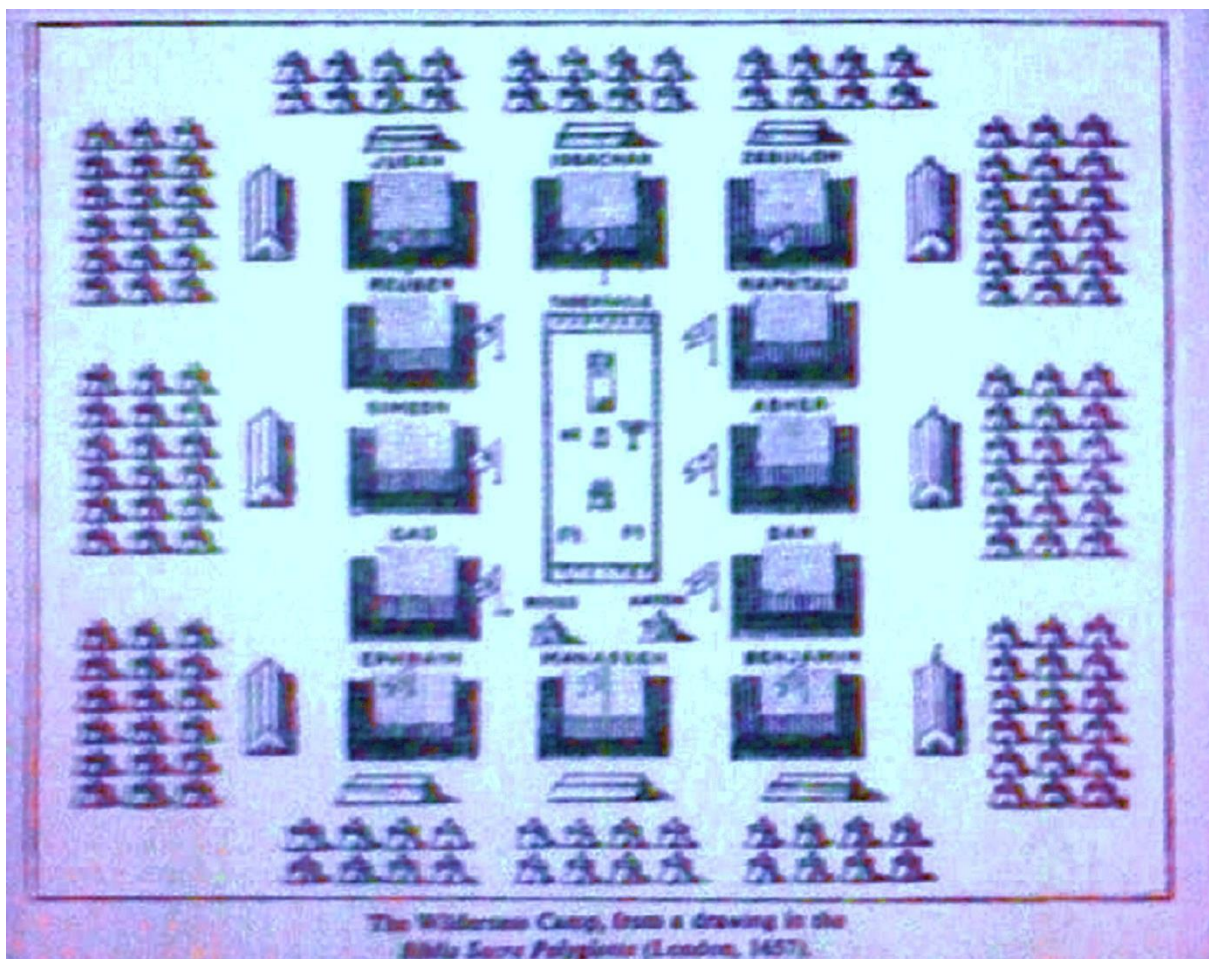


## Basic tenets of our faith.

Jim Coetzee

Nazarene Israelite Two House Congregation of Port Elizabeth.



### **Basic tenets of our faith.**

**This book is not to be sold. We are told in the second part of Matthew 10: 8 *“freely you received, freely give.”***

The book contains sermons that I gave over the past few weeks and is intended to assist Nazarene Israelites believers in their daily living.

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

Published by the Nazarene Israelite Two House Congregation of Port Elizabeth. July 2014.

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## Chapter 1: 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 apostles<sup>1</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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 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 YHWH 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'*<sup>2</sup> 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 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***

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<sup>2</sup> Strong's Greek: 720. Ἀρνέομαι (*arneomai*) -- to deny, say no [biblesuite.com/Greek/720.htm](http://biblesuite.com/Greek/720.htm) 720 *arnéomai* – properly, deny (refuse); hence, contradict, refuse to affirm or to confess (identify with); disown (repudiate).



***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 (4<sup>th</sup> 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!

## **Chapter 2: The Two Witnesses – who are they?**

YHVH calls National Israel an olive tree in Jeremiah 11: 16, as follows: ***‘YHVH called your name, “A green olive tree, beautiful in fruit and form.”*** In Zechariah YHVH talks to Zerubbabel the person who rebuilt the Temple (the house of Elohim) in Jerusalem after the 70 years that Judah was in captivity in Babylon. Zerubbabel returned with Ezra and Nehemiah specifically to help them to rebuild the Temple. The Jews were allowed by King Cyrus to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple (Ezra 1: 2 – 4; 5: 13 – 15). Zerubbabel laid the foundation for the temple around September/October 539 BCE. However the work on the Temple only started in earnest by Zerubbabel in 521 BCE when Darius issued a decree allowing work on the Temple to continue and threatened opponents with punishment (Ezra 6: 6 -12) and was completed during September/October of 515 BCE (Ezra 6: 15).

Yahshua the Messiah is the ultimate fulfillment of Zerubbabel since He will according to Zechariah 6: 11 – 13 build the Temple of Elohim, as follows: ***“And take silver and gold, make an ornate crown, and set it on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. (12) Then say to him, ‘Thus says YHVH of hosts, “Behold, a man whose name is Branch (Nostrim), for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of YHVH. (13) Yes, it is He who will build the temple of YHVH, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.”***

Even so, YHVH through the prophet Zechariah speaks to Zerubbabel in Zechariah 4: 6 & 7, saying: ***“This is the word of YHVH to Zerubbabel saying, ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says YHVH of hosts. (7) “What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain (even though the job of rebuilding the Temple of Elohim is like a mountain before Zerubbabel, YHVH promises that it will become like a flat plain, very easy); and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of “Grace, grace to it!””*** The word ‘grace’ is repeated twice showing that it is through Yahshua, the top stone that we will attain salvation. The top stone spoken about here is also the one spoken about in Psalm 118: 22, in this way: ***‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone.’*** When Yahshua discussed the building of the Temple of Elohim with Kepha in Matthew 16: 18, He said: ***“And I also say to you that you are Peter (meaning a stone), and upon this rock (meaning Himself) I will build My ecclesia; and the gates of Hades (death or the grave) shall not overpower it (meaning that there will still be members of the ecclesia alive when Messiah will return one day).’***

Rav Kepha understood what Yahshua was telling him, other than those who believe the ecclesia is built upon them (like the Roman Catholic Church and some Assemblies of YHVH who believe they now have the right to determine the dates for Elohim’s Feast Days annually); who are essentially usurping the function allocated to the Levites among the Jews and we therefore reading about them and their replacement theology in Revelation 3: 9, where Yahshua said: ***‘Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and to know that I have loved you.’*** We see Kepha immediately related what Yahshua was saying to Him in Matthew 16 to what King David wrote in Psalm 118, saying in Acts 4: 10 - 12: ***“let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Yahshua Messiah the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom Elohim raised from the dead – by this name this man stands here before you in good health. (11) He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone. (12) And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.”***

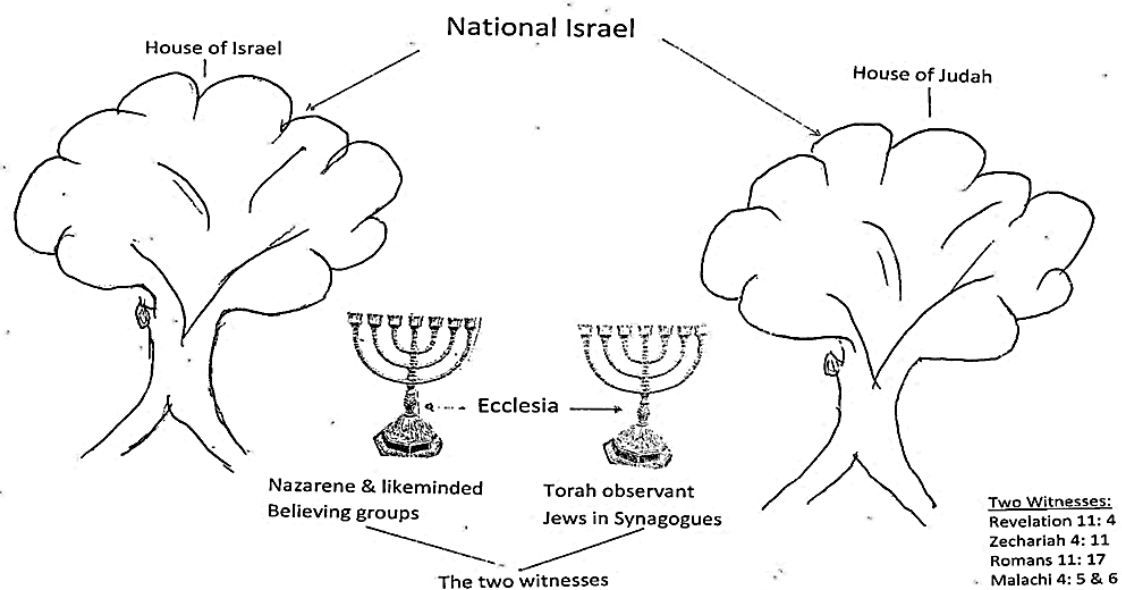
Rav Kepha continues to explain what he understood from what Yahshua told him in Matthew 16, saying in first Peter 2: 5 – 10: ***‘You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a***

*holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Elohim through Yahshua Messiah. (6) For this is contained in Scripture; "BEHOLD I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNOR stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT BE DISAPOINTED."* (7) *This is precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone,"* (8) *and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed* (those who do not understand that Yahshua who is YHVH in the flesh, but also the corner or foundation stone of His ecclesia, are not doomed forever, but will not be kings and priests in the Kingdom of Elohim, but will most probably be in the second resurrection). (9) *But you* (who know and accept these truths about Messiah the stone of stumbling and the rock of offense) *are a CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR Elohim's OWN POSSESSION, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;* (10) *for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF ELOHIM; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERECY.'* So Yahshua is building the Temple of Elohim on Himself meaning YHVH in the flesh; the stone of stumbling and the rock of offense. He is using those of us who are not a people (Israelites who lost their identity, their faith and their language and who became intermixed with the peoples of the world), as building blocks or living stones, built on Him as the corner or foundation stone.

Now that we have established that Yahshua is presently building His ecclesia, using the new believers that we immerse in His saving name as building blocks or stones, let's turn to Revelation 11, where we read more about the Olive trees and the Lamp stands and where the two witnesses are mentioned the first time in verses 3 & 4, as follows: *"And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth* (meaning that they will be in mourning for the condition the world is in at this time). (4) *These are the two olive trees* (meaning National Israel) *and the two lampstands* (meaning the two groups of assemblies or ecclesia; consisting of Nazarene and likeminded believing groups; and Torah observant Jews, as may be understood from Revelation 1: 20, where we are told that the lampstands are the Israelite congregations) *that stand before the Master of the earth.'* From this it is clear that the two witnesses are from the two houses of Israel (the house of Judah and the House of Israel), but it is narrowed down further to the two groups of ecclesia that stand before Elohim. The One group represent Elijah or are in the Spirit of Elijah, since they are the ones presently teaching new believers, that YHVH is our Elohim and to return to the faith of our fathers in the faith, namely Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob before the coming of the Day of YHVH – they are doing the Elijah work, as recorded in Malachi 4: 5 & 6, in this way: *"Behold I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of YHVH. (6) And he will restore the hearts* (seat of emotion and belief) *of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse."* The second lampstand or Menorah represent the Jews who remain Torah observant until Messiah's return, when He will save the tents of Judah first, and when they will accept Him as their Master and Messiah ( as recorded in Zechariah 12: 7 – 14). The remnant of both houses of Israel or the two witnesses will have the same powers as Moses and Elijah had, and like Elijah will stop the rain during the three and a half years of their prophesying; they will also have power over the waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they desire.

The olive tree mentioned in Romans 11: 17, is talking about a single tree into which we (the lost ten tribes of the house of Israel) who have become a wild olive tree because of our intermixing with the peoples of the world into which YHVH scattered us because of idolatry, are to be grafted in. The tree is essentially Jewish, but the root of the tree is Messiah. We read accordingly from Romans 11: 17 – 28 & 32, *'But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, (18) do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports*

*the root, but the root supports you. (19) You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in. (20) Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; (21) for if Elohim did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you. (22) Behold then the kindness and severity of Elohim; to those who fell severity, but to you, Elohim’s kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. (23 And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for Elohim is able to graft them in again.) (24) For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree? (25) For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel (meaning the Jews) until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; (26) and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, ‘THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB. (27) AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.’ (28) From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of Elohim’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.(32) For Elohim has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all.”* YHVH is currently busy calling Israelites from the lost ten tribes including some real gentiles, to become first fruits to be born again as children of YHVH at Messiah’s return, if they remain faithful to the end. When Messiah returns on Yom Teruah (also known as Rosh Hashanah), He will first go to save a remnant of righteous Torah observant Jews, who will be in their synagogues when He returns. When they see His hands He will grant them grace (salvation) when they accept Him as their Messiah (as per Zechariah 12: 7 – 14). That will be the same day on which the dead in Messiah will be resurrected as Rav Shaul wrote in verse 15 of Romans 11, saying: ***‘For if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?’*** Many have been reading over these Scriptures umpteenth times, but fail to understand that this confirms the Hebrew calendar and give us a picture of how (YHVH)’s first fruits waved as two leavened loaves of bread on Shavuot (Pentecost) for acceptance as per Leviticus 23: 17, will finally be raised as the first born children of Elohim from both houses. Hallelujah!



### Chapter 3: What is sin?

If you ask the average member of a Christian Church what sin is, he/she would not be able to give you a direct answer. Some would say smoking, drinking and dancing constitute sin, whilst others might mention stealing, murder and the violation of a few more of the Ten Commandments as a definition of sin. But few realize that the breaking of any of Elohim's commandments given throughout the Scriptures, but more specifically in the first five books of the Scriptures, namely Torah constitute sin.

Even though many believe their Messiah, the one they call C\*h\*r\*i\*s\*t\* has kept the Law for them and they need not keep it any longer, as long as they have faith in His name, Yahshua the true Messiah said just the opposite in John 5: 43 – 47, in this way: ***"I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him.*** (Most of what Yahshua taught whilst He was on earth have been contradicted; one example being those who claim that the righteous dead go to heaven at death, whilst the wicked go to hell to burn in fire and brimstone for all eternity, whilst Yahshua clearly stated in John 3 : 13, saying: ***'And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, even the Son of Man.'*** A second example being where some insist that Satan and His demons had sexual relations with mankind in specifically Genesis 6, which resulted in Giants called Nephilim; this despite Yahshua in answer to the question the Sadducees asked Him regarding the resurrection promised to mankind and the fact that resurrected children of Elohim will not have sexual relations after being resurrected as in Matthew 22: 29 - 30, saying: ***"You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures or the power of Elohim. (30) For in the resurrection they {those who are resurrected as the first born children of Elohim} neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven."*** {Angels, including Satan and his demons being fallen angels, were not like people created to procreate.}} Continuing in verse 44 – 47 of John 5, Yahshua said: ***"How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only Elohim?"*** (Herein is another example where people contradict YHVH who categorically stated in Deuteronomy 6: 4 that He is the only Elohim; by telling people that there are two (YHVH's.) (45) ***Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope.*** (46) ***For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me.*** (47) ***But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"*** So, we see here that Yahshua made believe in the five books of Moses or Torah, a precondition for belief in Him. Believe in Torah similar to believe in Yahshua means that we do what Torah requires, as much as it means that we do and trust in what Yahshua taught whilst He was on earth.

Most of us are also aware of what Yahshua said in Matthew 5: 17, as follows: ***"Do not think that I came to abolish the law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill."*** Now without reading the next few verses, some quote this verse to show that Yahshua came to fulfill the requirements of the Law for them. But without realizing He actually came to make the Law more binding to His true followers, as He explained further in chapters 5, 6 & 7 of Matthew, and specifically in verses 18 – 20 of Matthew 5, saying: ***"For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished. (19) Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven*** (which will eventually come to earth as Yahshua indicated in the model prayer He taught His disciples in Matthew 6: 9 – 13); ***but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*** (20) ***For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."*** Yes, as prophesied by Isaiah, Yahshua came to magnify the Law as witnessed in Isaiah 42: 21, in this way: ***'YHVH was pleased for His righteousness' sake to make the law great and glorious.'*** In fact Yahshua told His followers at the end of Matthew 5 in verse 48 that our ultimate purpose in



life is to become like Elohim, as follows: ***“Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”***

A scriptural definition of sin is the transgression of the Law as explained by Rav Yochanan in first John 3: 4, as follows: ***‘Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.’*** Yahshua never abolished any of the original commands given at Mount Sinai and which was repeated in Deuteronomy at Horeb. But, when Yahshua died on His impalement stake, He effectively abolished the Sacrificial law in respect of sin, which was instituted 430 years after the covenant made with Abraham, by becoming the Lamb sacrificed for the sins of the world – once forever. The sacrificial law was instituted after the sin of the golden calf, to make atonement for the sins of the people, until Messiah came. It is as we read in Galatians 3: 24 & 25, in this way: ***‘Therefore the Law* (sacrificial law being discussed in Galatians 3) *has become our tutor, to lead us to Messiah, that we may be justified by faith. (25) But now that faith* (in Messiah’s sacrifice for the sins of the world) *has come, we are no longer under a tutor.’* The sacrificial Law was instituted to show the children of Israel that without the shedding of blood our sins cannot be forgiven, as Rav Shaul also explained in Hebrews 9: 22, saying: ***‘And according to the* (sacrificial) *Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.’*** Rav Shaul continues to explain by bringing Messiah into the discussion in verses 23 - 28 of Hebrews 9, saying: ***‘Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. (24) For Messiah did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of Elohim for us; (25) nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood not his own. (26) Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. (27) And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes the judgment, (28) so Messiah also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.’*****

Right at the beginning YHVH put laws of cause and effect into place. He initially explained these laws to His people, showing them that by doing what He requires will lead to eternal life, whereas disobedience to His laws will lead to death. But, we know that our original forebears Adam and Eve, deceived by Satan did sin by doing what YHVH told them not to do, and as a result they doomed all mankind to death. However, without going into too much detail, and as can be understood from the above quoted verses YHVH sent Yahshua to pay the penalty for the sins of the world, provided we repent and are immersed into His saving name, thereby accepting Him as our personal Passover, and then conform to the way Yahshua taught us whilst He was on Earth. The laws that YHVH put in place, is spiritual in nature and can therefore not be abolished, as Rav Shaul also explained in Romans 7: 12 – 14, saying: ***‘So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. (13) Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful. (14) For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.’***

So the Law is just, good, perfect, holy and spiritual and defines Elohim’s love for His people, based on two great principles, namely love towards Him and love towards neighbor. Because the Law is of a spiritual nature, it cannot and will not be destroyed and will remain forever binding upon Elohim’s people. It is the breaking of any of Elohim’s laws that brings upon us the penalty of sin. We also see from Romans 6: 23 that: ***‘(For) the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of Elohim is eternal life in Messiah Yahshua our Master.’*** It is therefore important for us to make a study of Elohim’s word to learn about His will and way for us, and about His salvation Yahshua through whom we are able to obtain eternal life. However, we need to be ever mindful that YHVH prescribes in His word the

Scriptures, exactly how He wants us to worship Him and that He accepts no other way or form of worship, as witnessed in Leviticus 18: 3, saying through Moses: ***'You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived, nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you; you shall not walk in their statutes.'***

Even so, because the people in the world are totally oblivious of the way of Elohim, since they either believe their Messiah (or C\*h\*r\*i\*s\*t) has abolished the Torah, or that He fulfilled or lived it for them, very few know how to live a kosher way of life. YHVH told us exactly what to eat and what not to eat (In Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14); which Feast Days He wants us to keep weekly and annually (in Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16); and how to live with our neighbor, but most people have rejected His way of life, for the ways of the world. Sin therefore includes eating of unclean foods, such as pork meat and sea food such as lobsters, crayfish and prawns; but also keeping of pagan holy days such as Xmas and Easter, and attending worshipping services on days not ordained such as Sundays. YHVH repeatedly stressed the importance of His Sabbaths (weekly and annual) for His people, saying to Moses that it is an everlasting covenant that He made with us in Exodus 31: 12 – 17, in this way: ***"But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'You shall surely observe My Sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am YHVH who sanctifies (set-apart) you. (14) Therefore you are to observe the Sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. (15) For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to YHVH; whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall surely be put to death. (16) So the sons of Israel shall observe the Sabbath, to celebrate the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual (or everlasting) covenant. (17) It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days YHVH made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed.'"*** Environmentalists are very concerned about the condition mankind has left our world in because of greed. They recommend all sorts of ways in which we are supposed to cause less of a carbon footprint on the earth's atmosphere, but they never consult Elohim's word to discover the real cause of the problems facing mankind at present. Nobody realizes that it has to do with the everlasting Sabbath covenant spoken about in Exodus 31, as Isaiah foretold in Isaiah 24: 4 & 5, saying: ***'The earth mourns and withers, the world fades and withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away. (5) The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant.'***

Now, some might say that these covenants that YHVH made, was mainly with the children of Israel and is only applicable to the Jews of today. However, from studying the Scriptures it is clear that Elohim created all of mankind to ultimately become His children, destined to inherit immortality and live in a loving relationship with Him into Eternity, as the writer of the book of Hebrews wrote in Hebrews 2: 6 – 11, in this way: ***'But one has testified somewhere, saying, "WHAT IS MAN, THAT THOU REMEMBEREST HIM? OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT THOU ART CONCERNED ABOUT HIM? (7) THOU HAST MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; THOU HAST CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAST APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS; (8) THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET." For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him (notice the h of him is in lower case, as it is talking about mankind). But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. (9) But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Yahshua, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of Elohim He might taste death for everyone. (10) For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. (11) For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.'***

Do you grasp the enormity of what is written here in Hebrews 2? If we are going to share eternity with Elohim, we should also begin to share His way of life and uphold the standard that YHVH set for us to follow, namely Yahshua as we read from Philippians 2: 5 - 11, as follows: ***'Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Messiah Yahshua, (6) who, although He existed in the form of Elohim, did not regard equality with Elohim a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (9) Therefore also Elohim highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, (10) that at the name of Yahshua EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, (11) and that every tongue should confess that Yahshua Messiah is Master, to the glory of Elohim the Father.'*** The only way that we are able to conform to the image of Elohim, namely Yahshua, is to study His word, as Rav Shaul wrote in 2 Timothy 3: 16 & 17, saying: ***'All Scripture is inspired by Elohim and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; (17) that the man of Elohim may be adequate, equipped for every good work.'*** This is the foundation for the everlasting relationship Elohim wants to have with His people; we essentially show our love to Elohim by obeying His commandments. In addition we read (YHVH)'s promise through Isaiah in Isaiah 56: 6 – 8, where He said: ***"Also the foreigners who join themselves to YHVH, to minister to Him, and to love the name of YHVH, to be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, and holds fast My covenant; (7) Even those I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offering and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples." (8) YHVH Elohim, who gathers the dispersed of Israel, declares, "Yet others I will gather to them, to those already gathered."*** So it is clear that anyone who wants eternal life should put in every effort to learn Elohim's way, and then follow it.

