not a Spirit being yet. But, we are told in Romans 8: 11, ***'But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yahshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Messiah Yahshua from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.'*** So it is clear, there is a direct comparison between being born of the flesh, and being born again of Elohim. After a human father has impregnated an egg cell from the mother, the father has begotten the child, but it remains in the mother's womb for the gestation period of nine months before it is delivered into this world. Similarly, the process of being born again begins when Elohim gives us a portion of His Set-apart Spirit after immersion, and the laying on of hands. The Set-apart Spirit from Elohim the Father combines with the spirit of man and we are begotten anew, to be born again as spirit beings when we are resurrected (or changed if we remain alive) at Yahshua's return. The human mother's womb serves the function of feeding the unborn child with physical food, so that it may develop and grow physically. After immersion, we also need to grow in grace and knowledge and are fed Spiritual food by those whom YHVH called into discipleship, before us. It is through the guidance of the Set-apart Spirit that our teachers feed us Spiritual food, but, it is important for us to make sure that what they teach us comes from The Scriptures.

Let's now cover the few remaining points of how to identify the false prophets among us. We turn to 2 Peter 2: 1 – 3, where Rav Kepha warns us about such false teachers, 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, even denying*** (a word which comes from the Greek word *'arneomai'*⁷ meaning to deny, but also to contradict) ***the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. (2) And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be maligned; (3) and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.'*** It is clear that false teachers are people who contradict what Yahshua taught and did whilst He was on earth. In addition we see that such teachers are more concerned about *'selling the word of Elohim'*, than teaching people freely as Yahshua said in Matthew 5: 8. This same warning is also repeated in the book of Jude verse 4, but here we are told that these people ***'are marked out for this condemnation'*** meaning that they will not be in the Kingdom of Elohim as kings and priests, but will eventually be given a chance of salvation in the second resurrection, after they have repented of their deception from Satan. These false

⁷ *Strong's Greek: 720. Ἀρνέομαι (arneomai) -- to deny, say no bible suite.com/Greek/720.htm 720 arnéomai – properly, deny (refuse); hence, contradict, refuse to affirm or to confess (identify with); disown (repudiate).*

teachers are those who teach against the Oneness of Elohim; saying that they know He consist of two (YHVH)'s, but they are also those who teach contrary to what Yahshua taught: One example being that somehow they deny that the Pharisees, presently seated in Moses' seat are responsible to name and proclaim the annual Feast Days of Elohim.

We've also seen Rav Shaul's warning about brethren who will find for themselves teachers to teach them what they want to hear, instead of listening to Elohim's truth in 2 Timothy 4: 1 - 4, in this way: ***'I solemnly charge you in the presence of Elohim and of Messiah Yahshua, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearance and His kingdom: (2) preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. (3) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers according to their own desires; (4) and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.'*** Finally we read more about the methodology used by false teachers in Jeremiah 23: 14 – 17, as follows: ***"Also among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing; the committing of adultery and walking in falsehood; and they strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one has turned back from his wickedness. All of them have become to Me like Sodom, and her inhabitants like Gomorrah. (15) Therefore thus says YHVH of hosts concerning the prophets, 'Behold, I am going to feed them wormwood and make them drink poisonous water, for from the prophets of Jerusalem pollution has gone forth into all the land.'"*** (16) ***Thus says YHVH of hosts, 'Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into futility; they speak a vision of their own imagination, not from the mouth of YHVH. (17) They keep saying to those who despise Me, 'YHVH has said, "You will have peace"; And as for everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart, they say, 'Calamity will not come upon you.'*** So we see that these false teachers strengthen the hand of the evildoers; they also give people false hope, instead of warning them to stop sinning; and they tell their congregants that no harm will come to them, despite their sins.

But there are also those who teach against the writings of Rav Shaul, without realizing that Yahshua personally appointed him to be a facilitator to reconcile us, a remnant of the lost ten tribes to the Father, but also to Brother Judah, as recorded in Ephesians 2: 11 - 19. It is for this reason that Rav Kepha warned about the writings of Rav Shaul, saying in 2 Peter 3: 13 – 16: ***'But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. (14) 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 Paul, 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.'*** Similarly was there in the recent past (2006) those who taught against the book of Hebrews, saying that it is anti-Torah also insinuating that it was originally written in Greek. However Eusebius in the fourth century referred to a now lost writing by Clement of Alexandria written around the year 200 C.E. which Eusebius cites as follows: *"in the work called Hypotheses, to sum up the matter briefly he (Clement of Alexandria) has given us the abridged accounts of all the canonical Scriptures, the Epistle to the Hebrews he asserts was written by Paul, to the Hebrews, in the Hebrew tongue; but that it was carefully translated by Luke, and published among the Greeks."* (Clement of Alexandria; Hypothesis (c.200 CE) referred to by Eusebius in Eccl. Hist. 6: 14:2) *"For as Paul had addressed the Hebrews in the language of his country; some say that the evangelist Luke, others that Clement, translated the epistle."* (Eusebius (4th Cent.); Eccl. Hist. 3: 38: 2-3). Because these people do not understand Rav Shaul's writings and reject a portion of the Scriptures, they are guilty of taking away from the word of Elohim, since Rav Kepha shows in verse 16 quoted above, that Rav Shaul's writings are part and parcel of the Scriptures or the word of Elohim.

Those who reject Elohim's way, after having received all the knowledge required to follow Him during this age, as well as those who reject His way after being given full understanding of His will and way, after the second resurrection, will simply be burnt to become ashes under the feet of the righteous, as witnessed in

Malachi 4: 1 – 4. I hope and pray that these few pointers will help those of us called out of the world to follow the way of Elohim, to find suitable teachers to both immerse and teach them the things Yahshua taught His disciples, whilst He was on earth. Think about it!

For a better understanding of what it means to be born again, I attach a study of the Scriptures for those interested.

What does it mean to be 'Born Again'?

Nicodemus was a Rabbi belonging to the sect of the Pharisees. He understood Yahshua to be a miracle-working prophet sent by Elohim, and was very interested in His teachings. But because he did not want to be seen speaking with this man the other Pharisees called a 'deceiver of the people' and a 'heretic', he came to Yahshua at night.

Only a few people today, understand that being born again is directly linked to the gospel of the coming Kingdom of Elohim. This was also true in the time of Yahshua and as much as Nicodemus did not understand when Yahshua spoke to him in John 3: 3, saying: ***"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of Elohim."***, most people have not ever and do not even now, understand the meaning of these words. Nicodemus was totally puzzled and he asked (in John3: 4): ***"How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"***

Yahshua answered him, saying (in verse 7): ***"Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'"*** But Nicodemus simply did not understand what Yahshua was talking about. Like with most Ministers of religion in Christian Churches today, even after studying for seven years in some cases to be awarded a Doctor's degree in Divinity, Nicodemus who was a Rabbi (or teacher), did not understand what it means to be born again. This was when Yahshua said to Nicodemus (in verses 10 – 12): ***"Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not understand these things? (11) Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak that which we know and bear witness of that which we have seen; and you do not receive our witness. (12) If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things?"***

Most professing Christians think they were 'born again' when they 'accepted J*e*s*u*s*' in their hearts' and were 'baptized'. From that time on, they supposedly have received the 'Holy Spirit' and have been living a NEW LIFE in C*h*r*i*s*t*. Yes, it is correct that true believers, who were immersed into Yahshua's saving name have received a portion of the Set-apart (Holy) Spirit of Elohim, and is indeed living a NEW LIFE in Messiah (as per Ephesians 4: 22 – 24). But it does not mean that such believers have been born again. The new birth described in the Scriptures is far more than what most professing Christians have assumed.

Two literal Births

Nicodemus was only familiar with the process of a physical birth, and understood when Yahshua said to him in verse 6 of John 3: ***"That which is born of the flesh is flesh."*** But then Yahshua explained that we must be born again, not again of the flesh, not a second time entering our mother's womb, as Nicodemus thought He meant; He explained that we must be born of the Spirit – born of Elohim. Elohim must be our Father this time. Similarly to when we were born of flesh through human parents, so we must be born of the Spirit of our heavenly Father.

When you are born of fleshly parents, you are composed of flesh. But, as Yahshua said in the second part of John 3: 6, ***"That which is born of the Spirit (of Elohim) is spirit."*** One who is born again of the Spirit will not have any blood in his/her body. Such a person will not have to breathe air to exist, as he/she will be literally COMPOSED OF SPIRIT. That is the basic teaching of Yahshua in the Scriptures – the new birth is not an emotional experience, but a literal birth.

In order for Nicodemus not to mistake the true meaning of being born of the Spirit, Yahshua explained further in verse 8 of John 3, saying: ***"The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."*** Notice that when you are born again of the Spirit of Elohim, like Yahshua was when He was resurrected, you will be like the wind; you will be able to appear and disappear at will. You will be able to walk through doors and walls like Yahshua did when He appeared to His disciples in John 20: 26, as follows: ***'And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas with them. Yahshua came the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, "Peace be with you."*** By comparing the spiritual birth to the physical birth, Yahshua showed that as human parents pass on their physical nature, so our heavenly Father will pass on His Spiritual nature, when we will be born again one day. Adam was a perfect physical specimen. But, what Elohim created was a physical flesh and blood human being. He was a perfect 'clay' model which Elohim intended to mold and reshape into a perfect SPIRITUAL Son of Elohim. Adam was not created complete; he was created to need a second spiritual 'birth'. But how? When? Why? All these questions will hopefully be answered in this important lesson.

Who or What is Elohim?