Sin was introduced to mankind in the Garden of Eden by Satan, when he deceived Eve concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Contrary to Satan's lie that Adam and Eve would not die, after eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, death was introduced to all mankind. Since then all mankind have fallen short of the glory of Elohim (as witnessed in Romans 3: 23), and unless we repent and turn to YHVH to obey Him, we are destined to everlasting death, as Rav Shaul explained in Romans 8: 6 & 7, saying: ***'For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, (7) because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward Elohim; for it does not subject itself to the law of Elohim, for it is not even able to do so.'*** It is because of the deceptive natures of our hearts that we frequently depart from the way of Elohim, as we read from Jeremiah 10: 23 and 17: 9, in this way: ***"I know, O YHVH, that a man's way is not in himself; nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps," (17: 9) "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick (the KJV reads wicked here), who can understand it?"*** Ever since the creation in the Garden of Eden, Satan's influence has been present in human nature, as Rav Shaul reminds us in Ephesians 2: 1 - 3, saying: ***'And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, (2) in which you formerly walked according to the course of the world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. (3) Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.'***

Satan became Elohim's adversary through His rebellion as described in Ezekiel 28: 13 – 15, as follows: ***"You were in Eden, the garden of Elohim; every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz, and the diamond; the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper; the lapis lazuli, the turquoise, and the emerald; and the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day you were created they were prepared. (14) You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of Elohim; you walked in the midst of stones of fire. (15) You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in You."*** Isaiah adds to the account of how Satan rebelled against

Elohim in Isaiah 14: 12 – 15, in this way: ***“How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning (the KJV uses Lucifer here), son of the dawn! You have been cut down to earth, you who have weakened the nations! (13) But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of Elohim, and I will sit on the mount of the assembly in the recesses of the north (meaning on Elohim’s throne in the third heaven.) (14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ (15) Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit.”***

We sin by not obeying Elohim’s teachings, but also by omitting to do what we should, as Yaa’cov wrote in James 4: 17 saying: ***“Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.”*** Rav Shaul explained in Romans 7: 22 – 25 that sin is an enslaving power from which we need to be redeemed, as follows: ***‘For I joyfully concur with the law of Elohim in the inner man, (23) but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. (24) Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? (25) Thanks be to Elohim through Yahshua Messiah our Master! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of Elohim, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.’*** As human beings we are unfortunately powerless to bring about this redemption on our own as witnessed in Psalm 49: 7 & 15, in this way: ***‘No man can by any means redeem his brother, or give to Elohim a ransom for him—(15) But Elohim will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol (the grave); for He will receive me.’*** This is confirmed in first Peter 1: 17 – 19, as follows: ***‘And if you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each man’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay upon earth, (18) knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, (19) but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Messiah.’***

It is sin that brings about a separation between us and Elohim, as the prophet Isaiah wrote aptly in Isaiah 59: 2 & 3, saying: ***‘But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your Elohim, and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear. (3) For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken falsehood, your tongue mutters wickedness.’*** We see further from Hebrew 2: 14 – 16, that the death penalty that we earned by breaking Elohim’s commandments can only be rendered powerless by Yahshua, as follows: ***‘Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; (15) and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. (16) For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham.’*** Elohim reconciled us to Himself through Yahshua the Messiah. We read accordingly from 2 Corinthians 5: 18 - 21, ***‘Now all these things are from Elohim, who reconciled us to Himself through Messiah, and gave us a ministry of reconciliation, (19) namely, that Elohim was in Messiah reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. (20) Therefore, we are ambassadors for Messiah, as though Elohim were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Messiah, be reconciled to Elohim. (21) He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of Elohim in Him.’***

YHVH calls us to become His first fruits by the word of truth (as per James 1: 18) and as first-fruit believers we are justified by Elohim’s grace through the redemption of Messiah (as per Romans 3: 24). Having been freed from sin Rav Yaa’cov informs us how to continue to live free from sin according to Elohim’s Torah in verses 19 – 25 of James 1, in this way: ***‘This you know, my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; (20) for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of Elohim. (21) Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your***

*souls. (22) But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. (23) For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; (24) for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. (25) But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty (Torah), and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does.'* Instead of being enslaved to sin, we serve Elohim and walk in His way, to ultimately be lead to eternal life in His kingdom. This is in line with what Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 6: 16 – 18, saying: *'Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? (17) But thanks be to Elohim that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, (18) and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.'*

We need to remain ever vigilant in our obedience to Elohim, since backsliding is a serious matter to Elohim, as Rav Kepha warned in 2 Peter 2: 20 – 22, saying: *'For if after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Master and Savior Yahshua Messiah, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. (21) For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them. (22) It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT," and, "A SOW, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire."* Even though we are each one responsible for our own sin, Satan the deceiver of all mankind is the one responsible for leading mankind into sin, and ultimately after Elohim has put the sins of the world on his head, he will be send into the wilderness as recorded in Leviticus 16: 10, in this way: *"But the goat on which the lot for the scapegoat (or more correctly the goat of removal, or Azazel another name for Satan) fell, shall be presented alive before YHVH, to make atonement upon it, to send it into the wilderness as the scapegoat.'* Satan and his demons will ultimately be damned to the black darkness which has been reserved for them forever, as witnessed in Jude 13, as follows: *'Wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam, wandering stars (meaning fallen angels or demons), for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.'* Think about it!



#### **Chapter 4: Repentance (Teshuvah) - what is it?**

If you ask the average church-goer what is meant by repentance, most will tell you that it means to be remorseful of wrongdoing and includes asking G-d for forgiveness for such wrongdoing. The transliterated Hebrew word meaning repentance is *'Teshuvah'*. But, teshuvah means much more than repentance; it means that we stop transgressing the Torah teachings of Elohim, and start obeying Him as He describes in His word. Teshuvah is aptly described in Hosea 14: 1 & 2, in this manner: ***'Return, O Israel, to YHVH your Elohim, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity. (2) Take words with you*** (meaning take the Torah or the word of Elohim and study the same) ***and return to YHVH. Say to Him, "Take away all my iniquity, and receive us graciously, that we may present the fruit of our lips."*** So, we see that teshuvah is based on the conviction that YHVH will intervene in our lives and grant us forgiveness of our sins; and ultimately eternal life in His coming Kingdom. Faith, which includes understanding and action, is required for salvation.

The point is that Elohim will not grant eternal life to someone who does not believe in Him and obeys Him. Faith is as defined in Hebrews 11: 1 & 6, in this way: ***'Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. (6) And without faith it is impossible to please Him*** (meaning Elohim), ***for he who comes to Elohim must believe that He is*** (that He exists), ***and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.'*** We need to study the word of Elohim, in order to understand that He is Almighty and that we are totally depended upon Him as our Creator and sustainer. However, this type of humility is rare in our modern, arrogant and egotistic society. Simply saying *'please forgive me'* without making the required changes in our lives is not enough. Acknowledging the existence of Elohim does not supernaturally produce a right relationship with Him; and repentance or more correctly Teshuvah does not just happen. It requires both commitment and effort. We need to be fully aware of what it is that we did wrong; we need to understand that sin is lawlessness or the breaking of Elohim's commandments, given throughout the Scriptures, as witnessed in first John 3: 4, as follows: ***'Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.'***

Repentance begins when we cry out to Elohim for forgiveness of our sins, knowing that we have transgressed His (Torah) teachings, and accepting Yahshua's death for the redemption of our sins. True repentance is not based on emotion alone, though knowing that we have transgressed against Elohim does involve a certain amount of emotion and sorrow, the decision to return to YHVH in obedience through faith in Messiah's righteousness is what counts, as Rav Shaul explains in Romans 8: 3 & 4, saying: ***'For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, Elohim did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, (4) in order that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.'*** Yes, we follow a narrow lonely road, where the Spirit leads us to obey YHVH and His teachings. Repentance is therefore not simply compliance to a set of rules, but having confidence in Elohim and His ways which will lead us to act according to His will doing works of righteousness, such as keeping the Sabbaths of Elohim; observing the clean food laws given in Leviticus 11 & Deuteronomy 14, and as recorded in James 2: 17 – 26, in this way: ***'Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. (18) But someone may well say, "You have faith, and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." (19) You believe that Elohim is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. (20) But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless? (21) Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? (22) You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; (23) and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED ELOHIM, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of Elohim. (24) You see that a man is justified by works, and not faith alone. (25) And in the same way was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works, when she received the messenger and sent them out by another***

way? (26) ***For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.*** True repentance is not something that we can work up for ourselves, since it is a gift of Elohim, as witnessed in 2 Timothy 2: 24 - 25, as follows: ***'And the Master's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, (25) with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps Elohim may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, (26) and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.'***

Many Nazarene/Messianic Israelites have a problem living up to moral and ethical teachings found in Torah. They are meticulous in their outward observance of Torah, but fail to keep the inner teachings of Torah. Spirituality is not defined by good deeds that you do, but rather by your behavior and character. Not everyone who says he is Spiritual is so because he dresses the part on the Sabbath. This is why Yahshua warned the religious leaders of His day (and by implication also us who are teaching people and learning to become teachers today), saying in Matthew 23: 23, ***"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others."*** Being Torah observant must start from the inside and work its way to the outside. Until we embrace the true message of Torah in our hearts ( the seat of emotion and faith) and live moral lives, conforming to the image of Elohim, by doing what is right (tell no lies, help those in need, etc.), we cannot call ourselves spiritual. This is essentially what YHVH said by the hand of Solomon in Proverbs 7: 1 – 3, saying: ***'My son, keep my words, and treasure my commandments within you. (2) Keep my commandments and live, and My teachings as the apple of your eye. (3) Bind them on your fingers (in what you are doing); write them on the tablet of your heart (and in what you believe).'*** There is a direct relationship between the outward expression of your faith (Torah observance) and the works of Torah on the heart.

Character is not one of the subjects taught in school or university. We cannot define honor, respect, ethics and morality, since the Torah has already done it for us. Unless we learn to apply what we have studied in our lives, we will never be truly spiritual. Learning Torah is not about how to observe the Sabbath, the Kosher Laws and other good deeds, it is about how we actually apply what we have learnt in our daily lives - It is not so much the learning that counts, it is the actual doing that counts. Only those who overcome the sins which so besets us, will inherit the kingdom of Elohim, as Yahshua told Yochanan in Revelation 2: 26 & 27, saying: ***'And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; (27) and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken in pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father.'*** As Messiah's modern day disciples we must hold ourselves to a higher standard of righteousness demanded by Torah. We need to change ourselves, before we can teach others to change the shortcomings in their lives. This is also why Yahshua said in Matthew 5: 20, ***"For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."***

Repentance is a major part of the conversion process, as Rav Kepha told those who listened to his first sermon in Acts 2: 37, saying in verse 38: ***"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."*** Repentance is but one of the many good things that our Father YHVH gives us, as Rav Yaa'cov wrote in James 1: 17, saying: ***'Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow.'*** The point is that we are to repent from transgressing the Torah, as we've seen previously in first John 3: 4. So we see that repentance precedes immersion. After we have repented and are immersed into Yahshua's saving name, Elohim's Set-apart Spirit is given to us by the laying on of hands, as witnessed by Rav Shaul in 2 Timothy 1: 6, as follows: ***'And for this reason I remind you to***

***kindle afresh the gift of Elohim*** (the Set-apart Spirit) ***which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*** Once we have the Set-apart Spirit within us, it will lead us to live according to Elohim's will and way, as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 8: 14, saying: ***'For all who are being led by the Spirit of Elohim, these are the sons of Elohim.'*** It is also by having a portion of Elohim's Set-apart Spirit in us that we will one day be resurrected at Messiah's return, as we read from Romans 8: 11, in this way: ***'But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yahshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Messiah Yahshua from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells us.'*** But, more importantly, it is also the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim, who indwells us that gives us understanding of the Spiritual things in the Scriptures, as recorded in first Corinthians 2: 10 – 12, as follows: ***'For to us Elohim revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of Elohim. (11) For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of Elohim no one knows except the Spirit of Elohim. (12) 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 us by Elohim.'***

Once we have been given the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim, it motivates us to keep Elohim's laws of love, as Rav Yochanan wrote in first John 5: 3, saying: ***'For this is the love of Elohim, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.'*** True Nazarene believers in Messiah have the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim, as Rav Shaul also wrote in Romans 8: 9 & 10, saying: ***'However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of Elohim dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Messiah, he does not belong to Him. (10) And if Messiah is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.'*** If we indeed have the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim indwelling us, we will strive to live according to the way Yahshua showed us whilst He was on earth, as Rav Yochanan also wrote in first John 1: 6 & 7, saying: ***'If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; (7) but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Yahshua His Son cleanses us from all sin.'***

Repentance leads to an eternal and joyful relationship with our loving Father; our Elohim and Creator. Repentance is necessary for putting off our old self and become part of the household of Elohim, as Rav Shaul wrote in Ephesians 4: 20 – 24, saying: ***'But you did not learn Messiah in this way, (21) if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Yahshua, (22) that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lust of deceit, (23) and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, (24) and put on the new self, which in the likeness of Elohim has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.'*** After Yahshua's immersion and after Yochanan was taken into custody, He entered Galilee and preached the gospel of Elohim, and saying in verse 15 of Mark 1: ***"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of Elohim is at hand; repent and believe the gospel."*** Those of us called out of the world by YHVH at this time will be part of the Kingdom of Elohim if we eventually qualify by remaining faithful to Him in this life. To be part of the Kingdom of Elohim, means that we will rule as kings and priests under Yahshua, if we qualify, as we read from Revelation 20: 6, in this way: ***'Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of Elohim and of Messiah and will reign with Him for a thousand years.'*** The expectation to being part of the Kingdom of Elohim is certainly a major reason to rejoice.

As indicated before, soon after repentance, one should be immersed to receive a portion of Elohim's Set-apart Spirit, thereby blotting out all our past sins, in that Messiah becomes our Passover Lamb, we read from Romans 3: 24 & 25, as follows: ***'Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Messiah Yahshua; (25) whom Elohim displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of***

***Elohim He passed over the sins previously committed.*** After this come a life led by Elohim's Set-apart Spirit, growing in grace and knowledge, in order to bear fruit to Elohim and to be perfected in righteousness, as Rav Shaul wrote in 2 Corinthians 7: 1, saying: ***'Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of Elohim.'*** But, our repentance should be on-going, as it is not a one-time action in the life of a true believer. Repentance is an ongoing thing, and a converted believer must continue to fight his sin for the rest of his life on earth as Rav Yochanan explained in first John 1: 8 – 10 & 2: 1, saying: ***"If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (9) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (10) If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. (2: 1) My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Yahshua Messiah the righteous.'***

Every believer is stuck with his/her human nature for the rest of his/her life which wars on a continues basis against his mind, leading to sin, as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 7: 17, 20 – 21, saying: ***'So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which indwells me. (20) But if I am doing the very thing I do not wish, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. (21) I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good.'*** Even though we desire to please and obey Elohim and acknowledges that we want to follow Him, we also realize the weakness of our flesh, as Rav Shaul also continues to write in verses 22 – 25 of Romans 7, saying: ***'For I joyfully concur with the law of Elohim in the inner man, (23) but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. (24) Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? (25) Thanks be to Elohim through Yahshua Messiah our Master! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of Elohim, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.'***

Even so, Elohim does not condemn the believer if he remains in a repentant attitude as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 8: 1 & 2, saying: ***'There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Yahshua. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yahshua has set you free from the law of sin and of death.'*** As converted believers in Messiah we should continue to strive to overcome those sins which so beset us, because if we do we are promised our place in the kingdom of Elohim, as witnessed in Revelation 2: 7, 11, 17; 3: 5, 12 & 21, in this way: ***"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the ecclesia. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of Elohim. (11) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the ecclesia. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death. (17) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the ecclesia. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it." (3: 5) He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels. (12) He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My Elohim, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My Elohim, and the name of the city of My Elohim, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My Elohim, and My new name. (21) He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.'***

The converted Nazarene believer continues through a lifelong process of repentance and faith to rely on the sacrifice of Yahshua our Messiah to cover his sins. It is as Rav Yaa'cov wrote in James 1: 22 – 25, saying: ***"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. (23) For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; (24) for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. (25) But one who looks intently at the perfect***

***law (the Torah), the law of liberty and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does.***” What Rav Yaa’cov is telling us here is that we should measure our every thought and deed against what Torah requires of us, and temper our human instinct with Torah; that is when we will truly build the character traits that YHVH requires of us. It is also for this reason that we continue to study the Torah and Haftarah portions with our Jewish Brothers, as well as the relevant Renewed Covenant portions from year to year, until the end, so that we remain acquainted with (YHVH)’s requirements of us. This is essentially also what Rav Yochanan told us in first John 2: 3 – 6, saying: ***‘And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. (4) The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; (5) but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of Elohim has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: (6) the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.’***” Think about it!



## Chapter 5: Immersion.

As Nazarene Jews/Israelites we believe in the ordinance of immersion after repentance. The Nazarene believer becomes part of the body of Messiah after immersion and by the laying on of hands with prayer, when he/she receives the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim. The reason why we as Nazarenes use the word immersion instead of baptism as used by most modern day Christians, is that most do not understand the concept of baptism as correctly described in the Scriptures, because they do not study the Scriptures to determine the correct way of performing this ordinance so vitally important for eternal life. As a result there are many who jumped half-prepared into a fake baptism that will not do anything for their after-life.

If anybody wants to follow the way of Elohim, they need to first get to know it by learning from those who went through the same discipleship program that Yahshua introduced to His disciples whilst He was on earth. He is after all the perfect example that the Father in heaven sent us to follow. The word baptism as correctly used in the King James Version in the book of Mark and elsewhere, comes from the Greek word *'baptizo'*, meaning to dunk or immerse completely in water. Because people have over the past 2,000 years been misinterpreting the Scriptures the word baptism has come to be used incorrectly by Churchianity. We all know that according to Rav Kepha's explanation of baptism in Acts 2: 38 & 39 that immersion is only performed on those who repented from their sins – lawlessness or the breaking of Elohim's commandments, in this way: ***'And Kepha said to them*** (those from the house of Israel who were pierced to the heart for denying Yahshua as their Master and Messiah, when they crucified Him as per verse 36), ***"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."*** (In other words, if we understand this correctly, we will notice that those who seek immersion should be adults who are fully aware what sin and repentance are, before their immersion. Yes, the practice of many in Churchianity where they baptize or worse 'christen' little babies to give them their names is not Scriptural, since a baby does not even know what it is to repent. In addition, those who attended such ceremonies know that such little babies are also not even immersed in water, but are simply 'sprinkled' which comes from the Greek word *'r(h)antizo'* or in the case of the Roman Catholic Church where water is poured over the head of the baby. The word pour in Greek is *'balo'*.) (39) ***"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."*** When most new believers come into the faith they want to ensure that their entire families are saved, because they usually come from religions where they were taught to convert as many as possible to the 'faith'. When reading this verse, they immediately see that *'the promise is for us and our children'*, but fail to understand that if YHVH does not call our children, even our best examples will not get them to follow the way of Elohim, since our calling is purely depended upon whether Elohim wants us to be His first fruits or not. In addition verse 39 tells us that immersion is only meant for those who have fallen away from obeying Torah – specifically those from the lost ten tribes, since Yahshua came specifically to reconcile us to the Father, but also to Brother Judah (as per Ephesians 2: 11 – 19). The words *'far off'* as used here, comes from Daniel 9: 7 and is again used by Rav Shaul in Ephesians 2: 13 to mean that it is only applicable to the house of Israel and not to the house of Judah, since the house of Israel is only now being called back to YHVH, as He promised us in Deuteronomy 4: 30 & 31.

Now, some might argue that we make too much of the fact that someone must virtually be dunked into the water, before his immersion is valid. However, when we follow Scriptural examples regarding baptism, we see from Mark 1, where Yahshua's baptism is also discussed that Yochanan the Immerser immersed *'in'* and not with water. We read accordingly from verses 4 – 11, as follows: ***'Yochanan the Immerser appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. (5) And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. (6) And John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was***

**locusts** (kosher eatable insects according to Leviticus 11) **and wild honey.** (7) **And he was preaching, and saying, “After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit (or worthy enough) to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals.** (8) **I immersed you with** (the side note against the word with here, tells us that it can mean ‘in’ ‘with’ or ‘by’) **water; but He will baptize you with the Set-apart Spirit.”** (9) **And it came about in those days that Yahshua came from Nazareth in Galilee, and was baptized by Yochanan in the Jordan.** (10) **And immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him;** (firstly notice that Yahshua came up out of the water after immersion. Next before some jump to the conclusion that when you are immersed in the Jordan River {by those who nowadays incorrectly administer such immersion en masse, without afterwards laying hands on the large number of recipients of the ordinance, by convincing their anxious audience to be immersed in ‘Yeshua’s name’ for payment}, and there appear one of the specially trained white homing pigeons or ‘doves’ near or on you when you come up out of the water, that you have received the Set-apart Spirit, you are wrong! Many of the imposters who have deceived people in this way have twisted this section of the Scriptures to fit their requirements; but notice again, the final sentence of verse 10 reads specifically ‘*and the Spirit like a dove descended upon Him.*’ It does not say a dove descended upon Yahshua after His immersion, but the Spirit descended upon Him similar to the way a dove would descend on a person!) (11) **and a voice came out of the heavens: “Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased.”** Yochanan the Immerser immersed people for the forgiveness of sin, and even though Yahshua our Messiah was immersed by Yochanan, He did not need to repent or be forgiven, but was immersed as an example for His disciples whom YHVH called throughout the ages.

Yochanan the Immerser chose the particular spot in the Jordan River for baptizing or immersing believers, purely because there was water available and even though Yahshua was immersed in the Jordan, we need not all be immersed there specifically to receive the Set-apart Spirit. Similarly we need not only worship YHVH, or believe that we may only attend His commanded Feast Days in Jerusalem; but we need to do whatever we do to conform to Torah or the way Yahshua magnified and explained it for us whilst He was on earth. To better understand the concept, let’s turn to John 4 where Yahshua spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well in verses 19 – 24, in this way: **‘The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. (20) Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” (21) Yahshua said to her, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father. (22) You worship that which you do not know; we (Yahshua as part of the Jewish race) worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews (as per the correct rendering of Matthew 23: 1 – 3; Romans 3: 1 & 2 and 9: 4) (23) But an hour is coming, and now is (meaning from that time until Messiah returns one day to again make Jerusalem the place of worship),when true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshippers. (24) Elohim is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”** In fact we read that Yochanan the Immerser did not only use the Jordan River to immerse his disciples, as recorded in John 3: 23, as follows: **‘And Yochanan also was baptizing in Aenon, near Salim, because there was much water there; and they were coming and were being baptized.’**

What is important to notice is that Yahshua could, if He wanted to immerse Himself, but He was immersed by Yochanan a Rabbi who taught his own disciples (and who was specifically born for this very purpose), as witnessed in John 3: 24 – 26, in this way: **‘For Yochanan had not yet been thrown into prison. (25) There arose therefore a discussion on the part of Yochanan’s disciples with a Jew about purification. (26) And they came to Yochanan and said to him, “Rabbi, He (meaning Yahshua) who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have borne witness, behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him.”** Yahshua showed us clearly by example here, that we cannot simply immerse ourselves, or let a friend immerse us, but a trained Rabbi or Elder should normally do the baptism or immersion. However, ordained deacons are also allowed to immerse people, but the

recipient of such immersion by a deacon will not according to the Scriptures receive the Set-apart Spirit, as we read from Acts 8: 12 – 17, as follows: ***‘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. (13) And even Simon (Simon Magus who formerly practiced magic and whom the citizens of Samaria gave much attention to saying about him in verse 10 “This man is what is called the Great Power of G-d.”) 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. (14) Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of Elohim, they sent them Kepha and Yochanan, (15) who came down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Set-apart Spirit. (16) For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been immersed in the name of the Master Yahshua. (17) Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Set-apart Spirit.’*** Yes the Set-apart Spirit is only given once a teaching elder or Torah teacher, has laid his hands on the immersed person, as witnessed in 1 Timothy 4: 14, in this way: ***‘Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery (meaning the preaching elders of the ecclesia).’*** A third witness to this comes from 2 Timothy 1: 6, where Rav Shaul wrote Timothy saying: ***‘And for this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of Elohim (meaning the Set-apart Spirit) which is in you through the laying on of my hands.’***

YHVH calls the ones whom He wants as first fruits of His harvest by His word of truth, as Rav Yaa’cov explains in James 1: 17 & 18, saying: ***‘Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow. (18) In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures.’*** Yahshua told His disciples that YHVH only opens the minds of those whom He calls to know the true gospel at this time, saying to them in Matthew 13: 11 - 13 and the first part of verse 19: ***“To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them (not called at this time) it has not been granted. (12) For whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. (13) Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. (19) When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart.”*** After immersion and the laying on of hands by a Torah teacher, we are given a portion of the Set-apart Spirit as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 8: 28 – 30, saying: ***‘And we know that Elohim causes all things to work together for good to those who love Elohim, to those who are called according to His purpose. (29) For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; (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.’*** Those of us whom YHVH has called and justified through immersion, will one day when Yahshua returns be glorified when we will be like He is as Rav Yochanan wrote in first John 3: 2 & 3, saying: ***‘Beloved, now we are children of Elohim, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. (3) And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.’***

The ordinance of immersion is immensely important for Nazarene believers in Messiah, since the death, burial and resurrection of Messiah are all called to mind and linked to their own symbolic ‘death’ and ‘resurrection’ from the watery grave to walk in newness of life, as recorded in Romans 6: 3 – 7, in this way: ***‘Or do you not know that all of us who have been immersed into Messiah Yahshua have been immersed into His death? (4) Therefore we have been buried with Him through immersion into death, in order that as Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, (6) knowing this,***

**that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; (7) for he who has died is freed from sin.'** This is confirmed in Colossians 2: 12 & 13, as follows: **'Having been buried with Him in immersion, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of Elohim, who raised Him from the dead. (13) And when you were dead in your transgressions and the un-circumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions.'** However, also fundamental in the symbolism of immersion is the promise of the believer's future resurrection into the Kingdom of Elohim, at Messiah's return. After immersion the forgiven sinner comes out of the waters of baptism to live a new life in Messiah, free from the death penalty incurred by sin. The waters of immersion have symbolically washed away all the believers past sins, and in this respect immersion is an outward acknowledgement of the believer's intent to submit his/her life to Elohim's will and way.