To be able to understand what it means to be born again, it is necessary to understand the basic truths concerning who or what Elohim is, and the purpose for our existence. We read from Deuteronomy 6: 4, ***"Hear, O Israel! YHVH is our Elohim – YHVH is one!"*** How does YHVH who is the Almighty, define the word one. In Deuteronomy 32: 39, He says: ***"See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me"***. However, we see further according to Genesis 1: 5 that 'One' may be composed of more than a single part, i.e. ***"And Elohim called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one (echad) day."***

We understand from Exodus 33: 20, that no man can see YHVH and live. This is confirmed in 1st Timothy 6: 16, in this way: ***"Who alone possess immortality and dwells in an unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen."*** In addition we read from 1st Timothy 1: 17, ***"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only Elohim, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."*** It is for this reason that man's mind cannot understand Elohim as He cannot be defined nor can He be bordered. To try to explain the unexplained, we make use of the Hebrew words 'Eyn Sof'. Eyn Sof is the very essence of Elohim, as in Hebrew 'Eyn' means 'there is nothing' and 'Sof' means 'end', 'termination', 'border' or 'definition'. Together, Eyn Sof implies something without definition or borders; namely infinite.

Look at another person, a tree, or a computer. All these things are "substance" that cannot be defined unless they are bordered. They are molecules that cannot be seen or defined, unless they are bound together. For example, when a believer dies, his life (or soul) comes to an end, his body is buried and returns to the dust from which it was made; and the believer's spirit (merged with a portion of Elohim's Set-apart Spirit) which is invisible, returns to the Father who gave it to the believer at immersion. Even though the believer's borders have been removed, his memory and character (spirit) exists in another dimension. In support of this, Yahshua said to Martha in John 11: 25 & 26, ***"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"*** This is talking about the spirits of true believers, that go back to YHVH when we die, and are perfected in heaven according to Hebrews 12: 23, as follows: ***'to the general assembly and ecclesia 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.'*** But as explained in a previous lesson, the believer's spirit containing a record of his character and memory is not conscious after death at all.

When Messiah returns one day soon, He will bring back the believers spirit and resurrect his body, at which time the believers spirit, soul (life) and body will be complete, as confirmed in 1st Thessalonians 5: 23, in this way: ***'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.'*** So, we see here

that man is composed of three component parts, namely: spirit, soul and body - yet as individuals we are one.

In exactly the same way is YHVH our Elohim composed of three parts as is explained in Romans 1: 19 – 20, as follows: ***“Because that which is known about Elohim is evident within them (mankind); for Elohim made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible qualities (YHVH is invisible, and has no form), His eternal power (Yahshua is the power of Elohim⁸) and divine nature (The Set-apart Spirit is the divine nature of Elohim⁹), have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.”*** YHVH is not three persons in one, but like us, He consists of three component parts. The visible image of Elohim, Yahshua being Elohim’s body; His immortal soul (or eternal life) being YHVH; and the Set-apart Spirit being Elohim’s Spirit. For those who assert that this is the doctrine of the Trinity, permit me to state that this does not say that you, who like all other human beings are composed of body, soul and spirit, are a trinity or three persons in one. Instead it clearly teaches that although you have three component parts, of which two are invisible, you as an individual are only one person. It should therefore be clear that this does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity at all.

YHVH in the Tanach

Has any human ever seen the Father? John 1: 18. What did Messiah say regarding the Father? John 5: 37. But did people ever look upon Elohim in the Tanach? Genesis 17: 1; 18: 1,22; 32: 30; Exodus 24: 9 – 11; 33: 18, 20 – 23 (Notice in Exodus 33: 18 that Moses had specifically requested to see YHVH in all His ‘glory’, but could not view Him directly in His glorified state lest he DIE from seeing His brilliance).

Comment: It is clear therefore, the Elohim that various people saw in the Tanach was not the invisible Elohim or the ‘Father’.

Who was called the ‘Rock’ in the Tanach? 2nd Samuel 22: 2 – 3. Did David call YHVH his ‘ROCK’ and his ‘Elohim’? Psalm 18: 1 – 2.

Comment: The King James Version of the Scriptures and some other translations use the word ‘LORD’ in capital letters, to translate the Hebrew name YHVH. The name YHVH means ‘to be’ or ‘to exist’. Therefore YHVH means ‘the self-existent One.’ One who lives from eternity, and to Eternity. In Revelation 1: 8 Yahshua explains the meaning of (YHVH)’s name, saying to Yochanan: ***“I am the Alpha and the Omega, says YHVH Elohim, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”*** This is also why Yahshua said in Matthew 28: 18, ***“All authority (The KJV read power) has been given to Me in heaven and on the earth.”***

⁸ We understand from 1st Corinthians 1: 24, that Yahshua messiah is the power and wisdom of Elohim, in this way: ***“but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Messiah the power of Elohim and the wisdom of Elohim.”*** Jeremiah 32: 17 tells us that YHVH created the heavens and the earth by His great power, as follows: ***‘Ah YHVH Elohim! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee.’*** Isaiah 52: 10 states that: ***“YHVH has bared His holy arm in the sight of all the nations, that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our Elohim.”*** The name Yahshua means salvation as can be understood from Matthew 1: 21, ***“And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Yahshua, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.”*** Yahshua the salvation of YHVH is His right hand and holy arm. He is also our Savior.

⁹ The spiritual essence of YHVH is His divine nature. We are given a portion of His divine nature when we are immersed, according to Ephesians 1: 13 - 14, as follows: ***“In Him you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of salvation – having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Set-apart Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of Elohim’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.”*** We demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit or divine nature of love, peace, patience, kindness, goodness and the like, by the indwelling of the Set-apart Spirit. Galatians 5: 22 & 23. We read from 1 Corinthians 2: 11 - 12, ***“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.”*** We are also told in 2 Peter 1: 4 that we may become partakers of the divine nature.

According to 1st Corinthians 10: 4, who was and still is, the Rock?

Comment: Thus the Scriptures identify the 'Rock' as Messiah. How surprising to those who have assumed that the Elohim mentioned in the Tanach was the one the Renewed Covenant called 'the Father'. So we see that 'YHVH' who spoke and was seen of men was always the one who became Yahshua Messiah. For no 'mortal man' has ever seen or heard the Father. (John 1: 18 & 5: 37)

Was it also the Word – the One who became Messiah – who spoke the Ten Commandments? Exodus 20: 1 – 2.

Comment: The Hebrew word for LORD in Exodus 20 is YHVH. So here again it was the Word or *the Logos*, the 'Spokesman' – who later became Messiah, who actually spoke the Ten Commandments. But what is the difference? It makes all the difference. Understanding the true identity of Elohim in the Tanach is vital to becoming re-born with the spiritual nature of Elohim.

The Nature of Elohim

What is the composition of Elohim? John 4: 24. But of what is man composed? 1st Corinthians 15: 47.

Comment: One of the great differences between the Elohim's Kingdom and a human kingdom is that Elohim is composed of invisible spirit, while man is mortal flesh and blood, made from the dust of the earth. Immediately before He was taken to be crucified, to what state did Messiah ask His father to restore Him? John 17: 5. Was Messiah again to share His Father's glory? Same verse. How does Messiah's glorified body appear? Revelation 1: 13 – 16. The 'Son of Man' mentioned here is the glorified Messiah!

What is another great difference between Elohim and man – what are Elohim's characteristics, attitude and general mental makeup? Psalm 99: 9. Is there anyone as Set-apart as Elohim? 1st Samuel 2: 2. Would you consider man of himself as being Set-apart (holy)? Romans 3: 10 – 18; 8: 7 & Jeremiah 17: 9.

Comment: The word 'holy' in this case means Set-apart, but also means 'pure of heart' and free from sin. Elohim possess a sinless, set-apart spiritual attitude and mind.

But what does all this have to do with our being born-again? Everything! When we are born-again one day, we will have the same power, esteem and set-apartness of Elohim.

A Father - Son Relationship

It is very important for us to understand the 'Father-Son' relationship of the Elohim Family, as it will help us understand the plan and purpose of Elohim and being 'born-again.' What did YHVH say about Himself? Isaiah 43: 10 & 11. Is this in agreement with what Yahshua said about Himself and His 'Father' in heaven? John 10: 30. Yet, who is greater in authority? John 14: 28 & 1 Corinthians 11: 3.

Comment: YHVH appeared to different people at different times and different manifestations. These manifestations at different times were called 'the Word' or 'the Angel of Elohim, and as such did not indicate the heavenly beings or servants of the Eternal, but were the appearances of the Almighty HIMSELF! YHVH manifested Himself as the Word (Son), to show us that if we follow in the footsteps of the Son – we will like the Son be resurrected and born again as Spiritual children of Elohim. We read accordingly from Romans 8: 11, as follows: ***'But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yahshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raise Messiah Yahshua from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.'*** As the visible image of the invisible Elohim, Yahshua was always under the control of the Father – even before the Word became flesh.

Why did the Word (Messiah) become a flesh-and-blood 'human being'? Hebrews 2:9, 11 & 14.

Comment: All mankind has sinned (Romans 3: 23). And since the wages of sin is death (Roman 6: 23), the Word of Elohim became a mortal man so that He the Creator, could pay the death penalty for the sins of all mankind. Messiah was able to do this because His life was far more valuable than the lives of all human beings together – after all He was Elohim incarnate – Elohim made flesh. (John 1: 14 & 1st Timothy 3: 16).

But how did the Word of Elohim become composed of flesh and blood? Matthew 1: 18 – 21. What title did YHVH Elohim acquire as a result of this miraculous begetting? Matthew 18: 35 & John 1: 14.

Comment: Before Messiah – the Word – was conceived in Miriam, He was not the ‘Son of Elohim’. He was the visible image or the word of Elohim who appeared to Abraham [Genesis 12: 1 – 4; 6 – 7; 17: 1 -22; 18: 1 -33: etc.] to Hagar [Genesis 16: 1 – 16]; to Jacob [Genesis 32: 24 – 30]; to Moses [Exodus 3: 2 – 17 & Numbers 12: 8]; to Samson’s parents [Judges: 1 – 22] and to others. Yahshua existed eternally as may be confirmed in Micah 5: 2. Before His ‘human birth’ Yahshua was not called the Son of Elohim.