Immersion, which is commanded, must be preceded by belief in the coming kingdom of Elohim (the true gospel that Yahshua preached<sup>3</sup>), as Yahshua said to His disciples in Mark 16: 15 & 16, in this way: **"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. (16) He who has believed (in the coming kingdom of Elohim) and has been immersed shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."** The symbolism of immersion shows our willingness to bury our past sinful life, as Rav Shaul continued the discussion about immersion Romans 6: 11, saying: **'Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to Elohim in Messiah Yahshua.'** The point is that our acknowledgment of guilt and the need for Yahshua Messiah to save us from the penalties of sin are of supreme importance. Our repentance characterized by a change of heart and deed is based on a total commitment and personal faith in Yahshua Messiah and Elohim the Father, as Yahshua told the multitude who were going with Him in Luke 14: 26 - 33, saying: **"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate (or love less) his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. (27) Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. (28) For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost, to see if he has enough to complete it? (29) Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, (30) saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish. (31) Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and take counsel whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? (32) Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks terms of peace. (33) So therefore, no one if you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."** This confirms that immersion is not something that should be taken lightly and that it should only be entered into by someone who is mature enough to realize that it is a lifelong commitment. It is perhaps for this reason that Yahshua our perfect example started His ministry after His immersion when He was about thirty years old.

As mentioned before, immersion is followed by prayer and the laying on of hands by the Torah teacher who immersed the new believer. The reason why a new believer should be immersed by a Torah teacher is because of the commission given us by Yahshua after His death and resurrection in Matthew 28: 18 – 20, saying: **"All authority (or power) has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (19) Go therefore and make disciples (or students) of all the nations, immersing them in the name (singular) of the Father and the Son and the Set-apart Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."** Baptizing or immersing a new believer is therefore a commitment by the one immersing the believer, to also

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<sup>3</sup> Yahshua our Messiah preached the gospel of Elohim soon after His immersion by Yochanan the immerser as recorded in Mark 1: 14 & 15, in this way: **'And after Yochanan had been taken into custody, Yahshua came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of Elohim, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of Elohim is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."'**



teach him/her all that he has learnt from Yahshua, or in our case, the teacher who came into the faith a number of years before him/her. It is as Rav Kepha wrote in first Peter 5: 1 – 3, saying: ***‘Therefore, I exhort the elders among you as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Messiah, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, (2) shepherd the flock of Elohim among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of Elohim; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; (3) nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.’*** However, Yahshua’s commission in Matthew 28 must be understood with His instruction to His disciples in Matthew 10. We are therefore commissioned to go into all the nations, with the specific instruction to preach only to the lost tribes of the house of Israel scattered into the nations of the world. All those who come to repentance through Elohim’s calling as Yahshua explained in John 6: 44 should be suitably immersed in the saving name of Yahshua, as Rav Kepha mentioned in Acts 2: 38 (quoted earlier). But, if some Gentiles come to believe because of our teachings and YHVH indeed calls them, and they eventually keep all of Torah, they should also upon request be immersed and are likewise considered to be first fruits.

The reason why we immerse new believers in the name of Yahshua our Messiah, as instructed by Rav Kepha in Acts 2: 38, is because of Yahshua’s instruction to His disciples in John 14: 26, where He said specifically: ***“But the Helper, the Set-apart Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”*** Yahshua continued speaking to His disciples about the Set-apart Spirit in John 16: 7 – 13, saying: ***‘But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. (8) And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; (9) concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; (10) and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me; (11) and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. (12) I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. (13) But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever, He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.’*** In addition Rav Kepha tells us clearly in Acts 4: 10 – 12, saying: ***‘Let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Yahshua Messiah the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom Elohim raised from the dead – by this name this man stands here before you in good health (a person who was healed by calling on the name of Yahshua). (11) He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone. (12) And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.’***

As described by Rav Shaul in Galatians 2: 20, it is through the Set-apart Spirit given to us at immersion that Messiah lives His life in us, as follows: ***“I have been crucified with Messiah; and it is no longer I who live, but Messiah lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of Elohim, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.”*** It is also through this process that new believers are placed into the spiritual body of Messiah, as recorded in first Corinthians 12: 12 & 13, in this way: ***‘For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Messiah. (13) For by one Spirit we were all immersed into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.’*** In the parable of the 100 sheep in Luke 15: 3 – 10 Yahshua specifically pointed out in verse 7 that the repentance of one lost sheep will cause great rejoicing in heaven, saying: ***“I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”*** Think about it!



## **Chapter 6: Messiah's memorial Passover.**

Over the past two decades I have heard many Nazarene Jewish/Israelite and likeminded believers express their disdain for the oral traditions of the fathers, and without realizing it they are delaying the restoration of all Israel. Many have since the mid-1990's been following different calendars to the Hebrew calendar that we have been following since learning about our Israelite roots more than forty plus years ago. In addition these advocates of the calendar taught by the Karaites have also encouraged the rejection of what they refer to as 'Rabbinical Judaism' and as a result they are no longer interested in provoking Judah to jealousy as Rav Shaul taught in Romans 11. This despite the fact that we as Nazarene Jews/Israelites have many of our own traditions taught us by Yahshua and in the writings of Rav Shaul a Jew who was personally taught by our Messiah for three years, after His ascension to heaven.

Rav Shaul accordingly reminds us about such traditions in 2 Thessalonians 2: 15, saying: ***'So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.'*** While claiming to reject all tradition, these proponents of different calendars are creating oral traditions of their own, claiming to be the ones who were given the authority to establish the timing of their own Feast Days as well as other doctrines such as believing in two (YHVH)'s, by Yahshua in Matthew 16. Yahshua, completely aware that believers who claim to believe in Him, would reject most of what He taught whilst He was on earth, but especially the Oneness of Elohim, said in John 5: 43 – 44: ***"I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive (or believe in) Me; if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him. (44) How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek glory that is from the one and only Elohim?"*** So, despite confirming the authority of the Pharisees (i.e. the Levites who presently reside among the house of Judah) to proclaim Elohim's Feast Days within its season in Matthew 23: 1 & 2, and the Oneness of Elohim in Mark 12: 29 & 30, Yahshua said that such believers would believe anyone else who contradicts His teachings, instead of believing in Him who came in the authority of His Father's name.

Two of the traditions that we hold to are specifically mentioned in first Corinthians 11, namely head coverings for our ladies during prayer and worship services, and the second being the annual Passover that we keep as a memorial to Messiah's death. We read specifically about the Passover from first Corinthians 11: 1, 2 and 23 – 26, Rav Shaul saying: ***'Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Messiah. (2) Now I praise you because you remember me in everything, and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you. (23) For I received from the Master that which I also delivered to you, that the Master Yahshua in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; (24) and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." (25) In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." (26) For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Master's death until He comes.'*** Many have misconstrued the meaning of Yahshua's words here thinking that they should eat the Passover every time they have worship services; or as others believe they should keep it at least four times a year. But the truth is that the Passover is a once a year observance, instituted by YHVH when He saved the ancient Israelites from slavery in Egypt. In addition Yahshua told us that we should keep it as a memorial of His death – and as most know a memorial is like a wedding anniversary kept once a year on the date on which the event originally occurred.

Even though the Passover kept by the Jews of Yahshua's day included wine and unleavened bread, He changed the meaning of the two main components of His memorial Passover in Matthew 26: 26 – 28, as follows: ***'And while they were eating, Yahshua took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." (27) And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; (28) for this is***

***My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.”*** We need to understand that the unleavened bread and wine that we partake of annually represent Messiah’s body and blood, but are not actually His body and blood as some churches assert. Even so, it is vitally important for each one of us whom YHVH has called out of the religions of the world and who are immersed into Yahshua’s saving name, to partake of the annual Passover, if we want eternal life, as Yahshua explained when He discussed our calling with the Jews in John 6: 44 – 58, saying: ***“No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. (45) It is written in the prophets, ‘AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF ELOHIM.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me. (46) Not that any man has seen the Father, except the One who is from Elohim; He has seen the Father. (47) Truly, truly I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. (48) I am the bread of life. (49) Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. (50) This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. (51) I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh.” (52) The Jews therefore began to argue with one another, saying, “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?” (53) Yahshua therefore said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. (54) He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. (55) For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. (56) He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. (57) As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me. (58) This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate, and died, he who eats this bread shall live forever.”*** Despite the fact that many found these words of Yahshua difficult to understand, we in retrospect understand it, because of what happened later in Messiah’s last few days on the earth.

We see clearly from the quoted section in first Corinthians 11 and from the final Passover kept by Yahshua as recorded in Luke 22: 14 – 20, that the Passover ceremony we are to observe is a New Covenant observance as well as a memorial ceremony, in this way: ***‘And when the hour had come He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. (15) And He said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; (16) for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of Elohim.” (17) And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, “Take this and share it among yourselves; (18) for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of Elohim comes.” (19) And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” (20) And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.”*** We therefore keep the annual Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> Aviv according to the Hebrew calendar.

Yahshua our Messiah set the time of the New Covenant Passover service on the night before His death as witnessed by Rav Shaul in first Corinthians 11: 23, where he wrote: ***‘the Master Yahshua in the night in which He was betrayed took bread.’*** Even though He was the prophet from among their countrymen that YHVH promised Moses in Deuteronomy 18: 18 & 19, and He was the one prophesied by Isaiah who came to magnify the Law as promised by Isaiah 42: 21, He did not change any of the Torah commandments given to Moses, but made it more binding in His teaching to His disciples in Matthew 5, 6 & 7. Messiah kept all the Feast Days of Elohim according to the Hebrew calendar with His Jewish brothers of His day, but corrected the date of the Passover to that of the original Passover given in Exodus 12, namely in the evening of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Aviv, 24 hours before the Jews of His day and today observe the Passover. Even so, the Jewish Passover of His day also occurred fittingly during the evening of 15<sup>th</sup> of Aviv, where the lambs used for their Passovers were slaughtered at three o’clock in the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Aviv, when Yahshua died on the impalement stake – and thus He fulfilled Yochanan the Immerser’s prophecy of being the Lamb of Elohim who take away the sins of the world.

But in addition to replacing the sacrificial Lamb, which was a type of Yahshua Messiah, with the symbols of bread and wine, Yahshua also introduced the foot washing ceremony as may be seen from His last Passover discussed in John 13: 1 – 17, in this way: ***‘Now before the Feast of the Passover, Yahshua knowing that His hour had come that He should depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. (2) And during supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him, (3) Yahshua, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from Elohim, and was going back to Elohim, (4) rose from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself about. (5) Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. (6) And so He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, “Master, do You wash my feet?” (7) Yahshua answered and said to him, “What I do you do not realize now, but you shall understand hereafter.” (8) Peter said to Him, “Never shall You wash my feet!” Yahshua answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” (9) Simon Peter said to Him, “Master, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.” (10) Yahshua said to him, “He who has bathed (meaning is immersed) needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.” (11) For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, “Not all of you are clean.” (12) And so when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and reclined at the table again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? (13) You call Me Teacher and Master; and you are right, for so I am. (14) If I then, the Master and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. (15) For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. (16) Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than is master; neither is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. (17) If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”*** Yahshua being the disciple’s Master and Teacher taught His disciples humility by washing their feet – before He humbled Himself to die on the impalement stake for us His future bride, but also for the sins of the world, as explained by Rav Shaul in Philippians 2: 6 – 8, where talking about Yahshua he wrote: ***‘Who, although He existed in the form of Elohim, did not regard equality with Elohim a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men (the sons of man). (8) And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death on a cross.’***

Whereas, the Jewish Passover consist of four glasses of wine, the first cup being the cup of ‘Sanctification’ which shows that as the future bride of Messiah we set ourselves apart for her groom only, and in this way the family of the bride agrees to become part of the family of the groom. This happens when we are immersed into Yahshua’s saving name and are in this way Set-apart for Elohim’s use. The second cup is the cup of betrothal or ‘Dedication’ which shows a covenant of salt between the two families. The third cup is the cup of ‘Redemption’ – the one Yahshua selected specifically on the night He kept His memorial Passover with His disciples, to show that He redeemed them (and by implication also us His modern day disciples) from their past sins. The cup of redemption or inheritance, represent the sandal covenant and indicate the shared inheritance of the future marriage partners. The third cup was drunk by the bride and the groom after the meal, to show their commitment to one another, and sealed the marriage contract or ‘ketubah’. The third cup is the one that Yahshua shared with His disciples during His last Passover before His impalement, when He washed His disciples feet, thereby transferring His inheritance to them with the sandal covenant. When Yahshua died, His final words as recorded in John 19: 30 was: ***“It is finished!”*** transliterated in Hebrew as ‘kallah’ also meaning My bride – indicating that now that He died, He will be able to remarry His bride, whom He divorced because of her adultery (or more specifically idolatry), once He is resurrected and when He returns to earth on Yom Teruah one day soon. Because it was customary in the ancient Hebrew marriage and betrothal ceremony for a prospective husband not to drink wine until He returns for His bride one day, Yahshua said in Luke 22: 17 & 18, ***“Take this and share it among yourselves; (18) for I say to you I will not drink of the***

***fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of Elohim comes.***” So the custom of the groom having a bachelor party with his friends, before getting married, is non-Scriptural.

After the future groom and His bride drank the third cup of wine, the groom paid the price for His bride, namely thirty pieces of silver, as commanded in Leviticus 27: 4. In addition Yahshua paid the death penalty for us, for our disobedience to Torah, and as a gift for His future bride, He thereby redeemed Her from the certificate of debt which was hostile to her, and has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross (as per Colossians 2: 14). The fourth cup of wine or the cup of ‘Praise’ will only be shared by the Groom and His bride during the wedding reception on the Feast of Tabernacles, after Yahshua’s return from heaven. The bread and wine that we partake of during the annual Passover represent Yahshua’s total sacrifice – His suffering and death. Yahshua died in the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Aviv, but His suffering commenced while He was still with His disciples, as is recorded in Matthew 26: 37 - 39, in this way: ***‘And He took with Him Peter (Kepha) and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. (38) Then He said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.” (39) And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt.”’*** Rav Shaul identified Yahshua as our Passover in first Corinthians 5: 7, saying: ***‘Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened*** (meaning our sins has been removed). ***For Messiah our Passover also has been sacrificed.’*** The tradition for remembering Messiah’s death as our Passover at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> Aviv, the night Yahshua was betrayed, and keeping the Festival of Unleavened Bread from the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Aviv to the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> of Aviv satisfies the requirements given in the Scriptures. The Scriptural record is clear in this respect, and we have no problem to discern the sequence of events; the Passover, like the original Passover in Exodus is followed by seven days of Unleavened bread.

Yahshua and His original disciples, as Jews observed the Passover throughout their lives, but now with new symbols He showed His disciples the deeper meaning of Passover by His suffering and death on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Aviv the year of His death. After instructing His disciples in Luke 22: 20, saying: ***“This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood”***, He instituted the Passover symbols consistent with His role as mediator of the new covenant as witnessed in Hebrews 9: 15, as follows: ***‘And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.’*** As Rav Kepha wrote in first Peter 3: 18 Yahshua took on Himself the penalty for all mankind’s sins, in this way: ***‘For Messiah also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to Elohim having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.’*** When we partake of the annual Passover, we demonstrate that Yahshua’s body and blood were sacrificed to cover our sins. It is through our faith in Messiah’s sacrifice for us, that we are reconciled to the Father. But it is also through His sacrifice that we are healed spiritually and physically as Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 53: 4 & 5, saying: ***‘Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of Elohim, and afflicted. (5) But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our wellbeing fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.’***

By eating the unleavened bread at Passover, we symbolize that Messiah lives in us, as Rav Shaul showed in first Corinthians 10: 16, saying: ***‘Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Messiah? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Messiah?’*** But, by partaking of the annual Passover, we also show our willingness to live by the word of Elohim. The purpose of the annual Passover is to ***‘proclaim the Master’s death till He comes’***, the only way in which we are reconciled to Elohim. Rav Shaul adds to the theme, saying in Romans 4: 25 and 5: 10: ***‘He who was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our***

***justification.*** (5: 10) ***For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to Elohim through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.***” The life which Yahshua now lives in us as believers in the way we imitate Him as the perfect example the Father gave us, thereby conforming to the image of the Son. Halleluyah!



## Chapter 7: Elohim's Set-apart days versus pagan holidays.

Most people who claim their belief in Messiah have assumed that the Scriptures teach the observance of Xmas and Easter. My question to our readers is: Do you assume that Yahshua, who is the perfect example the Father, sent us to follow, or even His original apostles, observed Xmas and Easter? If you have been deceived to believe that, you could not be more wrong!

Most historians and even theologians will agree that these holidays began as pagan festivals and were introduced to professing Christianity many years after the death of the original apostles. But how did this happen? It is important to understand that the original believers in Messiah, were known to be a sect of the Pharisees and was called Nazarenes, after Yahshua the Messiah who was also called the Nazarene, as recoded in Acts 24: 5, 14 & 15, in this way: ***"For we have found this man (meaning Rav Shaul, a Jew from the tribe of Benjamin, who was personally called and trained by Yahshua our Messiah for three years {see Acts 9: 4 – 6 and Galatians 1: 17 & 18} a real pest and a fellow who stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. (24) But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the Elohim of our fathers (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), believing everything that is in accordance with the Law, and that is written in the Prophets; (15) having a hope in Elohim, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked."*** We see further from Acts 15: 5, that many of the original believers in Messiah, were in fact from the Jewish sect of the Pharisees, as witnessed in Acts 15: 5, as follows: ***'But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses."***

Even though there were evil forces determined to destroy Nazarene Judaism since its inception, and the movement almost vanished by the fourth century because of sustained attacks against it, it never totally disappeared, as there have always been Torah observant individuals who believed in Yahshua as their Messiah. This is essentially what Yahshua promised His disciples in Matthew 16: 18, where He told His disciples, that the ecclesia (or group of called-out believers) built upon the Rock (meaning Himself), shall remain until His return to earth one day in the near future. After the establishment of the Christian Church, the fourth century Church father Epiphanius described the sect of the Nazarenes, as follows: *'But these sectarians...did not call themselves Christians - but "Nazarenes,"...However they are simply complete Jews. They use not only the New Testament but the Old Testament as well, as the Jews do... They have no different ideas, but confess everything exactly as the Law proclaims it and in the Jewish fashion except for their belief in Messiah, if you please! For they acknowledge both the resurrection of the dead and the divine creation of all things, and declare that G-d is one, and that his son is Y'shua the Messiah. They are trained to a nicety in Hebrew. For among them the entire Law, the Prophets, and the ...Writings... are read in Hebrew, as they surely are by the Jews. They are different from the Jews, and different from Christians, only in the following. They disagree with Jews because they have come to faith in Messiah; but since they are still fettered by the Law...circumcision, the Sabbath, and the rest...they are not in accord with Christians...they are nothing but Jews... They have the Goodnews according to Matthew in its entirety in Hebrew. For it is clear that they still preserve this, in the Hebrew alphabet, as it was originally written.'*

A vital key to understand is that the vast majority of Christian priests and scholars have never seriously tried to follow the example of Yahshua Messiah and His original disciples. As the Christian church grew in the Roman Empire, its leaders tried to make their religion more accessible to the pagan nation around them, in an attempt to win them over, but also to avoid persecution. As a result, Nazarene Judaism was cast by the wayside in favor of a counterfeit paganized belief system. Even so, Elohim had warned our forefathers against following the customs and belief systems of the

surrounding heathens in Deuteronomy 12: 29 – 31, saying: ***‘When YHVH your Elohim cuts off before you the nations which you are going in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, (30) beware that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, “How do these nations serve their gods, that I also may do likewise?” (31) You shall not behave thus toward YHVH your Elohim, for every abominable act which YHVH hates they have done for their gods; for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.’*** In addition Yahshua rebuked the religious leaders of His day regarding them substituting their human traditions for the commandments of Elohim in Mark 7: 6 – 9, in this way: ***‘And He said to them, “Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. (7) BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.’ (8) Neglecting the commandment of Elohim, you hold to the traditions of men.” (9) He was also saying to them, “You nicely set aside the commandment of Elohim in order to keep your tradition.”’***

Now, immediately upon reading these words of Messiah, some will say that He was addressing these words specifically to the Jews of His day. It is indeed true that Yahshua was speaking to the Jews of His day here, but if we believe that the Scriptures were written for all who came to believe in Messiah, then certainly Messiah’s rebuke of the religious leaders of His day, apply equally to religious leaders of today. Think about the traditions of Xmas and Easter, which Christianity and many other religions keep, as if they are commanded by Elohim, but are not even mentioned anywhere in the Scriptures. Actually the word ‘Easter’ does occur once in the original King James Version in Acts 12: 4. However, all reputable modern translations have corrected this blatant error rendering the original Greek word used here, namely ‘*Pascha*’, correctly as “Passover” in English. To validate this we read from verse 3 of Acts 12, ***‘And when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. Now it was during the days of Unleavened Bread.’*** Those familiar with Elohim’s Feast Days will know that the days of Unleavened Bread follow immediately after Passover, something that those who keep Easter do not acknowledge, since they usually eat leavened hot cross buns during this time. In addition, we know that Yahshua did not come for Christianity per se, since when He was asked by the Canaanite woman in the district of Tyre and Sidon to heal her demon-possessed daughter, He answered and said to her in Matthew 15: 24; ***‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.’*** A second witness comes from Matthew 10: 5 – 8, when Yahshua sent His disciples out the first time, in this way: ***‘These twelve Yahshua sent out after instructing them, saying, “Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; (6) but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (7) And as you go, preach, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (8) Heal the sick, raise the dead cleanse the lepers, cast out demons; freely you received, freely give.’***

However, every believer in Messiah has to make a choice between observing pagan holidays like Xmas and Easter - holidays that originated in sun worship with pagan trappings of evergreen trees; yule logs, mistletoe and Santa Claus; or the Set-apart Days of Elohim given in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. By observing the Set-apart Days of Elohim, we will begin to understand Elohim’s plan of salvation for all mankind. After all, even though most believe that the Set-apart Days given in Torah are for Jews only, we read unequivocally from Leviticus 23: 1 – 4: ***‘YHVH spoke again to Moses, saying, (2) “Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, ‘(YHVH)’s appointed times which you (Moses or the ones who sit in his seat) shall proclaim as holy (set-apart) convocations (days upon which YHVH commanded us to get together to worship Him)— My appointed times are these: (3) For six days work may be done; but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation. You shall not do any work; it is a Sabbath to YHVH in all your dwellings. (4) These are the appointed times of YHVH, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them.”’*** At this point some might interject, telling us that

Yahshua specifically came to do away with the Sacrificial Laws and that we should not keep them any longer.