Yahshua’s ‘human’ birth was His first birth. He gave up His glory or esteem as Elohim in order to be born into the world as a ‘human’ being, live a perfect sinless life, and then give His life to pay the penalty of all human sins and to die to be able to remarry His bride – the united Israel.

Man Created in Elohim’s Image

Man is not merely another ‘animal’ as evolutionist claim. Elohim’s purpose for creating man surpasses anything ever conceived by the mind of man. Let’s turn to the book of Genesis and begin to understand the most astounding revelation in the Scriptures. After what ‘kind’ was the animals created? Genesis 1: 20 – 25.

Comment: These verses plainly say, without any interpretation, that Elohim created fish to reproduce after their own particular kind, and cattle after the cattle kind. Each kind may have many varieties within it, but all creatures reproduce only after their own kind. That is why dogs reproduce dogs, sheep reproduce sheep, monkeys reproduce monkeys, etc.

But what about man? After whose ‘image’ and ‘likeness’ was man created? Genesis 1: 26 – 27.

Comment: In Elohim’s pattern for all life, like reproduces like. And just as each created form of plant or animal reproduces after its own kind, so man reproduces man. But unlike any of the animals created by Elohim, man was created in Elohim’s image or likeness. So we look like the image of Elohim, namely Yahshua.

These scriptures refute the theory that man is merely the ‘highest’ of the animals, having ‘evolved’ from lower mammals. They clearly state that Elohim created man after His own ‘image’ and ‘likeness’. We know from what we have already studied that YHVH our Elohim is invisible (as per 1st Timothy 1: 17), we also know that no man has seen or can see Elohim, as He is invisible (1st Timothy 6: 16). But we read from Colossians 1: 15, that Yahshua is the (visible) image of the invisible Elohim, the first-born of all creation. Yes Yahshua is the first ‘person’ who was born again from the dead. A second witness to Yahshua being the ‘image’ of Elohim comes from 2nd Corinthians 4: 4.

Only very few have really understood the tremendous significance of this astounding truth. But this is why Elohim is reproducing HIMSELF. Our destiny is to become the literal ‘children’ of Elohim.

Even though man is made in the likeness of Elohim, are both now composed of the same ‘substance’? John 4: 24 & Genesis 2: 7.

Comment: There is a big difference between spirit and dust. Although man was created in the image and likeness of Elohim, he was Not created out of the same material. He was made from the dust of the earth, subject to decay. However, Elohim’s purpose was to eventually create him out of spirit. We read from 1st Corinthians 15: 45 & 46, ***‘So also it is written, “The first MAN Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.” The last Adam (meaning Yahshua) became a life-giving spirit. (46) However, the spiritual is not first, but the***

natural; then the spiritual. Continuing in verses 47 – 49, ***‘The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven, (48) As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. (49) And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.’*** Clearly man is much more than any animal; Man has the potential to become spiritual born again sons and daughters of Elohim and Yahshua the Messiah came specifically to show us the way or how to become sons of Elohim. This is the true meaning of John 3: 16.

Our incredible Potential!

Astonishing as it may sound, Elohim is now in a process of creating His greatest creation of all – spiritual sons and daughters of Elohim with perfect spiritual characters. Let’s examine the overwhelming evidence:

Is Elohim still in the process of forming and molding man as a potter works with clay? Isaiah 64:8

Comment: Man’s creation in the Garden of Eden was complete only in the physical sense. Adam was created a perfect specimen, but not a perfect SPIRITUAL creation. He was created from dust; he was created corruptible – not incorruptible; he was created subject to death – not immortal. However, Elohim did not intend for man to remain this way!

Did Job realize Elohim was forming a special creation in his life? Job 14: 14 & 15. Are true believers being fashioned by Elohim for a specific purpose? Isaiah 43: 7 & Ephesians 2: 10.

The word we in the Renewed Covenant language usually refers to Nazarene Jewish/Israelite believers, as Rav Shaul intended in verse 10 (Ephesians 2). We, then as are called out believers are Elohim’s workmanship. We are at this time being created ‘unto good works’. Elohim’s Set-apart Spirit that He gave us at immersion, forms a perfect spiritual character in us. Man’s spirit and soul is so intertwined that only Elohim can separate it, as recorded in Hebrews 4: 12, in this way: ***‘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 intention of the heart.’*** Yes, we cannot hide anything from Elohim.

The spirit and soul (life) in man are so closely intertwined that the way man lives reflects his spirit or character of mind. When we are immersed into Messiah’s saving name, we are given a portion of Elohim’s Set-apart Spirit. As we grow in grace and knowledge, asking Elohim for more of His Set-apart Spirit, our lives (souls) should begin to reflect Elohim’s character to the world. Man’s material creation is only the beginning phase of our creation. YHWH is now fashioning and molding us by experience, and with the help of the Set-apart Spirit, into the finished spiritual masterpiece.

What it Means to be ‘Born Again’

The Gospel that Yahshua brought to mankind is simply the good news about the coming Kingdom of Elohim; and that Kingdom is dual. It is not only the ruling government which Messiah will establish on the earth, when He returns, but it is also the Family of Elohim - the Elohim Kingdom composed of Spirit begotten children of Elohim. Yahshua became the ‘Son’ of Elohim, not only to die for our sins and to be able to remarry His bride at His return, but also to show us the way as our perfect example.

Does Elohim clearly show us His purpose to increase His Elohim family by bringing many sons to glory? Hebrews 2: 10 & Revelation 21: 7. Isn’t Yahshua Messiah actually the firstborn (again) of many brethren (children of Elohim). Romans 8: 29 and Colossians 1: 15 & 18.

Comment: To be ‘conformed into the same image’ of Yahshua (2nd Corinthians 3: 18) means to become like Him – to be glorified and become part of the spiritual Family of Elohim.

But what must happen to flesh-and-blood believers before they can enter Elohim’s spiritual Family. 1st Corinthians 15: 49 – 51 & John 3: 3 – 8.

Comment: Yahshua said we must be 'born again'- changed into spirit. Yes, born again – this time of the Spirit of Elohim as spiritual children of Elohim.

Begotten Sons Now – not yet Born Again

If we are faithful true believers we are already in this life the children of Elohim? 1st John 3: 1-2. Are we already inheritors of the Kingdom of Elohim, or only heirs to it? Romans 8: 14 – 17

Comment: Even though we are already children of Elohim, we are only heirs – those who shall in the future inherit. Why? Because we are now only begotten children and it is only when we are born of Elohim that we become inheritors of Elohim's Kingdom – spiritual members of the Family of Elohim.

Before the second phase of our spiritual creation can begin, Elohim the Father must first beget each of us by placing His Set-apart Spirit within us at immersion into Yahshua's saving name. At that time we are impregnated by the 'seed' of eternal life. Similar to the way a newly begotten physical embryo begins to grow in its mother's womb, we begin to grow in Spiritual Character after we are begotten of Elohim's Set-apart Spirit. This growth comes through prayer, study and obeying Elohim's Torah, the way in which Yahshua our Messiah showed us when He was on earth.

Now compare Galatians 3: 26 and Ephesians 1: 5 with Romans 8: 14 – 17. Do these verses reveal that true believers are already Elohim' children – destined to inherit eternal life?

Comment: The Set-apart Spirit makes us into the literal begotten sons of Elohim, as we are going to be just like our Heavenly Father when finally His creation is completed in us. And in this way spiritual-begotten believers have become the unborn children of Elohim, in the same way that an unborn human fetus is the child of its human parents.

Do we actually receive of the divine nature of Elohim when begotten by the Set-apart Spirit? 2nd Peter 1: 2 – 4. What are some of the divine characteristics or 'fruits' of Elohim's nature that are made manifest in the lives of obedient believers after they are begotten by Elohim's Spirit? Galatians 5: 22 – 23.

Is charity (love) the greatest single attribute of Elohim's nature that is transmitted to us through the Set-apart Spirit? 1 John 4: 16; Romans 5: 5; 1st Corinthians 13: 1 – 13. Is this the same love that enables us to obey Elohim's Torah? Romans 13: 10.

Comment: The Set-apart Spirit that a person may receive from Elohim can be compared to the seed of a human father. Elohim's Spirit transmits His spiritual attributes to us, even as a physical seed transmits a human father's attributes to His newly conceived offspring, The Set-apart Spirit; the seed (1st Peter 1: 23) by which we are spiritually begotten imparts to us the nature and life of Elohim our heavenly Father.

If you are truly the kind of believers described in the Scriptures, then you are now begotten children (or sons) of Elohim. Elohim placed within you the seed of eternal life. He begot you with the Set-apart Spirit just as the seed from a human father impregnates the egg of the mother. Your mind (essentially the spirit in man) can be compared to an egg or ovum. You were impregnated with the spiritual seed of eternal life so you are not yet born of Elohim, not yet immortal spirit.

Born Again at the Resurrection

Can flesh and blood inherit Elohim's Kingdom? 1 Corinthians 15: 50. What must happen before we can be born as spiritual children of Elohim? Verses 51 – 53.

Comment: Whatever is born of spirit is spirit, said Yahshua (John 3: 6). But we have not yet been born of spirit. We are still flesh and blood! If you think you have already been 'born again', then take the pin prick test. Stick a sharp pin into your finger. If you feel pain and your finger bleeds – then you are still flesh and blood and have not been born again. When Messiah was resurrected - born again – He walked through a

closed door (John 20: 19 & 26). Do you think those Christians who claim to be born again, are able to walk through closed door, without injuring themselves. Yahshua plainly said that you must become composed of spirit to enter the Kingdom of Elohim (John 3: 3 & 5). And so the new birth is something yet to occur.