Again it is true Yahshua came to do away with the sacrificial law in respect of sin. Once He became the sacrifice for the sins of the world, the sacrificial law was effectively abolished. However, it is important to notice that the Feast Days of Elohim were already introduced in Exodus 23, before the introduction of the sacrificial law that came 430 years after Abraham, our father in the faith. But as it tells us in Galatians 3, the sacrificial Law was our tutor, to lead us to Messiah, that we may be justified by faith (Galatians 3: 24). Yahshua told believers in Him that a prerequisite for faith in Him is belief in the Law of Moses, saying in John 5: 46 – 47: ***‘For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. (47) But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?’*** In addition most of us are aware of His teachings in Matthew 5, 6 & 7 where He magnified the Torah, saying specifically in Matthew 5: 17 – 20: ***‘Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. (18) For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished. (19) Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (20) For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.’***

Elohim gave ancient Israel specific days that were to be set-apart or sanctified for use to worshipping Him on. Besides, most in Churchianity today would be surprised to learn the identity of the “LORD” who gave these holy days during which He is to be worshiped. This Being who led Israel out of Egypt when He introduced the first Passover, is sometimes referred to as the Rock; one example being in Deuteronomy 32: 15, in this way: ***‘But Jeshurun (a pet name for Israel) grew fat and kicked— you are grown fat, thick, and sleek— then he forsook Elohim who made him, and scorned the Rock of his salvation.’*** A second example is found in Psalm 18: 2, where David wrote: ***‘YHVH is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my Elohim, my rock, in whom I take refuge; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.’*** Rav Shaul wrote about this same Being in the Renewed Covenant, saying in first Corinthians 10: 1 - 4, ***‘For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; (2) and all were immersed into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; (3) and all ate the same spiritual food; (4) and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Messiah.’*** Therefore, the pre-incarnate Yahshua Messiah was the Elohim who spoke to our forebears in the Tanach. He was the “Word” (transliterated in Hebrew as the *‘Davar YHVH’* – Word of YHVH) or spokesmen of Elohim, who was with Elohim, from the beginning, and who was in fact Elohim who became flesh as explained in John 1: 1- 3 & 14. He is the image of the invisible Elohim according to Colossians 1: 15, but also the manifestation or form of YHVH who spoke to Moses as recorded in the first part of Numbers 12: 8, in this way: ***‘With him I speak mouth to mouth, even openly, and not in dark sayings, and he beholds the form of YHVH.’***

For the sake of clarity we turn to Leviticus 23, where all Elohim’s Feast Days are listed. Included in the Feast Days listed, we also find the weekly Sabbath, which occurs on the ‘seventh day’ as most believers would refer to as Friday from sunset to Saturday sunset, since all Scriptural Set-apart Days are determined from sunset to sunset. The Sabbath Day is also part of the Ten Commandments that YHVH gave ancient Israel at Mount Sinai on Shavuot and despite what many preachers have to say about it, Elohim’s people are even now required to keep it, as confirmed in Hebrews 4: 9, as follows: ***‘There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of Elohim.’*** How much clearer do we want this stated – If we claim to be Elohim’s people, then we are still required to keep the original Sabbath, which Elohim hallowed after He created the first man in Genesis 2. But besides the weekly Sabbath, YHVH has seven annual Festivals or Sabbaths which also appear in Leviticus 23 &

Deuteronomy 16, and even though we are not going to deal with the meanings of these festivals in detail in this teaching, they are described briefly here below:

1. **Passover:** The original Passover was specifically introduced to save the first-born children of Israel from death. In the same way did Messiah's Passover during which He became the Lamb of Elohim who takes away the sins of the world, ensure that the first fruits that YHVH calls out of the world at this time be resurrected as first born spiritual children of Elohim, and be protected from the second death after the thousand year rule of Messiah. In addition His death will eventually pay for the sins of everyone who ever lived and who will accept Him as their personal Passover.
2. **Feast of Unleavened Bread** - a seven day Festival immediately following Passover during which all leavened products such as cake and bread are to be put out of our dwelling places and not be eaten. It pictures the putting away of sin out of our lives, which is likened to leaven.
3. **Feast of Weeks or Pentecost** – This is the day upon which YHVH declared His covenant to the nation of Israel which He commanded them to perform, that is the Ten Commandments. It was also the day upon which He gave the Set-apart Spirit to those who gathered together on the first Pentecost after Yahshua's ascension to heaven. But it is also the Day celebrating the ingathering of the smaller first fruits of the annual harvests, which occurs exactly 50 days after the first annual Sabbath namely the First Day of Unleavened Bread (on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Aviv), and according to the command in Leviticus 23: 17 the day upon which we wave two leavened loaves of bread, picturing the two houses of Israel waved as first fruits before YHVH for acceptance, to be resurrected at His return one day.
4. **Feast of Trumpets** – a day of rejoicing called Rosh Hashanah by the Jews, marked by the blowing of trumpets on which we also believe Messiah will return one day. This will also be the day upon which YHVH will save the tents of Judah (the remnant of those who remain Torah observant until Messiah's return) first, when they will see His hands and accept Him as their Passover (as per Zechariah 12: 7 – 14); and once they have accepted Him. the dead in Messiah will be resurrected (as per Romans 11: 15 and 1 Corinthians 15: 51 – 52).
5. **Day of Atonement** – a solemn day of fasting and repentance, known to our Jewish Brothers as Yom Kippur. This is the day after Yahshua's return during which Satan will be bound for a thousand years. This will also be the day upon which those of us who qualify as the first fruit bride of Messiah will become at-one with Elohim.
6. **Feast of Tabernacles** – a seven day celebration picturing the thousand year rule of Messiah. But it also pictures the wedding celebration of Yahshua and His bride (of called out believers) which according to the ancient Hebrew wedding was celebrated for seven days during which the bride and groom consummated the marriage. We are required to keep this feast away from our homes living in temporary dwellings – picturing how temporary our lives as human beings are upon this earth and reminding us of eternal life in the kingdom of Elohim. During the seven days we truly get to learn more about Elohim's way of salvation for all mankind, but also to fear Him always.
7. **The Last Great Day** – the eighth day following the Feast of Tabernacles. It is a separate feast day which pictures the Final Great Harvest of Human beings into the kingdom or family of Elohim. This is the time during which Elohim will open His Word, the Scriptures to the minds of those who died without ever knowing the true gospel and way of Elohim as per Revelation 20: 12 and Isaiah 25: 7 - 9. They will be resurrected and given a period of one hundred years during which they will be required to prove that they want to live according to Elohim's way (as per Isaiah 65: 17 – 20), after which, if they remain faithful till the end, they will be changed into the Spiritual children of Elohim, as much as the first-born children of Elohim, will be born-again from the dead (or changed) to become His Spiritual Children, during the first resurrection.

That adds up to 19 annual Feast days (1+7+1+1+1+7+1). Seven of these 19 Feast days are annual Sabbaths (rest days). These seven annual Sabbaths are: (1) First Day of the Feast of Unleavened

Bread (2) Last Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (3) Feast of First fruits – or Pentecost (4) Feast of Trumpets (5) Day of Atonement (6) First Day of the Feast of Tabernacles (7) Eighth Day – or Last Great Day.

Those who profess to believe in Yahshua the Messiah should be careful to condemn all things Jewish, since we know that Yahshua Messiah was from the tribe of Judah himself. He like His Jewish disciples kept all the Feast Days of Elohim with His Jewish Brothers of His day, according to the Hebrew calendar. However, He kept the last Passover before His death on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Aviv, as per the original Passover in Egypt, 24 hours before the Jewish Passover occurred. Yahshua died at three o'clock the next afternoon, exactly the time when the Passover lambs, used for the Jewish Passover that next evening, was killed. Following His resurrection three days and three nights after His burial on the Wednesday afternoon, before the commencement of the First Day of Unleavened Bread the first annual Sabbath of the year, Yahshua told His disciples saying in Luke 24: 49, ***“And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”*** We read accordingly then from Acts 2: 1 – 4: ***‘And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. (2) And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. (3) And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. (4) And they were all filled with the Set-apart Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.’*** Now before some get the wrong idea about the different tongues that people heard, let's turn to verses 8 – 11 of Acts 8, where we are told what really happened, as follows: ***“And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? (9) Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, (10) Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes (those who converted to Judaism), (11) Cretans and Arabs— we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of Elohim.’*** So we see that the miracle spoken about here was in people hearing the others speaking as if they spoke the language in which the hearers were born. Also noteworthy is that those who attended this first Pentecost after Messiah's resurrection were mostly Jews (or Jewish converts) who believed in Messiah.

Now there might be some who will assert that this was the last and only Feast of Pentecost that believers kept after Messiah's ascension to heaven. But, this is not true, since there are other passages showing that it was still being kept. We see that Rav Shaul or Paul as Churchianity refers to him, the apostle to the Gentiles and the one who according to many even Nazarene/Messianic Believers, supposedly did away with Elohim's Torah. Yet, Rav Shaul who was personally taught by Yahshua did no such thing! Instead, Rav Shaul upheld the Torah of Elohim. We read therefore from Acts 20: 16, ***‘For Shaul had decided to sail past Ephesus in order that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.’*** We see further from first Corinthians 16: 8 & 9 that Rav Shaul kept yet another Pentecost, as follows: ***‘But I shall remain in Ephesus, until Pentecost; (9) for a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.’*** Before some think that Pentecost was the only Scriptural Festival that the ecclesia kept after Messiah's ascension to heaven, let's turn to Acts 27: 9, where we read: ***‘And when considerable time had passed and the voyage was now dangerous, since even the fast was already over, Shaul began to admonish them.’*** The fast spoken about here is the Day of Atonement in September or October, as the footnote in the New American Standard Bible tells us. It is understood that the book of Acts was written during the early 60s CE by Rav Shaul's companion Luke. We also see that Rav Shaul commands believers in Messiah to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread in first Corinthians 5: 7 & 8, saying: ***‘Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Messiah our Passover also has been sacrificed. (8) Let us***



***therefore celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.'***

There is also a remarkable prophecy about the time during which Yahshua will have returned and will be ruling the world from Jerusalem in Zechariah 14: 16 – 19, in this way: ***'Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, YHVH of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. (17) And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, YHVH of hosts, there will be no rain on them. (18) And if the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which YHVH smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. (19) This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.'*** Elohim required that His people keep His Feast Days in the distant past, and He is going to require all nations to keep it in the near future. Every single human being alive on earth will soon learn to observe all of Elohim's Set-apart Days. Why do those of us who profess to be His people during this day and age not start keeping His Feast Days today? But, even with the preponderance of evidence, some will still object, saying that these are Jewish Feast Days.

However, such people should think twice before discounting Elohim's Torah because it is Jewish. As mentioned before Yahshua Messiah was Jewish whether we believe it or not. We see when He spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4: 21 – 24, saying: ***"Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father. (22) You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews. (23) But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. (24) Elohim is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.'*** Yahshua was not only telling this woman that He a Jew by birth was the prophesied Savior, but He was also telling her that the Jews preserved the oracles of Elohim for all other believers in Messiah. All believers in Messiah should accordingly follow Him as the perfect example that YHVH gave to follow, the way of Elohim, and since He kept all of the Feast Days of Elohim, with His Jewish Brothers, we should do the same. Once we start keeping the Set-apart Days of Elohim, we will learn His plan of salvation for all mankind – and that is truly the good news about the coming Kingdom of Elohim. All people who were ever born will have an informed opportunity to accept Elohim's way of life and to be born-again as spiritual children of Elohim in His eternal kingdom.

Rav Shaul wrote about Elohim's plan of salvation for all mankind in Ephesians 1: 9 – 14, saying: ***'He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him (10) with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Messiah, things in the heavens and things upon the earth. In Him (11) also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, (12) to the end that we who were the first to hope in Messiah should be to the praise of His glory. (13) 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 the redemption of Elohim's own possession, to the praise of His glory.'*** Rav Shaul continues to explain about the mystery in chapter 3 of Ephesians saying in verses 8 – 12, ***'To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Messiah, (9) and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in Elohim, who created all things; (10) in order that the manifold wisdom of Elohim might now be made known through the ecclesia to the rulers and the authorities in heavenly places. (11) This***

***was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Messiah Yahshua our Master, (12) in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.'***

Most people are blind to Elohim's plan of salvation for all mankind, because Satan the fallen archangel blinds the minds of those whom Elohim is not calling at this time, so that they do not understand the good news about the coming kingdom of Elohim, as Yahshua told His disciples in Matthew 13: 11, 12 & 19, saying ***'To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. (12) For whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. (13) When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.'*** A second witness to this comes from 2 Corinthians 4: 3 & 4, as follows: ***'And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, (4) in whose case the god of this world 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.'***

One of the ways in which Satan has blinded the minds of this world is by inventing counterfeit holidays to take the attention of people away from Elohim's true Feast Days. This happened at the beginning of Christianity (during the first century CE), but has again started happening during the mid-1990's when the Karaite Jews began convincing many Messianic/Nazarene and like-minded believers to question the Hebrew calendar and start looking for the New Moon (which in their case refers to the first visible appearance of the crescent moon); and persuaded some that theirs was the so-called 'Biblical calendar'. The Feast Days of Elohim preserved for us by the Jews not only give those who obey and keep them a better understanding of His plan of salvation for all mankind, but it also provides us the opportunity to rest from our labors and to learn to fear Him always. It also gives us peace knowing that all righteous people will ultimately get to know these mysteries. Think about it!

## Chapter 8: Satan the adversary.

The name YHVH means the ever existing One or the Eternal. This is the name that men from the time of Enosh (Seth's son) started using to call upon Elohim (as per Genesis 4: 26<sup>4</sup>). This is the name that Abraham called upon as recorded in Genesis 12: 9 and 13: 4, but it is also the name Elohim used to introduce Himself to Moses, after Moses said to Him in Exodus 3: 13, ***"Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I shall say to them, 'The Elohim of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name? What shall I say to them?'"*** Continuing in Exodus 3: 14 & 15: ***'And Elohim said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"*** (The footnote against the words I AM in the New American Standard Bible reads: *'Related to the name of G-d, YHWH, rendered LORD, which is derived from the verb HAYAH, to be.'*) (15) ***And Elohim, furthermore, said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'YHVH, the Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is MY name forever, and this is My memorial (or Set-apart)-name to all generations."***

The point is that only YHVH existed eternally, and everything else exists because of Him. But where does Satan who is also a spirit being come from? Elohim did not create Satan the Devil; instead Elohim created a cherub called Lucifer, who was one of three archangels, the other two being Michael and Gabriel. We read about Satan in Ezekiel 28: 12 – 15, in this way: ***'Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says YHVH Elohim, "You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. (13) You were in Eden, the garden of Elohim; every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz, and the diamond; the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper; the lapis lazuli, the turquoise, and the emerald; and the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created they were prepared. (14) You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of Elohim; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire. (15) You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you.'"*** YHVH created the angels as perfect spirit beings, but with the ability to choose whether to follow Him or not. Even though Lucifer followed the way of Elohim for a while, he transformed himself into the Devil by his rebellion against the government of Elohim. In fact Lucifer became Satan by his rebellion and he and his angels were cast down to earth, for that very reason. Therefore, he became Elohim's adversary by his rebellion making himself Elohim's enemy.

We need to understand that the three archangels, as well as all the other angels were never destined to become more than the servants of Elohim. They were never destined to become children of Elohim, and were not created to procreate themselves in any way. Not a single one of all the myriads of angels created by Elohim can be begotten of Elohim and born-again into the family of Elohim, as His children. After Satan's rebellion and the destruction of the universe by Elohim as

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<sup>4</sup> *Despite the fact that most copies of the Scriptures use the word LORD here, it should be written as YHWH (or YHVH) as the Principles of Translation of the New American Bible clearly state in the preface of this Bible: "The Proper Name of God in the Old Testament: In the Scriptures, the name of God is most significant and understandably so. It is inconceivable to think of spiritual matters without a proper designation for the Supreme Deity. Thus the most common name for deity is God, a translation of the original Elohim. The normal word for Master is Lord, a rendering of Adonai. There is yet another name which is particularly assigned to God as His special or proper name, that is, the four letters YHWH (Exodus 3:14 and Isaiah 42:8). This name has not been pronounced by the Jews because of reverence for the great sacredness of the divine name. Therefore, it was consistently pronounced and translated LORD. The only exception to this translation of YHWH is when it occurs in immediate proximity to the word Lord, that is, Adonai. In that case it is regularly translated GOD in order to avoid confusion."* However, we know that this is in fact one of the reasons why most teachers of religion, and their followers (or churches – ecclesia) have been confused about the G-d they serve.

described by King David in Psalm 18: 7 - 15, the earth became formless and void (transliterated as Tohu and Bohu in Hebrew) as we read from Genesis 1: 2 and also from Jeremiah 4: 23, as follows: ***'I looked on the earth, and behold it was formless and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light.'*** After the rebellion of Satan, and the destruction of the universe, when YHWH recreated the earth, He created humans and for the first time gave them the potential to become born-again Sons of Elohim to rule the earth and ultimately the entire universe under Yahshua the Messiah.

The problem facing mankind at this time more than before, is that Satan is fully aware of these truths and hates us with a vengeance. Satan and his demons view us as a severe threat to their way of life. With this perverted view, Satan who tried to usurp all Elohim's power and authority, considers human beings as competitors, since Elohim has destined mankind to replace him and his demons as rulers of this world. It is for this reason that we believe Satan, a spirit being is the adversary of both Elohim and His future children, as is also evidenced by His name in both Hebrew and Greek, as witnessed in Revelation 9: 11, in this way: ***'They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon (meaning destruction), and in Greek he has the name Apollyon.'*** Satan hates Elohim's plan of salvation for all mankind depicted by the annual Feast Days which He introduced to Moses in Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16. It is for this reason that he deceived especially those who claim to follow Messiah about the 'set-apart days' that they are commanded to keep annually. This is what the prophet Daniel prophesied about in Daniel 7: 23 – 25, saying: ***"Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms, and it will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. (24) As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. (25) And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.'"***

The four kingdoms spoken about in Daniel 7 started with the world-ruling kingdom of king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, followed by that of Greece, then by Persia and finally by Rome. Now as much as Yahshua was born under Roman Law, so many of us alive in the western world, was born under Roman law (in South Africa it is known as Roman-Dutch Law). Even after Messiah's death the then known world was and is still under Roman law. This was when the Hebrew calendar was replaced by the Roman calendar and the Sabbath Law of YHWH was changed to the Sunday Law introduced by the Roman Catholic Church under Roman law. Even though the saints of the Highest One have been persecuted for the past two thousand years, and alterations were made in the times and the law of Elohim, we could still in our own time, remain loyal to YHWH and keep His ordained times and law, but soon, because Satan knows his time is getting short, is going to increase the severity of persecution against the saints of the Most High. We are told here in Daniel 7: 25 that the time of Jacob's trouble will be for a time, times and half a time, meaning two and a half years. This will be because of the fact that Yahshua promised us that He will reduce that time of Jacob's trouble in Matthew 24: 21 & 22, saying: ***"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."***

Satan has deceived the whole world, including those who claim to believe in Yahshua, into rejecting Elohim and His Torah, as Rav Yochanan wrote in Revelation 12: 9 & 10, saying: ***'And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (10) And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our Elohim and the authority of His Messiah have come, for the accuser of the brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our Elohim day and night.'"*** Yahshua the Messiah described Satan in John 8: 44, saying: ***"You are of your father the devil and you want to do the***

***desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.***” Because Satan knows his time is short, Rav Kepha warned those of us living at the time of the end saying in first Peter 5: 8, ***“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”***

Satan attempted to prevent Elohim’s plan to reproduce Himself by getting the first Adam to follow him and rebel against his Creator, thereby disqualifying himself from replacing Satan as ruler of the earth. Next he attempted to have Messiah, the second Adam killed by King Herod. Then when Messiah was grown up, Satan attempted to destroy Him spiritually by tempting Him to sin. But he failed in this last attempt to make Yahshua sin, and therefore Messiah will depose him as ruler of the earth, when He returns to earth to establish the Kingdom of Elohim on earth. Because Yahshua came specifically to show us the way into Elohim’s eternal kingdom, we need to also overcome Satan’s influence over us, if we want to become co-heirs of Elohim and Messiah, and rule under Messiah during His coming millennial rule. It is for this reason that Rav Shaul warned us in Ephesians 6, to put on the whole armor of Elohim, saying in verse 12: ***‘For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.’*** The point is that we cannot afford to be ignorant of Satan’s tactics as Rav Shaul warns in 2 Corinthians 2: 11, saying: ***‘In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.’*** Since we are in a spiritual war with wicked spirits (four kinds of demons), we need to put on the whole armor of Elohim, which includes, belief in Yahshua the salvation of YHVH; doing righteous deeds; study and apply Torah in our lives, and belief in the coming kingdom of Elohim. Yes, we need to know how to protect ourselves from these invisible enemies who are out to destroy us spiritually.

We are told in Ephesians 2: 2 – 3 what Satan’s main weapon is in his attempt to destroy Elohim’s people, as follows: ***‘In which you formerly walked according to the course of the world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. (3) Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.’*** Satan, formerly the archangel Lucifer who was originally created perfect in his ways, developed his nature by his own reasoning and continued his nature in us, which is now part of our human nature. The problem with human nature, is that like Satan’s nature, it is hostile toward Elohim, as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 8: 7 & 8, saying: ***‘Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward Elohim; for it does not subject itself to the law of Elohim, for it is not even able to do so; (8) and those who are in the flesh cannot please Elohim.’*** However, once the Set-apart Spirit merges with the spirit of man in him, after repentance and immersion, he develops the spiritual awareness and strength to resist his own human nature consisting of self-centeredness, lust, greed, vanity, jealousy, envy, bitterness and hatred, which are broadcast into our minds through the airwaves by Satan. Even so, no one is compelled to obey these messages that Satan continues to broadcast into the minds of people, and contrary to what most people believe, Satan the devil has no power to force anyone to do wrong. However, those who walk around unaware of what is happening around them, automatically tune into Satan’s wavelength and do according to what he inspires them to do without realizing what is taking place in their minds. Most people just go with the flow, responding to emotions and impulses which often find expression in their vain fleshly pursuits, as Rav Shaul explains in Galatians 5: 19 – 21, saying: ***‘Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, (21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of Elohim.’***

After one is begotten of Elohim by His Set-apart Spirit, which makes one a true believer, Satan will continue to try to deceive the newly begotten believer, to try and deceive him/her mind and lead



the person away from Elohim and His ways, as Rav Shaul wrote fittingly in 2 Corinthians 11: 2 – 4, saying: ***‘For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Messiah I might present you as a pure virgin. (3) But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Messiah. (4) For if one comes and preaches another Yahshua whom we have not preached*** (one who came to abolish the law), ***or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel*** (the gospel about the life, death and resurrection of Messiah rather than the Gospel of the coming kingdom of Elohim as Yahshua preached in Mark 1: 14 & 15) ***which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.*** We see that some ‘believers’ in Rav Shaul’s day already started falling victim to Satan’s pressures again, as Rav Shaul witnessed in Galatians 1: 6 – 8, saying: ***‘I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Messiah, for a different gospel; (7) which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Messiah. (8) But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.’*** Rav Shaul further warns us about false teachers saying in 2 Corinthians 11: 13 – 15: ***‘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.’***

Conversion – meaning repentance and immersion into Yahshua’s saving name does not shield us from Satan’s wavelength. He has since the creation of mankind, continued to broadcast his nature into the minds of people and works through others to subvert our life in Messiah. In fact Satan wants to make it impossible for us to serve YHVH our Elohim, by getting family and friends to get us to become too involved in worldly pursuits. He also keeps introducing new gadgets and games to get people to waste their time and energy, and make sure there are enough pagan ‘holy’ days and symbols like hot cross buns and Easter eggs around to entice our children to distract our attention from serving Elohim. Before Yahshua our Messiah could qualify to restore Elohim’s government and rule the world from Jerusalem, He had to resist Satan’s most severe temptations. Messiah overcame Satan’s wiles by living and knowing the will and way of Elohim – He lived by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of YHVH. It is for this very reason that Satan could not deceive Him. He responded to Satan’s temptations by citing the appropriate scripture that applied to each situation. He not only knew the Scriptures, but was the embodiment of the Word of Elohim. Rav Kepha warned true believers in the way of Elohim in first Peter 5: 9, saying: ***‘But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.’*** Rav Yaa’cov similarly said in James 4: 7, ***‘Submit therefore to Elohim. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.’***

Rav Shaul tells us to put on the whole armor of Elohim in order to fight this spiritual battle saying in Ephesians 6: 13, ***‘Therefore, take up the full armor of Elohim, that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.’*** We see further from verses 14 – 17 what the full armor of Elohim is, in this way: ***‘Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH,*** (Psalm 119: 142 & 151 tells us that Torah and all Elohim’s commandments are truth – so we should study and obey the commandments of Elohim, to be able to gird our loins with truth; i.e. temper our animal instincts with Torah) ***and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS*** (we practice righteousness by doing what YHVH requires of us in Torah, by keeping Elohim’s Sabbaths, by being taught more about His word; by eating kosher food only; and by obeying by practicing what YHVH taught us in His word), (15) ***and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE*** (essentially believing and proclaiming the gospel of the coming Kingdom of Elohim, knowing that despite the current hopeless condition the world is in, there is something much better coming, when Messiah will return to come and rule us from Jerusalem.); (16) ***in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith*** (in {YHVH}’s plan of salvation of all

mankind, depicted in His annual Feast Days given in Leviticus 23) ***with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one.*** (17) ***And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION*** (faith in Messiah the Helmet of Salvation, who came to redeem us from our indebtedness because of not obeying Elohim's commandments, to cover our sins), ***and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of Elohim.***' Continuing in verses 18 – 20, Rav Shaul writes: ***'With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,*** (19) ***and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,*** (20) ***for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.'*** Without knowing and preaching the true Gospel (the gospel about the coming kingdom of Elohim) and obeying Torah, modern Churchianity has no leg to stand on. It is as Yahshua taught in John 5: 46 & 47, saying: ***"For if you believed Moses you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. (47) But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"*** Moses wrote the Torah and Yahshua gave us the good news about the coming kingdom of Elohim, but sadly most church-goers today reject both the true gospel and the writings of Moses. Rav Shaul warns true believers in Messiah to make sure that we put on the whole armor of Elohim, but also to pray fervently and continuously to be able to withstand the attacks of Satan, saying in 1 Thessalonians 5: 17, ***"Pray without ceasing."*** This is the only way in which to overcome Satan and force him to flee from us.