What are true believers exhorted to do in this life? 2nd Peter 3: 18 & Ephesians 4: 15. How and by whom are they to be fed and nurtured so they may grow into the stature of Messiah? 1st Peter 5: 1 - 2 & Ephesians 4: 11 - 13.

Comment: The Father begets. He does not 'bring forth': the mother does that, later. After the father's role which starts the process, there is always a lapse of time leading to birth. At the time of begetting, birth has not yet occurred. In the case of human beings, it follows about nine months later.

In the intervening time, similar as a mother nourished and protects the unborn son or daughter in her womb during the gestation period, so the true ecclesia is commissioned to nourish and protect true believers in her womb. Elohim's spirit-begotten children must be fed on the spiritual food provided by Elohim - the words of the Scriptures, and live by every word of Elohim, in order to grow in spiritual character. If we are matured in spiritual character when Messiah returns, we will become born again spiritual children of Elohim. We will then no longer be subject to death (Luke 20: 35 & 36). However if the spirit-begotten child of Elohim does not grow spiritually, such a believer can become a spiritual miscarriage or be aborted.

Speaking of the resurrection, when the second birth will occur, what did Rav Shaul say regarding the new body believers will receive? 1st Corinthians 15: 42 - 44. Will they become as Yahshua Messiah is today? Philippians 3: 20 - 21; 1st John 3: 2; Matthew 17: 1 - 2; Revelation 1: 13 - 16; Matthew 13: 43 and Daniel 12: 3.

Comment: Because Elohim is spirit, when one is born of his heavenly Father he will also be spirit - he will be composed of the same substance of which Elohim is composed. He will be given a spirit body just like Messiah's and will be Glorified and given tremendous SPIRITUAL POWER. The spiritual power and glory 'born again' believers shall receive at the resurrection will be so great that it will make their spirit bodies shine as the sun, and make their clothing dazzling white.

And all who are thus 'born of Elohim' will be able to see Elohim because they will be in the Kingdom (the divine family) of Elohim.

The difference between 'Begotten' and 'Born'

Most Christians assume that they were 'born again' when they first accepted C*h*r*i*s*t*. Then by misapplying the King James Version's translation of 1st John 3: 9, ***'Whoever is born of G-d doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of G-d,'*** they also assume that they are no longer capable of sinning in this life.

However, that assumption is incorrect, as the following will show:

Did Rav Yochanan say that believers do sometimes sin? 1st John 1: 8 - 10. Did he use the 'present tense' of the verb in verse 8? Then he meant they sin after becoming believers, didn't he? Notice that he includes himself by saying 'we'.

Was Rav Shaul beset with recurring sin long after he repented and received the Set-apart Spirit? Romans 7: 14 - 25, Is there a just man on earth who does not at some time commit sin? Ecclesiastes 7: 20. So isn't it plain that believers in this mortal flesh are not perfect yet - not yet born of Elohim?

Now notice 1st John 5: 18. Does the verse further substantiate the fact that believers are not yet born of Elohim?

Comment: The person who has been finally ‘born of Elohim’ will not sin any longer. Once we are born of Elohim at the resurrection we will be able to live without ever sinning again. How? Simply because we will then possess the fullness of Elohim’s perfect Character and divine nature. We will no longer possess a nature which can fall victim to sin.

But as long as we are only ‘begotten’ of Elohim we must ‘keep ourselves’ – we must continue to resist the evil temptations of the flesh. Such a one can commit sin. When caught off guard in a moment of weakness, we can sin! But we cannot ‘practice (or continually live in) sin’ and be the begotten children of Elohim, which is another possible meaning of 1st John 3: 9. Life, to the begotten believer, is a constant struggle against the wiles of Satan, temptations in the world, and pulls of our own flesh. Although he has now received the begetting of Elohim’s divine nature (2nd Peter 1: 4), he still has human nature as well, and the one wars against the other (Galatians 5: 17).

But what about the men of Elohim in the Tanach? How can we prove whether any of them were either begotten or born of Elohim? Psalm 51: 10 – 11. What about all the ‘holy men of old,’ including Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? 2nd Peter 1: 21; Romans 8: 14 & Luke 13: 28. And yet, was Yahshua the ‘*first born from the dead*’? Colossians 1: 15 & 18.

Comment: Now since these personages in the Tanach had Elohim’s Set-apart Spirit, and yet Messiah was first to be born of Elohim by virtue of His resurrection, then it follows that those men of old were merely ‘begotten’ of Elohim. The same is also true of every true believer who died since Messiah’s time.

The Greek Word Gennao

Much of the confusion about being ‘born again’ has resulted from misinterpreting the original Greek translation of the Renewed Covenant. With one exception (James 1: 15 & 18) the Greek word used in reference to spiritual begetting and birth – spiritual salvation – is always gennao. This word means both ‘to conceive’ or ‘to beget’ and also ‘to bear’ or ‘to be born’ – all or any part of the whole process which produces a new individual human being; whereas in English we use two separate verbs – ‘begotten’ and ‘born’. Since both begetting and birth are included in the meaning of ‘gennao’, we must let the Scriptures interpret the Scriptures in order to know which meaning is intended in a particular passage. Here are a few examples where the Greek word should correctly have been rendered ‘begotten’, not born: John 1: 12 – 13; 1st John 2: 29; 4: 7; 5: 1 (three times); 5: 4. The King James Version is correct by using ‘begotten’ in 1st Corinthians 4: 15; Hebrews 1: 5 and 1st John 5: 1.

Now what about the scriptures that call Messiah the ‘only-begotten’? (John 1: 14, 18; 3: 16 & 1st John 4: 9) Do these, after all, disprove the truth that true believers are only ‘begotten’ of Elohim’s Spirit, growing toward being ‘born’ of Elohim at the resurrection? Of course not! The simple answer is that all these verses are referring to Messiah’s miraculous begetting in His mother Miriam’s womb. Messiah’s physical begetting and birth (gennao) were unique. No other human has ever been begotten by the Spirit of the Father in a human mother’s womb! In the sense He is – and always shall be – ‘only begotten’. But many have been ‘begotten again’ (1st Peter 1: 3) to ultimately become – through the process of spiritual growth and birth – the spirit-born sons of Elohim.

You Must be Born Again!

What Elohim created at the time described in the first chapter of Genesis was a physical creation. Man made of the dust of the ground, was the material being which Elohim planned to mold, shape and form into a perfect Spiritual creation. He pictures us as the clay, Himself being the Potter – forming us into the spiritual image of Himself. Elohim uses human reproduction to picture the process by which He is reproducing Himself. Each human since Adam and Eve started from a tiny ovum, the size of a pinpoint, produced in the body of the mother. But the egg is incomplete of itself. It lives only about 48 hours, according to some authorities. Unless fertilized by the life-giving sperm cell from the human father within the limited time, it dies. A human life can only begin when that sperm cell impregnates the ovum.

Spiritually speaking, each human mind (or the spirit in man) is like an egg. Each of us was born incomplete; able to live only a relatively short period of time, We were made to need the impregnating spiritual life of Elohim's Set-apart Spirit so we could be created in Elohim's spiritual 'image' and live forever.

The physical ovum, once fertilized, becomes a begotten human life called an embryo. The mother's womb nourishes and protects it – carrying it in that part of her body where she may best protect it from physical injury, until it has grown enough to be born. After a number of weeks, the embryo develops to become a fetus, and at birth it is called a human baby. Likewise Elohim's ecclesia through its teacher/discipleship program protects and spiritually feeds begotten believers with the Word of Elohim so they grow spiritually (2nd Peter 3: 18) in the divine character of Elohim until ready to be born into His family.

However, there is one major difference in this resemblance. The physical fetus does not attain physical and mental maturity before birth. But, the spirit-begotten believer must attain a reasonable measure of spiritual maturity before he is spirit-born. The newborn physical baby's main growth occurs after birth, but this type of the spiritual growing which spiritually begotten Believers must do before their spiritual birth (1st Peter 1: 23; 2: 1 -2). Messiah did not grow into spiritual perfection after He was resurrected, but during His 'human' life-time, setting us the example, being made perfect (Hebrews 2: 10 and 5: 8 & 9).

Surely nobody will be foolish enough to suggest that when Messiah was born-again as the very son of Elohim by the resurrection (Romans 1: 4), He was resurrected full grown. How did the apostles know that He was the same Yahshua? Because they knew what Yahshua looked like – and in His resurrected body, He looked the same as He had before in the flesh, except that He was now composed of spirit instead of flesh and blood. When we are 'born again' and changed into spirit bodies at the resurrection - we, too shall look essentially as we do now, as far as physical features are concerned. But the resurrected body will be a different body; composed of spirit instead of flesh and blood (1st Corinthians 15: 35 – 44)

Now what exactly is spiritual growth. It is CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT. Such character is the ability, as free moral agents, to discern right from wrong – the true values from the false – and then to make the right decision, even against self-desire, impulse or temptation; plus the will and self-discipline to resist the wrong and do the right. We must begin developing spiritual character and grow toward spiritual adulthood during this life; not after we are born of Elohim at the resurrection. Our abhorrent carnal nature (Roman 8: 7 & Jeremiah 17: 9) must be gradually changed now! This spiritual growth comes by feeding on the Word of Elohim, through prayer and assisting in doing the work of Elohim – proclaiming the good news into the world.

Then when Messiah returns to earth, we shall be resurrected, or instantaneously changed, into bodies that will be like His (1st John 3: 1 – 2). At that instant, our present physical bodies will be made like His glorified body – 'born again' as members of the Elohim Family; as Elohim's own glorious offspring with eternal life inherent within ourselves, as His immortal sons to reign under Yahshua Messiah (our elder brother).

The Oneness Truth	The Trinity Confusion
- Messiah is Elohim	- Messiah is Elohim
- Messiah <i>is</i> YHVH	- Messiah is <i>not</i> YHVH
- Messiah is the manifestation of YHVH Himself	- Messiah is the created Son of YHVH, a second 'Person'