Even though Satan has been cast down to the earth, he and his millions of demons (fallen angels) are still trying to take dominion from Elohim. In fact Yahshua revealed in Revelation 12: 7, that Satan will once again try to take rulership from Elohim, saying: ***'And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war.'*** We see from verse 9 that Satan would be cast down again, in this way: ***'And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.'*** Verse 10 informs us that this will happen shortly prior to Messiah's return to establish Elohim's Kingdom on earth. It is at that time that Satan will bring great wrath upon the entire earth, as witnessed in verse 12, as follows: ***"For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."*** Even though Satan will bring great wrath to all the people on the earth, we see from verses 13 – 17, that his main aim will be to destroy Elohim's ecclesia (of called out believers), in this way: ***'And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. (14) 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. (17) And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of Elohim and hold to the testimony of Yahshua.'***

After Satan will be cast down to the earth for a second time, he will realize that his time is very short, before he will be restraint completely for the next thousand years whilst Messiah will rule the world from Jerusalem. At that time he will pull out all stops in a last-ditch attempt to destroy the remnant of believers called out of the world by Elohim – especially those not accounted worthy to escape. We also see from verse 14 – 16 above that Elohim will provide His ecclesia with shelter away from Satan's wrath. However, because some in the ecclesia of Elohim might not be accounted worthy to escape, they will have to go through fiery trials in order to wake up spiritually as witnessed in Revelation 3: 14 – 19, as follows: ***"And to the angel of the ecclesia in Laodicea write: The Amein, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning (or beginner) of the creation of Elohim, says this: (15) I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or***

**hot. (16) So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. (17) Because you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, (18) I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. (19) Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent."**

This prophesy about Elohim's end time ecclesia informs us that He will protect His faithful servants from the great tribulation which will be caused by Satan and his demons. The only way in which we are able to ensure that we remain part of the ecclesia who will be protected during the time of trouble immediately ahead, is to persevere in our obedience to Elohim's word and not to deny Yahshua's name, as recorded in Revelation 3: 8 & 10, in this way: ***'I Know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name*** (there are two ways in which we could deny Messiah's name; the first being to use the name J\*e\*s\*u\*s\* instead of Yahshua the salvation of YHVH; and secondly to join a synagogue, before Messiah's return). (10) ***Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth.'*** Halleluyah!

## **Chapter 9: Elohim's purpose for mankind.**

Even though Elohim made mankind from physical matter, He planned for all human beings to eventually become part of His spiritual children in the coming Kingdom of Elohim, as witnessed in the creation account in Genesis 1: 20 – 27, in this way: ***'Then Elohim said, "Let the waters team with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens."***(21) ***And Elohim created the great sea monsters, and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and Elohim saw that it was good.*** (22) ***And Elohim blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."*** (23) ***And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.*** (24) ***Then Elohim said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after its kind"; and it was so.*** (25) ***And Elohim made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and Elohim saw that it was good.*** (26) ***Then Elohim said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*** (27) ***And Elohim created man in His own image, in the image of Elohim He created him; male and female He created them.'***

From this it is clear that YHVH our Elohim created us in His image and likeness with the specific purpose for us to rule over the rest of the creatures that He created. Even so, we are told by Moses that YHVH has no form in Deuteronomy 4: 12 saying: ***"Then YHVH spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form – only a voice."*** This is confirmed about YHVH in first Timothy 6: 16, in this way: ***'Who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.'*** But, we read about Yahshua in Colossians 1: 13 – 18 (who is according to John 1: 1- 3 & 14, the word of Elohim, who became flesh): ***'For He (YHVH) delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, (14) in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (15) 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.'*** A second witness as to Yahshua being the image of Elohim, is recorded in 2 Corinthians 4:3 & 4, in this way: ***'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.'*** At this point we should begin to realize that we were created to look like Yahshua the image of Elohim, but again with a specific purpose.

Elohim's purpose for mankind is to prepare those whom He calls during this era, and who choose through a life of overcoming sin, developing righteous character and growing in grace and knowledge to attain the Kingdom of Elohim and become a kingdom of priests under Yahshua our Messiah our perfect example, at His return. The reason for our existence is to literally be born again as spiritual children into Elohim's family, as witnessed in Romans 8: 28 & 29, as follows: ***'And we know that Elohim causes all things to work together for good to those who love Elohim, to those who are called according to His purpose. (29) For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.'*** This tells us clearly that if we whom YHVH has specifically called at this time to be the first fruits of His creatures (as per James 1: 18), will if we remain faithful to Him to the end (death or when Messiah returns) be born again from the dead as well, provided we have the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim, indwelling us. We read accordingly from verses 14 – 17 of Romans 8: ***'For all who are being***

***led by the Spirit of Elohim, these are sons of Elohim. (15) for you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Avinu! Father!" (16) The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of Elohim, (17) and if children, heirs also, heirs of Elohim and fellow heirs with Messiah, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.'*** We read further from Acts 2: 39, ***"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."***

In fact Elohim desires all humans to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (as is recorded in first Timothy 2: 4), and as part of this process, He is at this time calling a remnant to inherit eternal life at Messiah's return to come and rule us from Jerusalem. However, He is not calling the cream of the crop at this time, as witnessed in first Corinthians 1: 26 – 28, in this way: ***'For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; (27) but Elohim has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and Elohim has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, (28) and the base things of the world and the despised, Elohim has chosen, the things that are not that He might nullify the things that are, (29) that no man should boast before Elohim.'*** This agrees with Messiah's words in Matthew 20: 16, where He said: ***"Thus the last shall be first, and the first last."*** We read about Elohim's calling us from John 6 where Yahshua talks about Himself as the bread from heaven, saying in verses 44 & 65: ***"No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him on the last day. (65) For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father."*** However, as confirmed in first Corinthians 15: 22 – 24 we are not the only ones who will make it into Elohim's eternal kingdom, as follows: ***'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, (24) then comes the end (ones), when He delivers up the kingdom to the Elohim and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.'*** Those who are chosen at this time will accept Messiah as their Savior, surrender their lives to conform to Elohim's will and way, and strive to overcome sin in their lives, as Yahshua explained in Revelation 3: 19 – 22, saying: ***'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, be zealous therefore, and repent. (20) Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me. (21) He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. (22) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the ecclesia.'***

Yahshua is called *'the first-born from the dead'* as also witnessed in Revelation 1: 5 & 6, in this way: ***'And from Yahshua Messiah, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, (6) and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His Elohim, and Father; to Him be the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.'*** 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. But as we also saw in Romans 8: 29, He is *'the first-born among many brethren.'* This is why we are assured in first John 3: 2, that one day at the return of Messiah to establish His kingdom on earth, ***'we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.'*** It is at that time that those who have died in faith in Messiah will be resurrected, and those who are alive in the faith will be changed, and become the spiritual children of Elohim, as explained in first Corinthians 15: 42 – 53, as follows: ***'So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; (43) it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; (44) it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. (45) So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.' (46) However, the spiritual is not first,***



***but the natural; then the spiritual. (47) 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. (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. (53) For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.'***

As spiritual children of Elohim, they will serve as kings and priests under Yahshua as witnessed in Revelation 5: 10, in this way: ***"And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our Elohim; and they will reign upon the earth."*** A second witness comes from Revelation 20: 4, as follows: ***'And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Yahshua and because of the word of Elohim. And those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Messiah for a thousand years.'*** Yahshua our Messiah will hold both offices of High Priest and King of kings, as prophesied by Zechariah in Zechariah 6: 11 – 13, in this way: ***"And take silver and gold, make an ornate crown, and set it on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. (12) Then say to him, 'Thus says YHVH of hosts, "Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of YHVH. (13) Yes, it is He who will build the temple of YHVH, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.'"*** We also read from Revelation 17: 14 where Rav Yochanan talking about the ten kings who received authority from the beast for one hour, said: ***"These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Master of masters and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."*** This shows us that being called and chosen alone, will not qualify us to enter the kingdom of Elohim, but we need to remain faithful to the very end.

The author of Hebrews links Yahshua's priesthood with those who qualify to enter the kingdom of Elohim, as kings and priests with Him, in Hebrews 2: 11 – 17, saying: ***'For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, (12) saying, "I WILL PROCLAIM THY NAME TO MY BRETHREN, IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING THY PRAISE." (13) And again, "I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM." And again, "BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM ELOHIM HAS GIVEN ME." (14) Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; (15) and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. (16) For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. (17) Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to Elohim, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.'*** Those who finally qualify to become priests during Messiah's millennial rule, will be responsible to teach people to discern between 'the unclean and the clean' which essentially includes Kosher Food; the Sabbaths of Elohim (weekly and annual); and the concept of helping them distinguish between good from evil, as prophesied by Ezekiel in Ezekiel 44: 23 & 24, saying: ***"Moreover, they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. (24) And in a dispute they shall take their stand to judge; they shall judge it according to My ordinances. They shall also keep My laws and My statutes in all My appointed feasts, and sanctify My Sabbaths."*** As priests of Elohim they will teach His Torah and make known its meaning and application to their human siblings, as recorded in Malachi 2: 7, as follows: ***"For the lips of a***

***priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of YHVH of hosts."***

As mentioned in the Tanach, one of the responsibilities of a king was to write the five books of the Torah for himself, as we read from Deuteronomy 17: 18 - 20, in this way: ***"Now it shall come about when he sits on his throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. (19) And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear YHVH his Elohim, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, (20) that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left; in order that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel."*** Those who finally qualify to become kings and priests during the Millennium will be those who have allowed Elohim to write His laws in their hearts and minds, while they are still human, as Rav Shaul quoting Jeremiah 31: 33 in Hebrews 8: 10 wrote, saying: ***"FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS YHVH: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM UPON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR ELOHIM, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE."*** This means that as we are learning to obey Torah at this time, we make YHVH our Elohim KING in our lives, and start serving Him with our hearts (belief system), souls (the way we live) and all our strength – like righteous Torah observant worshippers of YHVH should do.

Those of us who qualify to become kings and priests at Messiah's return, will teach all those who survive the great tribulation and the day of YHVH into the millennium, as we read from Isaiah 30: 20 – 21 (KJV), as follows: ***'And though YHVH give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: (21) And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.'*** These kings and priests will administer Elohim's government in the areas in which Messiah will give those responsibilities to do so, as Yahshua explained in the parable of the minas in Luke 19: 11 – 19. Those who used their talents to proclaim the kingdom of Elohim will be awarded rulership over cities in the coming kingdom of Elohim, in accordance with the diligence with which they performed their duties as we read from verses 16 – 24, in this way: ***'And the first appeared, saying, "Master, your mina has made ten minas more." (17) And he said to him, "Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, be in authority over ten cities." (18) And the second came, saying, "Your mina, master, has made five minas." (19) And he said to him also, "And you are to be over five cities." (20) And another came, saying, "Master, behold your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; (21) for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow. (22) He said to him, "By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down, and repaying what I did not sow? (23) Then why did you not put the money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?" (24) And he said to the bystanders, "Take the mina away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas."' At that time Elohim's spiritual helpers will be completely subject to Messiah, as much as He is completely subject to the Father's will, as He explained in John 5: 30, saying: ***"I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."******

However, Elohim's plan of salvation includes all mankind. YHVH will not judge anybody without first giving them all knowledge required to be saved. The Great White Throne Judgment spoken about in Revelation 20: 11 – 13, shows that all human beings who have died without ever knowing Elohim's plan of salvation will be resurrected and be given an opportunity to understand their true potential. YHVH will at that time open the Scriptures (described as books in Revelation 20: 12) to their

understanding, the same way as Yahshua opened the minds of His disciples to the Scriptures in Luke 24: 44 & 45, in this way: ***'Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."*** (45) ***Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.'*** We read further about this period during which people will be given understanding after the second resurrection 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*** (this shows that what is described here will definitely only happen after the second resurrection and the Great White Throne judgment), ***and YHVH Elohim will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth*** (showing that at that time people will not hate Israel and Judah any more); ***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."***

All people who ever lived will have the opportunity to learn Elohim's will and way and come to repentance at that time. They will accept Yahshua the Messiah as their Passover and Savior and will receive eternal life as Elohim's children in His everlasting kingdom. But there will be those who after learning Elohim's will and way during this life and those who will be given the opportunity during the Great White Throne judgment, who will reject it. They will be the ones spoken about in Malachi 4: 1, in this way: ***"For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says YHVH of hosts, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branch."*** Now that we know Elohim's plan of salvation for all mankind, we should put in every effort to attain the fantastic potential He planned for us. Baruch HaShem YHVH!

## Chapter 10: When will Israel and Judah get together?

*Note: Be sure to read both footnotes as a great deal of importance is contained in them.*

The restoration of all Israel is not a figment of someone's imagination, but is a reality based upon the unqualified promise of YHVH. Between 721 and 718 BCE the northern ten tribes of Israel were taken into captivity and deported by the king of Assyria, whilst their homeland were repopulated by foreigners who became known as the Samaritans in Messiah's time. Even though the House of Israel is presently scattered throughout the nations in the world and think of themselves as Gentiles, not a 'least grain' will be lost, as may be understood from Elohim's promises through His prophets. As a side light, notice that the word grain as used here refers to the first fruit grain offering of the house of Israel called out of the world, who will if they qualify, be resurrected as first born children of Elohim at Messiah's return.

In Hosea 1 YHVH told the prophet Hosea to take for himself a wife of harlotry, and to have children of harlotry, because the people of Israel under king Jeroboam committed flagrant harlotry and forsook YHVH their Elohim. Hosea then married Gomer a harlot who bore him three children. YHVH tells Hosea to name his first born son Jezreel; a name that is very similar to Israel and which in Hebrew means to sow or scatter. This was showing prophetically that YHVH was going to scatter the house of Israel amongst the nations of the world as punishment for their sin of idolatry under Jeroboam. We see further from verse 7 of Hosea 1 that this punishment is specifically meant for the House of Israel, whilst YHVH will have compassion on the House of Judah, as follows: ***"But I will have compassion on the house of Judah and deliver them by YHVH their Elohim, and will not deliver them by bow, sword, battle, horses and horsemen."*** It was during the time of their scattering amongst the nations that Hosea tells us that these Israelites would lose their identity. Hosea's second and third children were named Lo-ruchama (meaning not-pitied) and Lo-ammi (meaning not My People). This essentially meant that during their captivity amongst the nations, they would not receive any pity from YHVH and that they would no longer be known as His people.

Even though the house of Judah was also taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon about 120 years later, they returned to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple under Ezra and Nehemiah 70 years later. However, about 40 years after the death of Messiah, Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed again by the Romans and the surviving Jews were taken away as slaves. They too were gradually dispersed throughout the nations of the world, but could always be identified as a Torah observant, Sabbath keeping people who feared YHVH their Elohim, and were as a result, persecuted throughout the past 1900 years because of the jealousy of the nations amongst whom they lived. Soon after World War I, Jews from all over the world slowly started returning to join a few of their brethren remaining in the land of Israel. The Treaty of Versailles ending World War 1 requested the establishment of a Jewish homeland on one percent of the land of the old Ottoman Empire. In addition the British Balfour Declaration of 1917 recognized the land of Israel by then known as 'Palestine' as the former Jewish Homeland. The State of Israel was finally declared during 1948, and since then millions of Jews started and are still returning to the land of Israel.

Fortunately YHVH also promised that He will not leave the people of the house of Israel scattered amongst the nations of the world forever. We see that Hosea prophesied that at the time when the number of the descendants of Israel will be as 'the sand of the sea', some of this immeasurable group who used to be known as 'not My people' will again come to be known as 'sons of the Living El.' This means that they will regain their identity – they will realize that they are not Gentiles, but belong to the so called 'lost ten tribes of Israel.' We have seen this prophesy about this bringing back of the lost tribes of Israel, in Deuteronomy 30: 3 – 6, as follows: ***'Then YHVH your Elohim will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where YHVH your Elohim has scattered you. (4) If your outcasts are at the ends of the***

**earth, from there YHVH your Elohim will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. (5) And YHVH your Elohim will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. (6) Moreover YHVH your Elohim will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live.’** We also see according to a prophecy of Isaiah that only a small number will ultimately return to the land (or be saved during Messiah’s return) in Isaiah 10: 20 – 22, in this way: **‘Now it will come about in that day that the remnant of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped, will never again rely on the one who struck them, but will truly rely on YHVH, the Holy One of Israel. (21) A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty Elohim. (22) For though your people, O Israel, may be like the sand of the sea, only a remnant within them will return; a destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness.’**

YHVH has a plan to re-establish the kingdom of Israel on earth, whether we like it or not. Most true believers of the house of Judah are looking forward to the time when Elohim’s kingdom be established upon the earth. It is also for this reason that Yahshua’s disciples asked Him in Acts 1: 6, saying: **“Master, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?”** Messiah’s memorial Passover has to do with national salvation rather than individual salvation and is also a foretaste of the Marriage supper of the Lamb described in Revelation 19. It is very important for us as the house of Israel to understand that Yahshua came specifically to bring us back to the Father, but also to Brother Judah, as there can be no Kingdom without the return of the lost house of Israel. It is for this reason when Yahshua first send out His twelve disciples He said to them in Matthew 10: 5 – 8, saying: **“Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; (6) but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (7) And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ (8) Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons; freely you received, freely give.”** This is also why Yahshua said to the Canaanite woman who asked Him to heal her demon possessed daughter in Matthew 15: 24, **“I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”**

In fact the prophet Isaiah prophesied about Yahshua’s first coming in Isaiah 49, saying specifically in verses 5 – 7: **‘And now says YHVH, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, in order that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of YHVH, and My Elohim is My strength). (6) He says, “It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones (Nazarenes) of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” (7) Thus says YHVH, the Redeemer of Israel, and its Holy One, to the despised One, to the One abhorred by the nation, to the Servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, Princes shall also bow down; because of YHVH who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You.’** We read about the re-gathering of Israel from verses 15 – 23 of Isaiah 49, where YHVH says: **“Can a woman forget her nursing child, and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. (16) Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me (YHVH was not prepared to give us up, and even died to buy us back). (17) Your builders hurry; your destroyers and devastators will depart from you. (18) Lift up your eyes and look around; all of them gather together, they come to you. As I live,” Declares YHVH, “You shall surely put on all of them as jewels, and bind them on as a bride. (19) For your waste and desolate places, and your destroyed land— Surely now you will be too cramped for inhabitants, and those who swallowed you will be far away. (20) The children of whom you were bereaved will yet say in your ears, ‘The place is too cramped for me; make room for me that I may live here.’ (21) Then you will say in your heart, ‘Who has begotten these for me, since I have been bereaved of my children, and am barren an exile and a wanderer? And who has reared these? Behold, I was left alone; from where did these come?’” (22) Thus says YHVH Elohim, “Behold, I will lift up My hand to**



***the nations, and set up My standard to the peoples; and they will bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters will be carried on their shoulders. (23) And kings will be your guardian, and their princesses your nurses. They will bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of your feet; and you will know that I am YHVH; those who hopefully wait for Me will not be put to shame.*** In the end YHVH promises through Isaiah in verse 26, saying: ***“And I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh, and they will become drunk with their own blood as sweet wine; and all flesh will know that I YHVH am your Savior, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”*** Yes, after Yahshua’s return to earth, all the earth will know that He is YHVH our Savior, who redeemed us – how much clearer do we want this Scriptural truth stated?

People, without repentance and the correct immersion into Yahshua’s saving name, for our disobedience to Torah and without returning to the original Hebrew Roots of the faith of our fathers in the faith, there can be no physical return. People who immerse others willy-nilly without following the correct procedure, namely to read in the hearing of the person they immerse the original covenant YHVH made with Israel at Mount Sinai (Exodus 20), ensuring that the individual is truly repentant of his/her past Torah breaking, and that he/she accepts Yahshua as his/her personal Passover, should be discouraged. In addition unless a Torah teacher or a teaching elder lay hands upon the person being immersed, such a person will not receive a portion of Elohim’s Set-apart Spirit necessary to indwell him/her to finally be resurrected at Messiah’s return, as witnessed 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.’*** At this point I am reminded again 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.’*** We should accordingly dissuade known false teachers who give people false hope of salvation, by immersing them without going through the proper procedures. But we should also teach those who do so sincerely, but in ignorance, to ensure that they are taught to follow the way of Elohim, before they start performing religious ceremonies which they will only be able to perform correctly once they are fully trained. Since immersion is directly related to Messiah’s memorial Passover, in that it reminds those who partake of the Passover annually of their own immersion (or symbolic death) when they were saved from sin or their personal Egypt as potential first born children of Elohim. We need to be mindful that Messiah’s disciples partook of four Passovers with him, the last one a few hours before His death, before they conducted their own Passovers with their own disciples.

Both the Tanach and the Renewed Covenant mentions the longstanding believe of Judah about the return of the lost ten tribes of Israel and their reconciliation with Judah into one nation. The Hebraic Restoration movement is also beginning to understand that the kingdom that will be established by Messiah when He returns one day refers to the re-united 12-tribe Kingdom of Israel. However, some are at this time rejecting the fact that the Rabbinical Jews of today are the custodians of the oracles described as the milk of the Gospel in Hebrews 5: 12, in this way: ***‘For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach the elementary principles of the oracles of Elohim*** (the timing of the Feast Days of Elohim, including the weekly Sabbath preserved for us by our Jewish Brothers), ***and you have come to need milk*** (to be taught about these elementary

principles of Elohim's oracles) **and not solid food** (meaning the meat or gospel which are both called the 'Besorah' in Hebrew).'

Even today our Jewish Brothers hold King David of ancient history in tremendous awe. They are fully aware that YHVH promised that He will one day restore the tabernacle of King David which has fallen. It is for this very reason that Rav Yaa'cov (a Jew) concludes the discussion about circumcision in Acts 15: 13 – 21, saying: **"Brethren, listen to me. (14) Simeon** (meaning Rav Kepha) **has related how Elohim first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles** (Israelites who believe they are Gentiles and some real Gentiles) **a people for His name (15) And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written, (16) 'AFTER THESE THINGS I will return, AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN, AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL RESTORE IT, (17) IN ORDER THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK YHVH, AND ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME,'** (the children of the house of Israel are essentially called by (YHVH)'s name – the name Israel means that you have striven with Elohim and have prevailed; it is also for this reason that each one of us the progeny of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as well as those who become heirs of Abraham through faith in Messiah, have to strive with Elohim {overcome our difficulties to understand why we need to do whatever Elohim requires of us in His word} before we truly become Israel. Even so, one day after Yahshua start ruling the united nation of Israel during the Millennium and beyond, the rest of mankind will follow the examples set by {both houses of} Israel as the model nation that YHVH wanted us to be from the beginning, when He called them out of Egypt) (18) **SAYS YHVH, WHO MAKES THESE THINGS KNOWN FROM OF OLD. (19) Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to Elohim from among the Gentiles, (20) but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood** (including not eating meat with blood in it {i.e. properly koshered meat}, but also to follow the laws regarding childbirth and menstruation) (21) **For Moses** (the first five books of the Tanach) **from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath.**" Brethren, do you fully understand what we have just read? This ruling of Rav Yaa'cov is endorsing the return, restoration and establishment of the 12-tribe kingdom of Israel based on the Torah of YHVH as taught by the Levites (the Rabbinical Jews) in the Jewish synagogues today. Yes, it is true that we Nazarenes are not welcome in the synagogues at this time, but we need to make very sure what our Jewish Brother teach so that we may be able to do what they teach – and not necessarily do what they do, as Yahshua confirmed in Matthew 23: 1 – 3.

But at this point we have not yet answered the question asked at the beginning. Let's first turn to the Tanach for an answer which we will later confirm in the Renewed Covenant. Few people realize that Yahshua is prophesied to return in Ezekiel 37, and will have already established His Kingdom in Ezekiel 38. We start reading therefore from verse 15 – 28 of Ezekiel 37, in this way: **'The word of YHVH** (before He came to earth as Yahshua) **came to me saying, (16) "And you, son of man** (Ezekiel), **take for yourself one stick and write on it, 'For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions** (Benjamin, and Levy)': **then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions.'** (17) **Then join them for yourself one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. (18) And when the sons of your people speak to you saying, 'Will you not declare to us what you mean by these?' (19) Say to them, 'Thus says YHVH Elohim, "Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand."**' (My question at this point is: Do you believe what YHVH is saying here, or not?) (20) **And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes. (21) And say to them, 'Thus says YHVH Elohim, "Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side** (YHVH is presently doing this by calling us out of the religions of the world to start following Him and His Torah once again) **and bring them into their own land; (22) and I will make them one nation in**

*the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations, and they will no longer be divided into two kingdoms. (23) And they will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people and I will be their Elohim. (24) And My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances, and keep My statutes, and observe them. (25) And they shall live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons, and their sons' sons, forever (those who try to convert their children and other family members do not understand that YHVH does the calling. If we go back to the land our children will go back to the land with us anyway<sup>5</sup>, if we qualify to be in the kingdom. Our children and grand-children will be taught the truth during the millennium and will once they understand Elohim's plan of salvation for all mankind and accept Yahshua as their Passover, be changed into spiritual children of Elohim. Similarly will our fathers and mothers, some who have already passed away, be resurrected after the millennium and be given the opportunity to understand the Scriptures and accept Yahshua as their personal Passover, after which they too will be changed into the spiritual children of Elohim. It is therefore clear, YHVH calls whoever He wants at this time and has a plan to save most people, including those who are already in their graves<sup>6</sup>), **and David My servant shall be their prince (under Yahshua) forever. (26) And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever. (27) My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their Elohim, and they will be My people. (28) And the nations (Gentiles) will know that I am YHVH who sanctifies Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forever.**""*

Examples in ancient history where the children of righteous servants of YHVH were saved with them are righteous Noah and his family, and Lot and his daughters. Similarly did righteous Yahshua not only atone for the house of Judah, but also for the remnant of the lost tribes of the house of Israel whom the Father shall call, as witnessed in John 11: 49 - 52, as follows: ***'But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, (50) nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish." (51) Now this he did not say on his own initiative; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Yahshua was going to die for the nation, (52) and not for the nation only, but that He might also gather together into one the children of Elohim who are scattered abroad.'*** This is also why YHVH says through Hosea about those who reject Scriptural truths such as these, in chapter 4 verse 6, as follows: ***'My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge, because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your Elohim, I also will forget your children.'***

<sup>5</sup> We read from Isaiah 61: 6 & 9: ***'But you will be called the priests of YHVH; you will be spoken of as ministers of our Elohim. You will eat the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast. Then their offspring (the children of those of us who make it) will be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples. All who see them will recognize them because they are the offspring whom YHVH has blessed.***'

<sup>6</sup> King David fully understood YHVH's plan of salvation for all mankind, and when he wrote Psalm 22 about Yahshua's death, he also showed us why Yahshua died for the sins of the world, saying in Psalm 22: 27 - 29: ***'All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to YHVH, all the families of the nations will worship before Thee (when all knees will essentially bow before Yahshua, after they are resurrected one day). For the kingdom is (YHVH)'s and He rules over the nations. All the prosperous of the earth (those in the first resurrection at Messiah's return and their flesh and blood children who survive into the millennium based on what we have just read in Ezekiel 37) will eat and worship, all those who go down to the dust (those already dead and buried) will bow before Him, even he who cannot keep his soul alive (because of the sort of life he lived whilst he was alive). Why then cannot some of us understand these truths and stop trying to call their families; something Yahshua said Elohim is doing HIMSELF – see John 6: 44.***

Many Messianic/Nazarene Israelites and like-minded believers have misunderstood what Rav Shaul is teaching in Romans 11, and has as a result become arrogant and some have even become anti-Semitic. However, this is where we find out exactly when a remnant of both houses of Israel will be saved together. Let's read from Romans 11: 25 – 29 and 32, where Rav Shaul wrote: ***'For I do not want you, brethren (from the 'Gentile' assembly that Rav Shaul oversaw in Rome, as the apostle to the Gentiles), to be uninformed of this mystery. Lest you be wise in your own estimation (something which indeed happened to many called out believers who like the ecclesia in Laodicea mentioned in Revelation 3: 14 – 17 did, thinking they know it all, but still had much to learn before they would be ready for Messiah's return), that a partial hardening (or blinding) has happened to Israel (meaning Jewish Israel in this case) until the fullness of the Gentiles (Israelites from the lost ten tribes who believe that they are Gentiles and some real Gentiles) has come in; (26) and thus all Israel (a remnant from both houses) will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB. (27) AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS."*** (28) *From the standpoint of the gospel (about the identity of Yahshua the true Messiah) they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of Elohim's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; (29) for the gifts and the calling of Elohim are irrevocable. (32) For Elohim has shut up all in disobedience that He might have mercy on all.'* Do we fully understand what Rav Shaul was trying to get across to us? If so, why do some still try and do what Yahshua said only YHVH will and can do.

Yes I hear some say: But I would like to do the work of Elohim. What is the work of Elohim which you and I as returning Israelites should do? We find the answer given us by Yahshua in John 6: 28 & 29, in this way: ***'They said therefore to Him. "What shall we do, that we may work the works of Elohim? (29) Yahshua answered and said to them, "This is the work of Elohim, that you believe in Him whom He sent."*** At this point we also need to remember what Yahshua said at the end of John 5 in verses 45 - 47, as follows: ***"Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father, the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. (46) For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. (47) But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"*** So we see here that Yahshua told us clearly what is recorded about the end time true believers as in Revelation 14: 12, in this way: ***'Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of Elohim and their faith in Yahshua.'***

Now after reading the above, we understand that there will be a cut-off point for the total number of believers whom YHVH is calling at this time. The cut-off point is as mentioned in Romans 11, when the fullness or full number of Gentiles (from the house of Israel plus some real Gentiles) have come in, then Messiah will return to the house of Judah first as recorded in Zechariah 12: 7. When the Jews in their synagogue see His hand at His return on Yom Teruah (as per Zechariah 12: 10), they will accept Him as their Master and Passover and He will save the remnant of Torah observant ones who remained faithful to YHVH and His Torah to the end, changing them into spirit-beings. This is also the day upon which the dead in Messiah will be resurrected as recorded in first Thessalonians 4: 13 – 16, 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. (15) For this we say to you by the word of the Master, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Master, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. (16) For the Master Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of Elohim; and the dead in Messiah shall rise first.'*** This is also what Rav Shaul meant with what He wrote in Romans 11: 15, saying: ***'For if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?.'*** This is also why YHVH through Isaiah tells Judah in Isaiah 66: 20 & 21, saying: ***'Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as a grain offering (meaning first fruit believers, as may be understood from Leviticus 23: 17) to YHVH, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules, and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem, says YHVH,***

***just as the sons of Israel bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of YHVH. (21) I will also take some of them for priests and for Levites, says YHVH.***

So contrary to what many Nazarene/Messianic and like-minded believers (from the Assemblies of YHVH and the ones in the offshoots of the Church of G-d) believe, the sons of Israel will not be the only priests and Levites during the millennium rule of Yahshua our Messiah. What a wonderful future is awaiting all Israel of both houses when Messiah returns and we will again be ruled by King David under Messiah as King of kings and Master of Masters. Halleluyah!



## **Chapter 11: The importance of the Jewish Beth Din for us.**

I am shocked at the opinion of some Nazarene/Messianic and like-minded believers who think that the Kosher signs put on the various food products that we use in our daily lives, are put on products in a haphazard fashion without those doing so knowing the contents of the product, or the location and condition of the place where it is prepared, and are merely concerned with getting payment for allocating the 'sign'.

I do not have to tell people in South Africa about recent happenings in our meat and restaurant industry. Horse, donkey, and all sorts of meat from totally un-kosher animals were sold as beef in even up-market butcheries and restaurants. However, that is only the tip of the iceberg of concerns for the average meat consumer. When we moved to Port Elizabeth from Durban 20 years ago, we had two South African meat inspectors who worked for the local abattoirs in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, and who attended services with us. They told us some hair-raising stories about the standards of the meat industry, concerning the quality of meat which they could declare as acceptable for human consumption at that time. They assured us that they would never buy meat that is not declared kosher by a trained Jewish or Muslim butcher. One told us that meat that is usually rejected by halal and kosher slaughterers, were accepted by all other butcheries – examples where animals having large infected sores on their body parts were processed anyway, except that the visible infected parts were cut out and discarded. I shudder to think what is allowed today, where the volume of meat used is ever increasing because of a growing middle-class, and the ageing and lack of maintenance of current facilities. On the contrary no diseased animal is ever considered for slaughtering by kosher or halal butchers. Even after an animal is slaughtered, the Jewish slaughterer will feel inside the carcass of the animal to determine the condition of the lungs if perhaps there is T B or another communicable disease present.

Even so, to us as Nazarene Jews/Israelites such problems should not concern us in the least, since most of us have been buying properly koshered meat from reputable meat markets anyway. In addition, for those who do not have kosher butcheries available in their areas, I usually recommend that they buy (clean meat) chicken, beef and mutton products from reputable halal butcheries, since they at least slaughter and bleed the animals in a proper way. Such meat should also before it is cooked, be further koshered by laying it in salt water to get rid of any excess blood, since we are definitely not allowed to consume the blood and fat of even Scripturally clean animals. However, in recent years there were stories doing the rounds about unscrupulous people labeling any meat with halal labels, thus making even halal sourced meat questionable today. We need to be careful therefore, since we are not only talking about scriptural health laws here, but we are talking about obedience to Elohim. It is important to remember that it was a kosher law (not to eat the fruit of a certain tree) that resulted in our forebears' expulsion from the Garden of Eden.

Jews in parts of the world where there are only a few of them living are absolutely envious of the kosher consumer who lives in South Africa. The world of kosher in South Africa is totally astonishing; not only in the amount of kosher food that is readily available in most parts of the country's reputable grocery stores, nor in the variety alone, but in the fact that there is only one certifying agency in Johannesburg. South Africa has only one Beth Din that sets the kosher standards for the whole community. Anyone who wants their products declared kosher, have to get in touch with the Beth Din in Johannesburg, who will send out 'inspectors' to inspect the contents of the product to be declared kosher, but will also ensure that the location where the product is manufactured measures up to the standards set by the Beth Din.

Even though we as Nazarene Jews/Israelites believe that the Levites among the Jews have been given the oracles of Elohim<sup>7</sup>, which includes the timing of Elohim's Feast Days within their seasons, as well as the koshering of food products, all new believers are initially required to adhere to at least the four basic requirements given us by Rav Yaa'cov, Yahshua's half-brother who took over the position as leader after Yahshua ascended to heaven in Acts 15. The ruling of Rav Yaa'cov in Acts 15 is in total agreement with the rulings of the Pharisaic Rabbis followed by Orthodox Jews of today. New believers should eventually follow all the requirements of the Torah, but in the beginning of their walk with Elohim they are only required to follow the essential four rules given in Acts 15: 20, in this way: ***'But that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood.'*** If we understand the ruling of Acts 15 from a Hebraic perspective, we will know that it does not contradict what Yahshua taught in Matthew 5: 19, saying: ***'Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.'*** At this time we are all aware that circumcision is not a requirement for salvation. However, if we as heirs of Abraham through Yahshua our Messiah want to inherit the Land of Israel as future rulers and priests under Yahshua, we will have to comply by doing our part in the covenant which YHVH made with Abraham, our father in the faith, as is confirmed in Ezekiel 44: 6 – 9, which is a prophecy about Messiah's millennial rule, as follows: ***'And you shall say to the rebellious ones, to the house of Israel. Thus says YHVH Elohim, "Enough of all you abominations, O house of Israel, (7) when you brought in foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to profane it, even My house, when you offered My food, the fat and the blood; for they made My covenant void – this in addition to all your abominations. (8) and you have not kept charge of My holy things yourselves, but you have set foreigners to keep charge of My sanctuary." (9) Thus says YHVH Elohim, "No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart (properly immersed) and uncircumcised in flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the sons of Israel, shall enter My sanctuary.'"*** Let's therefore consider each of the four initial requirements given us by Rav Yaa'cov in turn:

1. Firstly we get to the requirement ***'that they abstain from things contaminated by idols.'***? The ten-tribes of the nation of Israel were taken captive because of idolatry introduced to them by their new king after king Solomon, namely Jeroboam, as witnessed from 2 Kings 17: 22 & 23, in this way: ***'And the sons of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, (23) until YHVH removed Israel from His sight, as He spoke through all His servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away into exile from their own land to Assyria until this day.'*** Continuing in first Kings 12: 28 – 32 we see how Jeroboam lead Israel into worshipping idols, as follows: ***'So the king consulted, and made two golden calves, and he said to them, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt." (29) And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. (30) Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. (31) And he made houses on high places, and made priests from among all the people who were not of the sons of Levi. (32) And Jeroboam instituted a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast which is in Judah, and he went up to the altar; thus he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves which he had made. And he stationed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made.'*** We read further about Israel's idolatry from Hosea 4: 17, as follows: ***'Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone.'*** Hosea continues talking about the house of Israel in Hosea 8: 3 & 4, saying: ***'Israel has rejected the good; the enemy will pursue him. (4) They have set up kings, but not by Me; they have appointed princes, but I did not know it. With their silver and gold they have made idols for themselves, that they might be cut off.'*** It is

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<sup>7</sup> Judah has been given the oracles of Elohim, as witnessed in Matthew 23: 1 – 3; John 4: 22; Deuteronomy 17: 8 – 12; Deuteronomy 33: 8 – 11; Romans 3: 1 – 4; Romans 9: 4; and in numerous other verses in the Scriptures.

important to understand that things offered to idols are not only restricted to meat, but include such items as Easter Eggs, hot cross buns, Xmas cake etc. Even so, the point to remember is that the idolatry which was the cause of Israel's captivity, resulting in them becoming like Gentiles, had to do with keeping Feast Days at different times to what the Scriptures ordain, especially those that are a month later than the Feast Days kept in Judah, but also the feast days of pagan religions, such as Xmas and Easter. The prohibition against idolatry further entails that once we start serving YHWH as our Elohim, we should refrain from attending other church services, and stop their ministers from visiting us, to receive financial contributions 'to do god's work', since they are definitely not serving YHWH. We see further towards the end of the book of Hosea in Chapter 14: 8 & 9 that he prophesied that some in Ephraim will eventually stop to follow idols, saying: ***'O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am like a luxuriant cypress; from Me comes your fruit. (9) Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them. For the ways of YHWH are right, and the righteous will walk in them, but transgressors will stumble in them.'*** This prophecy tells us about those who will eventually become wise enough to realize that Ephraim has worshipped idols and will repent from doing so. This is in agreement with what King David has written in Psalm 19: 7, saying: ***'The law of YHWH is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of YHWH is sure, making wise the simple.'*** A second witness comes from Psalm 119: 98 – 100, in this way: ***'Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever mine. (99) I have more insight than all my teachers, for Thy testimonies are my meditation. (100) I understand more than the aged, because I have observed Thy precepts.'*** From this it is clear that we obtain more understanding by learning and practicing Torah and it is only by knowing Torah that we may fully understand Acts 15.

2. Next we deal with the prohibition ***'from fornication'***: Because new believers coming especially from Christianity believe that their savior has 'fulfilled' Torah for them (a word that they interpret to mean that 'He kept it for them'), and they are not obliged to keep it any longer, they do not understand that once they are properly immersed in Messiah's name, they need to stop fornicating. In addition Yahshua himself refuted this false believe of many in Christianity by saying in John 5: 46 & 47, ***"For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. (47) But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"*** Marital relations outside of marriage is not allowed according to Torah and those who are not legally married need to stop living together until they are legally married else they are not even near obeying Elohim's Torah.
3. Then we also need to consider the prohibition ***'from things strangled'***. This is another Torah command which has to do with how believers ought to prepare the meat of kosher animals before it is ready to be cooked. Animals should be properly slaughtered and the blood should be let out on the ground and covered with soil.
4. Finally we need to consider the prohibition ***'from blood'***; which refers to all those things in Torah which refer to as the proper way in which to deal with various blood issues. One such issue is that we should not eat meat with any residue blood in it:
  - Only meat from specific species is permissible.
  - Mammals and fowls must be slaughtered in a specific way: slaughtering is done by a trained individual, using a special method of slaughtering, called shechita (see Deuteronomy 12: 23 & 24). The Shechita slaughterer known as a shochet severs the jugular vein, carotid artery, esophagus and trachea in a single continuous cutting movement, with a sharp un-serrated knife, essentially avoiding unnecessary pain to the animal. If one of these criteria is not attained, the meat is rendered unsuitable. Prior to

slaughtering, the animal must be checked to ensure that it does not have a medical condition or defect that would have caused it to die within a year, which would make its meat un-suitable. The lungs of slaughtered animals should also be examined, to see that they are free of adhesions – so as to prevent the consumption of animals infected with tuberculosis. Sick and diseased animals are not clean. Animals which die naturally or are torn by beasts are also not fit for human consumption (see Leviticus 17: 15). In addition we are commanded not to eat a limb removed from a living beast as per Deuteronomy 12: 23.

- Blood must be removed as much as possible as per Leviticus 3: 17 and Leviticus 17: 10. This is done during the koshering process, by soaking and salting the meat. How many believers are sure that the meat that they buy conforms to these requirements? How many of our ladies soak meat in coarse salt or brine, before cooking it? Many in Christianity and especially Messianic/Nazarene and likeminded believers know about these requirements, but never followed them? Even so, there are many believers who go to restaurants, where they order steaks that even though it comes from kosher animals, are still full of blood. Yes, this means that we as believers cannot eat from normal un-kosher restaurants.
- The next blood issue which is equally important is for husbands and wives in a totally kosher marriage relationship to abstain from each other when the woman is menstruating and after childbirth in accordance with the Torah requirements in respect of both male and female children. This means that for any new believer who come into the faith, it becomes immediately important to get to know what the Torah has to say about these '*blood issues*'.

This tells us that new believers need to start studying Torah, prior to immersion, and as they continue studying after immersion, will learn to eventually obey all the Torah teachings applicable to them. The law (or Torah) is according to Romans 7: 14 spiritual and will continue even into the Kingdom of Elohim. This is perhaps why Rabbinical Jewish Rabbis teach [Mehilta, Bachodesh 6] that whoever acknowledges the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN denies idols and acknowledges the entire Torah. We also read Rav Shaul's admonition to believers in Corinth from 2 Corinthians 6: 14 – 18; 7: 1, as follows: ***"Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? (15) Or what harmony has Messiah with Belial, or what has a believer in common with and unbeliever? (16) Or what agreement has the temple of Elohim with idols? For we are the temple of the living Elohim; just as Elohim said, 'I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR ELOHIM, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. (17) THEREFORE, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,' says YHVH. AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you. (18) And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me, says YHVH Almighty. (1) THEREFORE, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting set-apartness in the fear of Elohim."***

Most true believers in Yahshua our Messiah have after they have been around for a number of years become label readers. Most of us and even our children inspect every item purchased from the grocery shelves of supermarkets to see if it carries a kosher sign from either the South African Beth Din or if the product is imported, marked either with a U or a K depending from the country it originates. As I said at the beginning most do not fully appreciate the fantastic service that the Jewish Beth Din is providing for us here in South Africa. Some of the specially trained staff attached to the Johannesburg Beth Din, travels thousands of miles per annum throughout the country to people who require their products to be declared kosher. In fact about 30 years ago an MBA student at the London City University Business School recommended that because of the comparatively small Jewish population in the UK, as opposed to that of the USA, they base their kosher certification on the South African model. Kosher symbols now appear on many national products and it has

become a fact of life for the discerning kosher consumer to be able to buy kosher certified products from any supermarket in the UK. The transformation over the past 25 – 30 years is all due to the successful implementation of national kosher certification many years ago in the South African community. The first ever certified product was in 1934 and was either 'Tastic' rice or 'Epic margarine'. There are exactly 17,481 unique products certified by the Beth Din, and these are from time to time inspected to ensure continued adherence to Beth Din standards. Users of such products will notice that at times the Beth Din certification of certain products are removed. The South African Beth Din at times travel as far as Ethiopia to ensure that products that we source from there and which the producer wants to have certified as kosher for users in South Africa, to inspect the manufacturing process, the location and the contents of such products.

When a product is certified Kosher for Passover, the Beth Din has to ensure that it contains no leaven at all. Because kosher meat should not be eaten or cooked in milk derivative products as per the prohibition in Exodus 23: 19; 34: 26; and repeated in the renewed covenant and listed with the clean and unclean foods as in Deuteronomy 14: 21, we also need to be aware what the kosher signs on the products that we purchase mean; example being when a product may be eaten with meat and contains no milk derivatives, it is marked with the Beth Din sign together with the word '*Parev*' written below. If the product contains milk derivatives, and should not be consumed with meat products, it will be clearly marked below the Beth Bin sign as '*milchik*'. Most kosher milk chocolates and ice-cream are marked as '*milchik*', but there are chocolates and ice-cream available which are marked as '*parev*', since such products are usually prepared with a cream made from palm oil.

The fact that products display the kosher sign, might add a very small amount to the purchasing price, but it ensures that we the users of such products, comply with the Torah teachings of YHVH our Elohim, since our Jewish Brothers are providing this service mainly for all Jews; and we are benefitting from this great effort and should thank YHVH for giving them the authority to administer His Feast Day calendar, and keep us within the boundaries specified by Torah, as far as foodstuffs are concerned. Baruch HaShem YHVH!



## **Chapter 12: The Scriptures is the word of Elohim.**

In an age where we have become used to live from one crisis to another, the most damaging casualty that is occurring is in our relationships with each other, as well as the universal estrangement from YHVH our Elohim. Trust has become a thing of the past and the values and ethics held by our forefathers are fast disappearing. We and our children are deeply concerned about what will happen tomorrow because job prospects are very limited and do not last all that long. The conditions we have been living in for the past two decades have left most people in the world with a sense of uneasiness and most are searching to find solutions in either human leadership, whilst a small number is trying to find solace in religion and the Scriptures. Such people wonder if there could be workable answers in the Scriptures after all.

In a teaching that Yahshua the Messiah gave during Chanukah in John 10: 1, 9 & 10, He said: ***“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and robber. (9) I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved and shall go in and out, and find pasture. (10) The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy (in other words for selfish reasons only); I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.”*** Those who twist the Scriptures to mislead people into a false sense of salvation are thieves and robbers, and in fact teaching disobedience to the way of Elohim. The Scriptures reveal Messiah’s true purpose for mankind, but the problem is that very few people ever truly understood what He taught. In addition most of what is taught by those who claim to believe in Him, was twisted to mean something totally different to what He taught and did whilst He was on earth, but fortunately His testimony<sup>8</sup> was recorded for us in the books of the Scriptures. The Scriptures reveal how YHVH our Elohim communicates with mankind, since the first coming of Yahshua our Messiah in Hebrews 1: 1 & 2, in this way: ***‘Elohim, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, (2) in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.’*** YHVH our Elohim, Creator of all things, did not leave us without guidance and direction; instead He left us with His word and revealed Himself by means of it.

Most of us are aware that the Scriptures refer to Yahshua the Messiah as the Word of Elohim in John 1: 1 – 3, and tells us in verse 14: ***‘And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.’*** We read further from Matthew 4: 4 that the Tanach is the true Word of Elohim, as follows: ***‘But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF ELOHIM.’”*** This is also what the original believers in Messiah, namely the Nazarene sect of the Pharisees believed, as witnessed by Rav Shaul in Acts 24: 14, in this way: ***“But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the Elohim of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law, and that is written in the Prophets.”*** Moses prophesied about the coming of a prophet like him, whose words Elohim told us to obey in Deuteronomy 18: 18 & 19, saying: ***“I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth and he shall speak to them all that I command him. (19) And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.”***

Rav Kepha tells us that the prophet who Moses wrote about was indeed Yahshua our Messiah as in Acts 3: 19 – 23, saying: ***“Repent therefore and return that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Master; (20) and that He may send Yahshua the Messiah appointed for you, (21)whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things (during the coming Kingdom of Elohim) about which Elohim spoke by the***

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<sup>8</sup> Yahshua’s testimony: What He did and taught whilst He was on earth as the perfect example YHVH our Elohim sent us to follow and imitate.

**mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. (22) Moses said, ‘YHVH ELOHIM SHALL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED in everything He says to you. (23) And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’”** The problem is that very few people who say they believe in Yahshua the Messiah truly believe in what He did and said whilst He was on earth, despite the Father restating what He told Moses in Deuteronomy 18 and Matthew 17, when Yahshua was transfigured before Kepha, Yaa’cov and Yochanan, saying in verse 5: ***“This is My beloved Son with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him!”*** It is clear therefore that the words of Yahshua Messiah as Elohim’s Son, is the heart or very essence of prophecy as is also confirmed in Revelation 19: 7 - 10, in this way: ***“Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready” (8) ‘And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (9) And he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb’” And he said to me, “These are true words of Elohim.” (10) ‘And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Yahshua; worship Elohim. For the testimony of Yahshua is the spirit of prophecy.”***

It is therefore vitally important to each one of us whom YHVH has called as disciples of Yahshua to listen very carefully to whatever He tells us as the word of Elohim, as the Father told Yahshua’s three disciples when He was transfigured with Moses and Elijah in Matthew 17. It is also very important for us to make an in depth study of Messiah’s life and teachings in the Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; but also in a larger sense in the entire word of Elohim, known to us as the Scriptures. In truth Yahshua Himself authenticated the Tanach by calling them the Scriptures in Luke 24: 44 & 45, saying: ***“These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” (45) ‘Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.’*** In addition Yahshua telling His disciples about the Set-apart Spirit who will provide inspiration for the writing of the books that would eventually become the Renewed Covenant in John 16: 13 & 14, saying: ***“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. (14) He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you.”***

Throughout His life on earth Yahshua treated the Tanach as the true record of Elohim’s teachings and dealings with mankind, and consequently His teachings always contained quotes and or allusions to it. Rav Shaul similarly wrote about the Scriptures in 2 Timothy 3: 16, saying: ***‘All Scripture is inspired by Elohim and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.’*** Rav Kepha also confirmed that the prophecies contained in the Scriptures are all inspired, saying in 2 Peter 1: 21, ***‘For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Set-apart Spirit spoke from Elohim.’*** It is clear from the afore-going that Elohim made known His divine message to mankind through the prophets as well as through Messiah’s apostles in the Renewed Covenant. We also see that Rav Kepha also refer to Rav Shaul’s letters as part of the Scriptures, in 2 Peter 3: 14 - 16, saying: ***‘Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, (15) and regard the patience of our Master to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Shaul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, (16) as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.’*** Rav Shaul refers to two quotations as Scripture in first Timothy 5: 18; the first one from the Tanach (Deuteronomy 25: 4) and the second from the Renewed Covenant (Luke 10: 7), in this way: ***‘For the Scripture says, “YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING,” and “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”’*** It is clear therefore that when Rav Shaul wrote his letters to Timothy between 62 – 64 CE, some of the writings of the apostles were already seen as part of the Scriptures.

The Scriptures is consistently pictured as coming directly from the mouth of YHVH Himself (Deuteronomy 8: 3). There are almost 4,000 passages in the Tanach introduced by such expressions as: *'YHVH spoke'*; *'Thus says YHVH'*; and *'the Word of YHVH came'*. Even so, the authorship of the Scriptures is dual in that both Elohim and man were involved. It is for this reason that Rav Kepha wrote in 2 Peter 1: 20 & 21, saying: ***'But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, (21) for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Set-apart Spirit spoke from Elohim.'*** Therefore all Scripture comes from Elohim. It is for this reason that Rav Yaa'cov wrote to those of us called out of the world at this time saying in James 1: 18 – 21: ***'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. (19) This you know, my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; (20) for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of Elohim. (21) 'Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls (lives).'*** As we seek YHVH our Elohim, His word will enable us to produce lasting fruit as recorded in Isaiah 55: 6 – 11, in this way: ***'Seek YHVH while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. (7) Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to YHVH, and He will have compassion on him; and to our Elohim, for He will abundantly pardon. (8) For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways My ways,' declares YHVH. (9) "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. (10) For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth, and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; (11) So shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.'"***

The purpose for studying Elohim's Word is to obtain understanding of His will and to learn to live by His Word. In addition YHVH expects those who diligently study His Word to take action as recorded in Hebrews 4: 11 – 13, as follows: ***'Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience. (12) For the word of Elohim is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (13) And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.'*** The Scriptures also tells us in Hebrews 11: 6, ***'And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to Elohim must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.'*** Our fathers in the faith Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as well as the prophets and apostles all experienced the reality of Elohim in a personal way. In ancient times Elohim established personal contact with certain chosen people, as we read from Exodus 3: 2 – 4, ***'And the angel of YHVH appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. (3) So Moses said, "I must turn aside now, and see this marvelous sight why the bush is not burned up." (4) When YHVH saw that he turned aside to look, Elohim called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses! And he said, "Here I am."***

Elohim appeared to Moses and later revealed His divine words, which Moses carefully recorded for future generations, as we read from the first part of Exodus 24: 4, in this way: ***'And Moses wrote down all the words of YHVH.'*** Elohim who Moses encountered was the Elohim Abraham had a personal conversation with in Genesis 18. Initially when Moses was fearful in the presence of Elohim, but later he overcame his fear and asked to see Elohim personally as is recorded in Exodus 33: 18. Today there are many who do not know who and what Elohim is. The prophet Hosea expressed sorrow because the house of Israel had willingly lost knowledge about Elohim with tragic consequences for them in Hosea 4: 1 – 6, saying: ***"Listen to the word of YHVH, O sons of Israel, for YHVH has a case against the inhabitants of the land, because there is no faithfulness or kindness or***

***knowledge of Elohim in the land. (2) There is swearing, deception, murder, stealing, and adultery. They employ violence, so that bloodshed follows bloodshed. (3) Therefore the land mourns, and everyone who lives in it languishes along with the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky; and also the fish of the sea disappear. (4) Yet let no one find fault, and let none offer reproof; for your people are like those who contend with the priest. (5) So you will stumble by day, and the prophet also will stumble with you by night; and I will destroy your mother. (6) My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your Elohim, I also will forget your children.'***

The Scriptures clearly tell us who the Creator is. Other than in Genesis 1, we also read from Isaiah 42: 5, ***'Thus says Elohim YHVH, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread out the earth and its offspring, Who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk in it.'*** It is possible for us to understand more about Elohim through His creation, and the fact that YHVH created us in His image gives us a hint of the ultimate potential He has planned for us. We also read fittingly from Romans 1: 19 & 20, ***'Because that which is known about Elohim is evident within them (meaning mankind); for Elohim made it evident to them (us). (20) For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes (Hebrews 11: 27 tells us that YHVH our Elohim is invisible), His eternal power (Yahshua is according to first Corinthians 1: 24 the power and wisdom of Elohim<sup>9</sup>) and divine nature (the Set-apart Spirit is the divine nature of which we might become partakers according to 2 Peter 1: 4), have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.'*** First Thessalonians 5: 23 confirms that the spirits (mind power and memory), souls (lives) and bodies of those who were called by Elohim, who were immersed into Yahshua's saving Name, had hands laid upon them by the elders of Elohim's assembly; and who accordingly received a portion of the Set-apart Spirit will if they remain faithful to the end, be preserved complete at Messiah's return. So even though each one of us as individual persons is only one, we like Elohim consist of three component parts, namely body, soul and spirit. It is therefore evident that YHVH our Elohim being only One YHVH (according to Deuteronomy 6: 4), also consist of three component parts; Yahshua being the image of the invisible Elohim (as per Colossians 1: 15), the Set-apart Spirit being the Spirit of Elohim, and YHVH the soul being eternal life, as recorded in first Timothy 6: 16, in this way: ***'Who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.'***

Although Elohim is Spirit and therefore eternal, the prophet Isaiah wrote about Him in Isaiah 57: 15, saying: ***'For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite (remorseful)."'*** So as we've read earlier in Isaiah 55: 5 & 6, even though YHVH inhabits eternity and is not constraint by time and space, He is quick to forgive those who return to Him and His Torah teachings with a repentant attitude. YHVH specifically sent the house of Israel, Yahshua the image of the invisible Elohim, to reconcile them to Him, but also to Brother Judah. The reason for so doing is because the house of Israel was always prone to idol worship, since they cannot like Judah worship an invisible Elohim. This is perhaps why Jeremiah wrote aptly in Jeremiah 10: 1 & 2, saying: ***'Hear the word which YHVH speaks to you, O house of Israel. (2) Thus says YHVH, "Do not learn the way of the nations, and do not be terrified by the signs of the heavens although the nations are terrified by them."'***

Because YHVH is all knowing, He knew that Israel will eventually forsake Him, and as a result He will scatter them throughout the nations of the world. This is why He said through Jacob that his offspring Israel will become a multitude of nations in Genesis 48: 19, but this is also why He said in Deuteronomy 4: 25 – 31, ***'When you become the father of children and children's children and have***

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<sup>9</sup> We also read from Jeremiah 32: 17, ***'Ah YHVH Elohim! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and Thine outstretched arm! (another name for Yahshua as per Isaiah 53: 1 and John 12: 37 – 40) Nothing is too difficult for Thee.'***



*remained long in the land, and act corruptly, and make an idol in the form of anything, and do that which is evil in the sight of YHVH your Elohim so as to provoke Him to anger, (26) I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you shall surely perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to possess it. **You shall not live long on it, but shall be utterly destroyed.** (27) And YHVH will scatter you among the peoples, and you shall be left few in number among the nations, where YHVH shall drive you. (28) And there you will serve gods, the work of man's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. (29) But from there you will seek YHVH your Elohim, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. (30) When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days, you will return to YHVH your Elohim and listen to His voice. (31) For YHVH your Elohim is a compassionate Elohim; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.'* So we see that Isaiah also prophesied in Isaiah 10: 22, saying: ***'For though your people, O Israel, may be like the sand of the sea, only a remnant within them will return; a destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness.'***

Yes, Yahshua the word of Elohim by whom YHVH made the heavens as per Psalm 33: 6, came specifically to bring back the lost sheep of the house of Israel, as He told the Canaanite woman who asked Him to heal her daughter in Matthew 15. And right from the beginning when the children of the Israelites who died in the wilderness was about to enter the Land of Israel, YHVH told them to listen to Yahshua, the word of Elohim (Deuteronomy 18: 18). YHVH again told Kepha, Yaa'cov and Yochanan to listen to Yahshua when He was transfigured before them in Matthew 17. Even though the message contained in John 3: 16 is not the true gospel, it has a great deal to do with it. Even so, it contains the same message, in this way: ***'For Elohim so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.'*** The most important part of this verse is also the most misconstrued section in the Scriptures, since most people do not fully understand what it means to believe in Yahshua. Firstly belief in Yahshua means that we believe in His name; Yahshua meaning the Salvation of Yah, and secondly that we believe what He did and taught whilst He was on earth, or His testimony. In addition the word believe also means more than what most people think, and is defined a lot better in John 3: 36 (which should always be read together with verse 16), as follows: ***"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of Elohim abides on him."*** Yes, we need to become fully obedient to Yahshua the Word of Elohim.

However, very few truly ever obeyed what Yahshua taught as is shown by the examples below:

1. Yahshua told Nicodemus in John 3: 13 saying: ***"And no one has ascended into heaven, but he who descended from heaven, even the Son of Man."*** Despite this and the fact that both David and Abraham are still in their graves, as recorded in Acts 2: 29 & 34 and Hebrews 11: 39 & 40, and are waiting for those of us who will be with them in the first resurrection at Messiah's return, most in Churchianity believe that good people go to heaven and the wicked to eternal punishment in hell, when they die.
2. Yahshua told the Sadducees in Matthew 22: 29 & 30 answering their question about the resurrection of the dead, saying: ***'You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures, or the power of Elohim. (30) For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.'*** This means that angels as well as demons, who are merely fallen angels, cannot have marital relations with people, yet some insist that angels had such relations with people during Noah's time, resulting in giants called Nephilim. This they apparently get from a book written by Enoch. My question to them at this point is: Which Enoch do you mean? It must be remembered that even though Enoch was Jared's son, Cain's first born son was also called Enoch. I believe Cain's son could write such diatribe to mislead Elohim's people. However, the Scriptures do not say this at all, and as explained in commentary to this section of Scripture in the 1599 Geneva Study Bible, in this way: Genesis 6.2 ***'That the (a) sons of G-d saw the***



**daughters (b) of men that they {were} (c) fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.**

- a. The children of the godly who began to degenerate.
- b. Those that had wicked parents, as if from Cain.
- c. Having more respect for their beauty and worldly considerations than for their manners and godliness.

Genesis 6: 3, **'And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always (a) strive with man, for that he also {is} flesh: yet his days shall be an (b) hundred and twenty years.'**

- a. Because man could not be won by G-d's leniency and patience by which he tried to win him, he would no longer withhold his vengeance.
- b. Which time span G-d gave man to repent before he would destroy the earth (in Noah's day).

Genesis 6: 4, **'There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of G-d came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare [children] to them, the same [became] mighty men which [were] of old, men of (a) renown.'**

- a. Who usurped authority over others, and degenerated from that simplicity, in which their father's lived.

Yes, the people in Noah's day were most probably more advanced than us, and inspired by Satan played around with mankind's gene pool to cause their offspring to become unnaturally large in size, but Satan was never created to procreate by Elohim and could therefore not have marital relations with mankind, as Yahshua also confirmed in Matthew 22.

3. Yahshua also explained to Nicodemus that we must be immersed in water to ultimately be born again into the Kingdom of Elohim. Yahshua further explained that only one day when we are resurrected in the first resurrection as spirit beings at Messiah's return, will we be born again into Elohim's Kingdom, as is also witnessed in first Corinthians 15: 42 – 53 and first Thessalonians 13 - 17. Yet many in the churches of the world do not believe what Yahshua taught here and believe that they are already born-again, in this life.
4. Yahshua said plainly that He did not come to abolish the Torah and the Prophets, but to fulfill them, by showing us by example how to do it 'better' than the scribes and the Pharisees as He said in Matthew 5: 17 – 20. In fact He explained His way of obeying Torah in the rest of the chapter, concluding by saying in verse 48: **"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."** Yet, most churches in the world misinterpret the word 'fulfill' and teach that Yahshua fulfilled the Law for them, so that it is no longer necessary to keep it any longer.
5. Further on the subject of the validity of Torah for believers in Messiah today, Yahshua also confirming the Oneness of Elohim, said in John 5: 43 – 47: **"I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive (or believe) Me; if another (like a minister in a church) shall come in his own name, you will receive (or believe) him (without question). (44) How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only Elohim? (45) Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father, the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. (46) For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. (47) But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"** Because Churchianity teach that Yahshua was talking to the Jews of His day here, they disregard totally what He said, whereas in fact He was saying that without believing in the Torah which Moses wrote as commanded by Elohim, we cannot believe in Him (meaning Yahshua the Messiah). Yet most of those who say they believe in Messiah, will tell you that Torah is not binding on them any longer. In addition note that Yahshua was also saying in this section, that if someone comes and tells us something different to what He taught, we are likely to believe such a person, rather than believe what Yahshua taught regarding the matter.
6. Yahshua plainly told believers in Him in Matthew 23: 1 – 3 that the Pharisees of His day sit in Moses's seat and are therefore authorized to proclaim Elohim's annual Feast Days, provided that they are within the correct season as He told Moses in Leviticus 23: 4. He also told us to listen to what they say, but not to do what they do, since they like most Pious men are hypocrites, more

interested in showing off their righteousness, but nevertheless doing the right thing – a case in point was making their tzitzit much longer than required. Yet, there are those who insist that Yahshua did not say what was written in Matthew 23 and that He personally gave them (as His latter day disciples) authority to replace the Jews in such decisions, in Matthew 16: 18; a section of the Scriptures that the Roman Catholic Church also interpreted incorrectly, as Rav Kepha, the one to whom Yahshua spoke in Matthew 16 explained in Acts 4: 10 – 12 and first Peter 2: 5 – 10, confirming that Yahshua is the Rock of our Salvation and foundation upon which His congregation is being build.

7. Yahshua plainly told His disciples that they should not do missionary work among the Gentiles in Matthew 10: 5 – 8, but that they should go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel scattered throughout the world, proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom of Elohim to them. In other words they should not try and convert any one, but simply proclaim the good news about the coming kingdom of Elohim to them, as Messiah said in Matthew 24: 14. He also said to them in John 6: 44 & 65, that *'no one can come to Him, unless the Father who sent Him draws him.'* Yet there are many in Churchianity who believes they should send out missionaries to convert as many people to their faith as possible. They do so by claiming that they are simply doing Elohim's work. This despite Yahshua telling His disciples and by implication also us His modern day disciples in John 6: 29, saying: ***"This is the work of Elohim, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."*** If we obey these words of Yahshua and show our faith in Yahshua by doing what He requires of us, we will obviously attract other people to us through our conduct, as Elohim's model people – which are what YHVH intended the Israelites to be from the start. In such cases where Gentiles are attracted to serving Elohim, and are prepared to keep His Sabbaths and hold fast His covenant, they must obviously also be immersed, since YHVH will accept them as well, as Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 56: 6 & 7, saying: ***"Also the foreigners who join themselves to YHVH, to minister to Him, and to love the name of YHVH, to be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, and holds fast My covenant; (7) Even those I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer."*** However, in this regard Yahshua also told His disciples in Matthew 13, when they asked Him why He used parables to teach them, saying in verses 11, 12 and the first part of verse 19: ***"To you (meaning His disciples and by implication also us His modern day disciples) it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them (not called at this time) it has not been granted. (12) For whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. (19) When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart."*** So we see from this explanation, that only those who truly understand the true gospel about the Kingdom of Elohim will ultimately be called. A second witness to this may be read from 2 Corinthians 4: 4.

YHVH specifically prepared a body for the Word of Elohim who became flesh as Yahshua – the Son of Man, born of a human mother. This is why Rav Shaul wrote about Yahshua in Hebrews 10: 1 – 5, ***'For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. (2) Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? (3) But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. (4) For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. (5) Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING THOU HAST NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY THOU HAST PREPARED FOR ME."*** We read further about the fact that Yahshua replaced the Sacrificial Law instituted after the sin of the golden calf in Hebrews 10: 14 – 20, in this way: ***'For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. (15) And the Set-apart Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, (16) "THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS YHVH: I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND UPON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM," (brethren, YHVH is busy doing this for us whom He has***

called out of the world right now, but we need to become fully obedient to His word. He will also do so for those of our children who survive and live on into the millennium) ***He then says, (17) “AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE.” (18) Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin. (19) Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Yahshua, (20) by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is His flesh (or body).’*** We understand from this section, that it is talking about Messiah’s body of flesh, which YHWH obviously prepared for Him in Miriam His human mother. But we also see that it was through His body of flesh, which was broken on the stake to give us access to (YHWH)’s throne and ultimately His Kingdom. He became the Son of Elohim after His resurrection (Romans 1: 4), to show us how we will one day when we are resurrected at His return be born-again as the children of Elohim.

However, we read further about Yahshua from Colossians 1: 18, ***‘He is also the head of the body, the assembly; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.’*** This gives us two important facts: firstly that Elohim’s called out assembly, consisting only of those who were suitably immersed into Yahshua’s saving name are in essence also the body of Messiah; and secondly that He is the first to ever be born-again from the dead. Rav Shaul also mentions true knowledge of Elohim’s mystery in Colossians 2, saying in verses 1 – 3: ***‘For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf, and for those who are at Laodicea (a congregation also mentioned in Revelation 3: 14, as being lukewarm in their faith in Messiah), and for all those who have not personally seen my face (meaning he never personally taught them), (2) that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in true knowledge of Elohim’s mystery, that is Messiah Himself, (3) in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (as mentioned earlier in first Corinthians 1: 24).’***

Here we get to the point about judging the body of Messiah rightly, when partaking of Messiah’s annual Passover. We turn to first Corinthians 11, where we are given the reason for Messiah’s memorial Passover as well as part of the ceremony in verses 23 – 25, in this way: ***‘For I received from the Master that which I also delivered to you, that the Master Yahshua in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; (without knowing about the Passover mentioned in Exodus 23: 18, some mistakenly believe they may use normal bread here, but we are told in this scripture that ‘you shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread’) (24) and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, “This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” (25) In the same way He took the cup also, after supper (some also keep the Passover without a small meal, as Yahshua obviously did at that time), saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood (which YHWH said He would write in our hearts – beginning at this time already in a small way with the first fruits, but will only complete doing so during the Millennium and beyond); do this, as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me.” In other words: we should keep Messiah’s memorial Passover once a year as per His example. Continuing on in verse 26 & 27 we read: ‘For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Master’s death until He comes. (27) Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Master in an unworthy (not spiritually prepared or in a flippant) manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Master.’ We read further from verses 29 – 34, ‘For he who eats and drinks, eat and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly.’ (This is talking about both Messiah’s physical body as well as the assembly of called out believers being trained by their teacher as per Messiah’s commission in Matthew 28: 18 – 20.) (30) For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep (have died). (31) But if we judged ourselves (as the body of Messiah) rightly, we should not be judged. (32) But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Master in order that we may not be condemned along with the world. (33) So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat (yes we as the body of Messiah should partake of His memorial Passover together), wait for one another. (We need to be concerned for one another.) (34) If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you may not come together***

**for judgment.'** Verse 34 actually confirms what is written in verse 20 of first Corinthians 11, i.e. that Messiah's memorial Passover is not the Master's Supper, where we consume a lot of food and drink a number of glasses of wine and get drunk, it is a solemn occasion during which we remember Messiah's death until He comes.

Even so there is more about judgment recorded in Colossians 2: 16 - 19, in this way: ***'Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day – (17) things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Messiah. (18) Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, (19) and not holding fast to the head (Yahshua), from whom the entire body (members of the congregation), being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from Elohim.'*** This is telling us that outsiders should not sit in judgment of what we eat and about the Sabbath days which we keep according to Elohim's teachings; since these Sabbath days are firstly shadows of the part of Elohim's plan for the salvation for all mankind, still to occur in the near future when Messiah returns; and secondly that outsiders have no say about what we do as Elohim's called out assembly, but that the body of Messiah should judge it in accordance with the way shown us by Yahshua whilst He was on earth. New believers only become part of the body of Messiah if they were immersed correctly as described in the word of Elohim – they need to be immersed in the name of Yahshua the Messiah by a Torah teacher or a Deacon ordained by the Torah teacher, after which they will only receive the Set-apart Spirit after a teaching elder (Torah teacher) has laid hands upon them as per Acts 8: 12 – 17; first Timothy 4: 14; and 2 Timothy 1: 6. The Passover is celebrated annually by the Torah teacher and his disciples, until the disciples have been fully trained (after at least four Passovers) and start keeping the Passover with their own disciples. This is essentially what is spoken about in verse 19 of Colossians 2 above.

Reading, hearing and doing what Elohim's Word requires are key characteristics of Elohim's assembly of called out people, as Yahshua also taught in Luke 8: 21 when they told Him that His mother and brothers are waiting for Him outside, saying: ***"My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of Elohim and do it."*** The Word of Elohim builds faith in a believer's life, as witnessed in Romans 10: 17, in this way: ***'So faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Messiah.'*** In fact Elohim expects His people to diligently and regularly study His word with understanding, for personal edification and for guarding themselves against Satan and his agents, as we read from Ephesians 6: 17, as follows: ***'And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of Elohim.'*** It is vitally important for each one of us to study the Word of Elohim on a regular basis, but specifically what Yahshua Messiah as the embodiment of Torah and Helmet of salvation taught and did whilst He was on earth. As stated in 2 Timothy 3: 16 Elohim's inspired Word is to be used to establish doctrine, correct errors, and to give instruction. We read Messiah's own words in John 17: 17, where He asked the Father, saying: ***"Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth."*** Yes brethren the Scriptures are used to clean up believers in Messiah, as His bride to make herself ready for His return, as we read from Ephesians 5: 26 & 27 and also from Revelation 19: 7, as follows: ***'That He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, (27) that He might present to Himself the assembly in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be set-apart and blameless.'*** (Rev.19: 7) ***'Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.'*** Baruch HaShem YHVH!

### Chapter 13: Why does YHVH our Elohim allow humans to suffer?

Most people who believe in YHVH because of His calling find it very easy to believe in Him when everything is going well. However as soon as a disaster strikes we quickly begin to question His existence. The spiritual condition of society has not been very inspiring since the beginning of the financial troubles in 2009. Because people do not understand why suffering is on the increase, they assume that neither Elohim nor religion provides answers for our problems.

Ever since World War I agnosticism has increased in Europe and the UK, because more than 10 million people died and about 20 million were injured during that conflict. The war of that time caused great damage to Christianity and their belief that G-d was in control, and since then most Europeans have come to believe that faith in Elohim cannot be justified. After the Nazi death camps of World War II there was a surge in the wave of doubt throughout Europe, resulting in the selling of empty churches for use as office space, bookshops and even nightclubs. This wave of doubt became so great that even some in the Jewish community started losing their faith in Elohim. The question is: How do we reconcile suffering and anguish caused by war with the Scriptural description of a loving Elohim? How is it possible that an all loving Elohim allows such terrible miseries to afflict mankind?

The truth is that from the beginning Elohim has given us freedom of choice. He will never force us to do anything that we do not want to do, but will always allow us to choose the way we want to go. However, from the beginning He told our ancient forebears in Israel in Deuteronomy 30: 19, saying: ***"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants."*** What are the advantages and disadvantages of our free will? We need to be mindful that freedom of choice allows for both good and evil outcomes. Truth is that in a world of freedom of choice, some choices predictably lead to damaging consequences, as Rav Shaul explains in Galatians 6: 7 – 10, saying: ***'Do not be deceived, Elohim is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. (8) For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life. (9) And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary, (10) So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.'***

Many centuries ago YHVH revealed to the prophet Hosea what He is going to do to the house of Israel because of their idolatry, violence and immorality. A few short years later the Assyrian army swept in from the east and slaughtered thousands of the northern kingdom of Israel and enslaved the survivors. Elohim showed Hosea exactly what was going to happen to Israel and also told them through the prophet, the reason why. It was inevitable that the house of Israel's sins would catch up with them. Elohim has similarly warned us about what will befall us at this time during which we live if we continue in our sin. However, when thousands die in natural disasters, such as tornadoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis we immediately blame Elohim. Yet Elohim told ancient Israel in Leviticus 26: 3 & 4, saying: ***"If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out, (4) then I shall give you rains in their season, so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit."*** The decisions made by our father's in the faith affected not only their own lives, but the lives of their children to the third and the fourth generations of those who hate YHVH. In this way the innocent often suffers because of the sins of others, which is but one of the consequences of bad choices.

By therefore analyzing suffering, we will learn a great deal, by tracing the circumstances back to their cause. We are warned about the long-term consequences of our actions in Proverbs 22: 3, in this way: ***'The prudent sees the evil and hides himself, but the naïve go on, and are punished for it.'*** When we consider major causes of suffering in our lives, we often need not look further than ourselves. Rav Shaul accurately described the human condition in Romans 3: 10 – 18, saying: ***"As it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; (11) THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS,***



**THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR ELOHIM; (12) ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.” (13) “THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,” “THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS”; (14) “WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS”; (15) “THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD, (16) DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS, (17) AND THE PATH OF PEACE HAVE THEY NOT KNOWN.” (18) “THERE IS NO FEAR OF ELOHIM BEFORE THEIR EYES.”** The unfortunate thing is that not all of the suffering, misery and heartache resulting from the bad decisions that we make, come on us alone, but many of the consequences of our choices fall indiscriminately on innocent bystanders, like our children and grand-children. Often times those who had nothing to do with our bad choices suffer most from them. In fact Moses confirmed this principle in Numbers 14: 18, saying: **‘YHVH is slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations’**” The bad choices that mankind made in the past are the cause of most of the suffering we see today.

Even so, the Scriptures reveal the only true and lasting solutions for all human suffering. The reason why Elohim has not put an end to human suffering is not because He lacks control over what human beings do. YHVH our Elohim has a great purpose that He is working out here on earth. But His design requires that He allows people to exercise free will. We have options to make choices that may even oppose His perfect will for us. It is our free moral agency (our freedom of choice) that provides the answer to understanding why Elohim allows suffering and evil to exist. Mankind’s problem started in the Garden of Eden, where Elohim gave our forefathers a rule regarding the food they were allowed to eat in Genesis 2: 9, in this way: **‘And out of the ground YHVH Elohim caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.’** YHVH gave Adam and Eve a choice of two trees or ways of life. But He did not leave them in the dark regarding these two trees. He explained the consequences of their choices, but even commanded them not to make the wrong choice, as we read from Genesis 2: 16 – 17, as follows: **‘And YHVH Elohim commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; (17) but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.”’**

However, we know that our forebears did not obey YHVH and eventually made the wrong decision, as we read from Genesis 3: 6, in this way: **‘When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.’** Despite YHVH Elohim’s warning that man should not eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, He did not stop them from making wrong decisions. Elohim being the personification of holy righteous character has always chosen what is wise and good. Because His plan for us is to ultimately become like Him, He did not create us as robots. If He did, we could not build the same righteous character that He has. Even though we are made in His image and likeness, Elohim could not from the start create us in His spiritual image. The reason being, that character building requires that we evaluate the choices open to us, taking into account the consequences and then make the best decision. It requires that we choose between right and wrong, watchfulness and carelessness, wisdom and stupidity.

The fortunate thing is that YHVH has provided us with a manual, describing in detail how to live, ensuring that we honor Him as our creator and sustainer, and also how to live with our neighbor. But like with Adam and Eve, Satan has deceived most to believe that Elohim’s manual, the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, but specifically the first five books where He gave Moses His commandments, statutes and judgments to record for all who wish to join themselves to YHVH the Elohim of Israel and serve Him, has been set-aside by Yahshua the Messiah. This was and still is clearly a hoax, whereby Satan has deceived the whole world, since Messiah being the image of the

invisible Elohim (part of the very Elohim), has not and will not ever teach people to forsake His Torah, as He aptly taught in John 5: 45 – 47, saying: ***“Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father, the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. (46) For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. (47) But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”***

If we take time to study the Scriptures we will soon learn what will happen to us if we make the wrong choices. We read for example from Proverbs 22: 8, ***‘He who sows iniquity will reap vanity.’*** Scriptural record shows that after Elohim commanded mankind what to do and what not to do in His word, He rarely interferes with man’s freedom to make decisions. Yes, He protected Abraham’s wife Sarah, from the immoral intentions of a king, and has at times intervened in human affairs to assist or protect His faithful servants. But in general, Elohim’s purpose functions best by Him giving us freedom to make our own decisions, even if it sometimes causes enormous suffering. Otherwise we will not learn the importance of developing righteous character, nor will we get to know the consequences of sinful behavior.

Here I want to give two important examples: Even though we as Nazarene/Israelite believers in YHVH are allowed to drink alcoholic beverages, He will never prevent us from drinking too much alcohol. In the same way that YHVH does not take away the freedom of choice of those who do; He also does not prevent them from suffering the consequences of the choices. However, He also warns those who regularly overindulge, but more specifically those of us whom He has called at this time through what Rav Shaul wrote in first Corinthians 6: 9 & 10, saying: ***‘Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of Elohim? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, (10) nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of Elohim.’*** The reason we know that this is specifically talking about those of us called out of the world, is what Rav Shaul wrote in verse 11, saying: ***‘And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Master Yahshua Messiah, and in the Spirit of our Elohim.’*** I am sure this will help some understand why we cannot immerse people who simply live together, before they get legally married. A second example is where people do not ensure that they perform the necessary health laws to prevent diseases from spreading to other human beings, as commanded in Deuteronomy 23: 12 & 13, in this way: ***“You shall also have a place outside the camp and go out there, (13) and you shall have a spade among your tools, and it shall be when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and shall turn to cover up your excrement.”*** If we do not do this, flies will soon land on the feces and spread germs by later landing on the food that you or someone else prepares. These laws are specified in Torah for our good, but it is as a result of disobedience to these laws, that we get sick and sometimes even die.

In addition to giving us His Torah, YHVH also provide those of us with the necessary help through Yahshua as we read from Hebrews 2: 16 – 18, as follows: ***‘For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. (17) Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to Elohim, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. (18) For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.’*** Elohim’s ears are also open to the prayers of those who sincerely want to obey His Torah, as David wrote in Psalm 34: 15, saying: ***‘The eyes of YHVH are toward the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.’*** Many have wondered; why didn’t Elohim create mankind as spirit beings from the beginning? Why did He decide to make us physical, flesh and blood human beings, and then only offer us eternal life if we earnestly resist the weaknesses of the flesh? If Elohim is omnipotent and can do everything, why did He not create us with a perfect character? Why did He create us to go through this difficult and trying physical life? Was it not possible for Him as our Creator to avoid all human suffering?

But, Elohim did not want to create us without the personal character that we need for making personal choices. It all has to do with our freedom of choice or the free moral agency that He gave each and every one of us. Elohim Himself had a choice about how He would create mankind. He could if He wanted to create us all to be exactly the same and to respond to Him like robots, whose actions would all be based purely on the instructions of our Maker. But He chose to create us like Him, able to make decisions that are limited only by our knowledge and character. This essentially required that we learn right from wrong and that our characters steadily develop by our decisions under His guidance and teachings contained in His word. As flesh and blood human beings, we need to understand that we are even now Elohim's workmanship – He is not finished with us. Throughout our lives, He is creating His righteous and holy character in us. As long as we are alive as physical human beings, our characters are not yet complete. As physical people we can change our minds and behavior based on our experiences. Yes, if we do not regularly study Elohim's word, the only other way in which we learn, is by our mistakes. Since we can change our minds and behavior, and repent from our wrongdoing, Elohim can change us even more and create in us the will to slowly but surely choose what is right over what is wrong, as Rav Shaul explains in Philippians 2: 12 & 13, saying: ***'So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; (13) for it is Elohim who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.'*** The main thing that Elohim wants us to do; is to recognize our incorrect behavior and be willing to correct our behavior by allowing His Spirit to empower us to make these changes. It is only then, when we can become *'a new person'* willing to obey Elohim, and thereby building His righteousness in us.

The Scriptures describe man's heart as our innermost thoughts, motives and attitudes. Elohim knows what is going on in the minds of each one of us. We see from Hebrews 4: 12 & 13, that He evaluates our intents and motives, 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 (the way we live) and spirit (what we think, our intents and purposes), of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.'*** YHVH considers what we do in the light of what is in our hearts (or the thought that motivates us), as He says through the prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 17: 10, as follows: ***'I, YHVH, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds.'*** We see from what the prophet Ezekiel wrote in Ezekiel 36: 26 & 27, that Elohim can effect a change in our hearts (the way we think), in this way: ***'Moreover, I will give you a new heart and will put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. (27) And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.'*** If we are prepared to give up our will and make His will and way, the way according to which we live, He will empower us through His Set-apart Spirit to live by the principles that He defines in His Torah. It is by studying Elohim's word that we learn to follow Elohim's way, as Rav Shaul wrote in 2 Timothy 3: 16 & 17, saying: ***'All Scripture is inspired by Elohim and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; (17) that the man of Elohim may be adequate, equipped for every good work.'*** Elohim writes what we learn from His word in our hearts, as Rav Shaul further wrote in 2 Corinthians 3: 3, saying: ***'Being manifest that you are a letter of Messiah, cared for by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living Elohim, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts.'***

Elohim allows trials and difficulties in our lives so that He can know how committed we are to His way of life. He has to determine if our character will endure hardship and suffering, to entrust us with the powers that come from eternal life. It is true therefore that we are placed on earth not only to build Elohim's righteous character, but also that that character be tested. YHVH continually tests our character to ensure that we will ultimately measure up to the Standard that He set for us, in Yahshua our perfect example. YHVH similarly tested ancient Israel as recorded in Deuteronomy 8: 2, as follows: ***'And you shall remember all the way which YHVH your Elohim has led you in the***

**wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.”** We see further from first Peter 1: 6 & 7, that YHVH test our faithfulness and even our righteousness by various trials, in this way: **“In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, (7) that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Yahshua Messiah.”**

King David told us in Psalm 11: 5 that even the righteous are tested to see how faithful they remain to Elohim, as follows: **‘YHVH tests the righteous and the wicked, and the one who loves violence His soul hates.’** It is only when we face very difficult decisions that Elohim can see how truly committed we are to Him and His way. Only when we obey under very difficult circumstances accompanied by severe temptation that the depth of our character is made known to Elohim, as Rav Shaul witness in Romans 5: 3 & 4, saying: **‘And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; (4) and perseverance proven character, and proven character hope.’** But, we need to always be mindful that Elohim will never allow us to be tested beyond what we can endure, as Rav Shaul witnessed in first Corinthians 10: 13, saying: **‘No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and Elohim is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.’**

One of the greatest mysteries for many believers is why Elohim allows upright people to suffer. Such believers usually question the benefit of suffering for those who are trying to live according to Elohim’s word. Rav Kepha gives us the answer in the first book of Peter, where he distinguishes between suffering for righteousness (which brings us closer to Elohim) and suffering for mistakes we make. Even so, it is important to be aware that we need Elohim’s help during both types of suffering. Commencing therefore in first Peter 2: 19 - 21 Rav Kepha wrote: **‘For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward Elohim a man bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. (20) For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with Elohim. (21) For you have been called for this purpose, since Messiah also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps.’** Just prior to His impalement, Yahshua explained to His disciples in John 15: 19 & 20, saying: **“If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of this world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. (20) Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than His master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.”** In addition Rav Shaul further tells us in 2 Timothy 3: 12, saying: **‘And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Messiah Yahshua will be persecuted.’**

Rav Kepha explains that much of the persecution directed at true believers in Messiah, is directed at Messiah Himself. The life that He now lives in us through the Set-apart Spirit is the real target, as Kepha wrote in first Peter 4: 12 & 13, saying: **“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; (13) but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Messiah, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice in exaltation.”** Because sin is a major cause of suffering, a great deal of unnecessary suffering can be avoided by obeying Elohim. It is for this reason that Rav Kepha continued in verses 14 – 16, saying: **‘If you are reviled for the name of Messiah, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of Elohim rests upon you, (15) By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; (16) but if anyone suffers as a Nazarene (a believer in Messiah), let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify Elohim.’** Obviously those who ignore this advice suffer as we read from Proverbs 1: 29 – 32, in this way: **“Because they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of YHVH. (30) They**

***would not accept my counsel, they spurned all my reproof. (31) So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way, and he satiated with their own devices. (32) For the waywardness of the naïve shall kill them, and the complacency of fools shall destroy them.”***

Even though we cause a great deal of our own suffering, Elohim’s preference is that we experience just the opposite. If we believe that Elohim takes pleasure in human suffering, we definitely misunderstand His character completely. In fact He says just the opposite in Ezekiel 33: 11, where He tells Ezekiel: ***“Say to them, ‘As I live!’ declares YHVH Elohim, ‘I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?’”*** In fact YHVH often postpones punishment in the hope that we will repent, as Rav Kepha wrote in 2 Peter 3: 9, saying: ***‘YHVH is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.’*** YHVH wants everyone that He ever created to achieve salvation in His kingdom, as He inspired Rav Shaul to write in first Timothy 2: 3 & 4, saying: ***‘This is good and acceptable in the sight of Elohim our Savior, (4) who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.’*** Think about it!

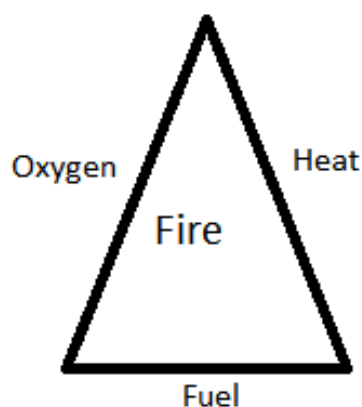


## Chapter 14: Will any of us survive the coming great tribulation?

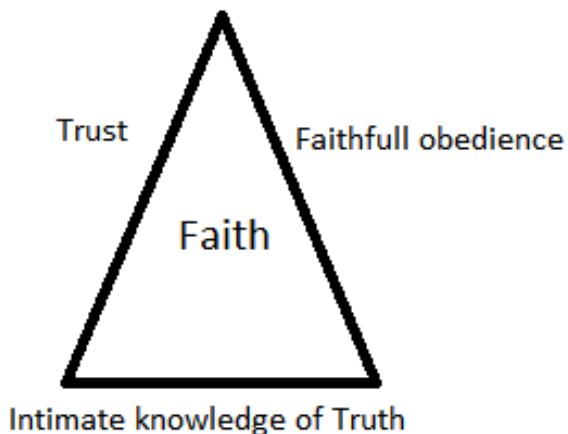
Most of us are aware of the recent blood moon that people saw around the world after Passover of 2014 (or 5774 according to the Hebrew calendar). People have been fascinated by the signs of the night sky for many years. In fact when Yahshua was on the earth about 2000 years ago, He remarked in Matthew 16: 2 - 4, saying: ***"When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.'*** (3) ***And in the morning, 'There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.'*** Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times? (4) ***An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah."*** It is when we consider Scriptural prophecy, which well-meaning people have associated with world political events and or natural disasters, and conclude that prophecy is being fulfilled before our very eyes.

But, when such events do not turn out the way these *'prophets'* predicted for those who would like it to happen, but do not realize the consequences they are hoping for, they are disappointed. In fact YHVH warned such false prophets in Ezekiel 13: 2 – 9, saying: ***"Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who prophesy, and say to those who prophesy from their own inspiration, 'Listen to the word of YHVH!' (3) Thus says YHVH Elohim, 'Woe to the foolish prophets who are following their own spirit and have seen nothing. (4) O Israel, your prophets have been like foxes among ruins. (5) You have not gone up into the breaches, nor did you build the wall around the house of Israel to stand in the battle on the day of YHVH. (6) They see falsehood and lying divination who are saying, 'YHVH declares,' when YHVH has not sent them; yet they hope for the fulfillment of their word. (7) Did you not see a false vision and speak a lying divination when you said, 'YHVH declares, 'but it is not I who have spoken?'" (8) Therefore, thus says YHVH Elohim, "Because you have spoken falsehood and seen a lie, therefore behold, I am against you," declares YHVH Elohim. (9) "So My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations. They will have no place in the council of My people, nor will they be written down in the register of the house of Israel, nor will they enter the land of Israel, that you may know that I am YHVH Elohim."***

The point is that such false alarms have happened before and will occur again. But one day these astonishing but frightening Scriptural prophecies will be fulfilled. Are we going to be ready when they do? I do not mean physically prepared, but spiritually. Many Nazarene/Messianic and like-minded teachers teach their disciples a number of survival tricks, from stocking up on blankets, canned and other food products, to how to start a fire without lighters. But, will their people be spiritually prepared for such events? The point is we are going to need a lot of faith to make it into Elohim's eternal kingdom. Many do not even understand what *'true faith'* in the way of Elohim entails. To help us understand what faith involves let me explain by the way every firefighter is taught the fireman's triangle depicted here under:



To have a fire you need (1) **Fuel** plus (2) **Oxygen** plus (3) **Heat**. By removing anyone of these three essential components the fire is extinguished. By studying the word *'Faith'* or more specifically faithfulness which is transliterated as *'emunah'* in Hebrew, it can in the same way be represented by means of a tri-angle containing three essential components. To have scriptural faith (emunah), we need (1) **Knowledge of truth**; i.e. Knowledge of the word of Elohim as Yahshua defined it in John 17: 17 plus (2) **Faithful obedience** plus (3) **Trust** in YHVH as the rewarder of those who believe in Him. By removing any of these three component parts, you cannot have true scriptural faith or faithfulness. It is as



Rav Yaa'cov explained in James 2: 17, in this way: ***'Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead being by itself.'*** To start with, a new believer is required to grow in grace and knowledge of Elohim's word in order to understand what He requires of us (as per 2 Peter 3: 18). In addition such a believer has to start obeying the commands that he/she learned by realizing that once we start following the way of Elohim, we are placed into a covenant relationship with Him. It is similar to the way the ancient Israelites were placed in a covenant relationship with Elohim on the very first Pentecost or Shavuot that they observed on the 6<sup>th</sup> of Sivan at Mount Sinai, when He gave them the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20. It is important to understand that only

those who remain faithful to the end will be in the kingdom of Elohim, as may be understood from reading from Revelation 17: 14, as follows: ***"These (the ten kings who will receive authority from the beast) will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Master of masters and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."***

To be able to remain faithful to the end, we require an intimate knowledge of truth, and trust in YHVH to be able to marry Yahshua the bridegroom at His return, as explained in the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25. The oil spoken about in Matthew 25 is knowledge of truth that is taught in a discipleship program similar to the one Messiah started with His disciples, and commissioned them to continue until He returns one day soon, as per Matthew 28: 18 – 20<sup>10</sup> and Matthew 24: 45 & 46<sup>11</sup>. This is why the five prudent virgins tell the foolish virgins in the last part of Matthew 25: 9, saying: ***'Go instead to the dealers (those who teach Torah) and buy some for yourself.'*** Yahshua's bride is supposed to make herself ready at this time, by washing her robes in the word of truth – cleaning up their lives using Torah. Even though the main purpose for us is to get ourselves ready for Messiah's return, some are only interested in the signs of the times, to save their and the lives of their family members. They are not really interested in getting to know what YHVH requires of us. It was for this reason that Yahshua told His disciples in Matthew 16: 25, saying: ***"For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it."*** They misinterpret what Yahshua told His followers in Matthew 24: 42 (KJV), saying: ***'Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Master doth come.'*** Some say Yahshua meant that we should watch the signs of the times, by reading newspapers and magazines to see how what is happening in the world around us ties up with prophecies of His return one day.

This is indeed true, however, I believe it means more specifically that we should watch ourselves and the way we live; to see how it conforms with the example He left us whilst He was on earth. When reading Matthew 16: 25 together with verse 24, we understand that this is really what Yahshua meant, in this way: ***'Then Yahshua said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let Him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."'*** Even though Scriptural prophecy is important for us who live at this end time, we need to be more concerned about the way we live than its

<sup>10</sup> Matthew 28: 18 – 20: ***'And Yahshua came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority (power) has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, immersing them in the name of the Father and the son and the Set-apart Sprit, teaching them to observe all that I command you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."'***

<sup>11</sup> Matthew 24: 45 & 46: ***"Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes."***

fulfilment, for then at least we will be ready when the Master comes. We also read Yahshua's warning in this regard in Matthew 7: 21 – 23, as follows: ***'Not everyone who says to Me, "Master, Master," will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. (22) Many will say to Me on that day, "Master, Master," did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles? (23) and then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS."***

Even so, the Scriptures are also clear that both good news and bad news lie ahead. Although we will before long face the darkest days, these dark days is really the prelude to a wonderful world such as we have never seen before or can even begin to imagine. Yahshua our Messiah in answering His disciples' question about the end of this age, said to them in Matthew 24: 4 – 8, ***"See to it that no one misleads you. (5) For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Messiah,' and will mislead many. (This is talking about the many false teachers who will come in Yahshua's name misleading people into false ways of attaining salvation.) (6) And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. (7) For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. (8) But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs."*** These are in fact the same birth pangs that Rav Shaul wrote about in Romans 8: 19 – 23, as follows: ***'For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of Elohim. (20) For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope (21) that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of Elohim. (22) For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. (23) And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.'*** We need to understand that Elohim is always in control and does everything for a purpose, even if we do not always understand that purpose. Elohim knows our nature and has since the creation of mankind seen how we as a human race regularly brought enormous suffering on ourselves through our bad choices. It is as the Scriptures point out in Galatians 6: 7 & 8, in this way: ***'Do not be deceived, Elohim is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. (8) For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life.'*** Prophecy reveal that man will bring himself to the brink of self-extinction, but also reveal how we will survive.

Mankind has always wondered what lies in the future. Throughout the ages people have sought out seers and fortune tellers to predict the future for them. However, most of what these self-proclaimed prophets predict usually comes to naught. The few correct predictions or their lucky guesses that they have are greatly outnumbered by their misses. The Scriptures however, are different, in that it contains numerous detailed prophecies which were fulfilled many years later. Because Scriptural prophecy is sure to happen, it can really be seen as history given in advance. We see from Isaiah 46: 9 & 10 that Elohim does tell us what is yet to occur, saying: ***"Remember the former things long past, for I am Elohim, and there is no other; I am Elohim, and there is no one like Me, (10) declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, 'My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure."*** But, we also see from Amos 3: 7, that He allows people to understand what will occur in the future, as follows: ***"Surely YHVH Elohim does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets."*** The point is Elohim will ensure that whatever He planned to happen in the future, will happen as He told us through Isaiah in the second part of Isaiah 46: 11, saying: ***"Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it."*** So, it is one thing to predict the future, but it is something else to have the power to make it happen.

The Scriptures speak clearly of different ages, as may be seen in the following two Scriptures: In Luke 18: 29 & 30, Yahshua speaks of an age to come, saying: ***“Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of Elohim, (30) who shall not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life.”*** Rav Shaul speaks of the present age in Galatians 1: 3 & 4, saying: ***‘Grace to you and peace from Elohim our Father; and the Master Yahshua Messiah, (4) who gave himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of our Elohim and Father.’*** In fact we see from what Yahshua’s disciples asked Him in Matthew 24: 3 that He told them about what is to happen during *‘the end of the age’* during which we are living at present. Yahshua predicted specific events and conditions that would pave the way of His return, saying in Luke 21: 27 & 28: ***“And then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory. (28) But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”*** Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 are parallel accounts of Messiah’s Olivet prophecy, given by Him immediately before His impalement and subsequent resurrection. As we’ve seen in Matthew 24, 3 & 4, Yahshua started with a warning about the many false prophets who will deceive many in His name. Religious deception will be widespread right up to and even after the coming great tribulation, as He indicated in verses 21 -24, saying: ***“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. (23) Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Messiah,’ or ‘There He is,’ do not believe him. (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.”***

We need to study the words of Messiah and His apostles, especially where they warned us regarding a great religious movement - using His name, which would lead most people in the world astray. We read from 2 Corinthians 11: 13 - 15, where Rav Shaul also warned about this, 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.’*** The approach of this religious deception would be to preach about another messiah and a different gospel, as Rav Shaul showed in 2 Corinthians 11: 3 & 4, saying: ***‘But I am afraid lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Messiah. (4) For if one comes and preaches another Yahshua whom we have not preached (one who came to abolish His Father’s strict adherence to Torah), or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel (a gospel about the life, death and resurrection of Messiah, rather than the gospel of the coming kingdom of Elohim) which you have not accepted, you bear it beautifully.’*** He continues in Galatians 1: 6 & 7 saying: ***‘I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Messiah, for a different gospel; (7) which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Messiah.’***

Even so, despite the deception that will take place, the true gospel will also be preached into the world, as Yahshua predicted in Matthew 24: 14, saying: ***“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness (not to convert) to all the nations, and then the end shall come.”*** In addition to religious deception Yahshua also predicted the wars that occurred and will yet occur before His return in verses 6 & 7 of Matthew 24. World War I started in 1914 and barely twenty years later World War II commenced. During both these wars millions of people were killed, whilst millions of others were wounded or maimed. In addition the world has witnessed numerous other wars and conflicts since the end of World War II. Messiah also predicted famines; pestilences and earthquakes that will occur before the great tribulation, saying that these will be only the beginning of sorrows (in verse 8 of Matthew 24). Then finally before Messiah’s return, there will be

the greatest tribulation ever. Fortunately, Messiah told His disciples that He will shorten the period that the great tribulation will last, in order to save His elect alive. Even though Messiah told us about all these occurrences, He did not predict exactly when these events will come to pass. In fact He told His disciples in Matthew 24: 36, saying: ***“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.”*** The absolute speed at which these things will occur will come as a surprise to many people as we read Yahshua’s words in verse 37 – 39 of Matthew 24, in this way: ***‘For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. (38) 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.’***

However, those of us whom YHVH has called at this time, will have a general idea of when these events will occur, as Rav Shaul wrote in first Thessalonians 5: 1 – 6, but especially in verse 5, saying: ***‘For you are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of night nor of darkness.’*** Since those of us called out of the world by Elohim, have been keeping His annual Feast Days as He commanded in Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16, we are aware that Messiah will return in the near future on the Feast of Trumpets or Rosh Hashanah as our Jewish Brother refer to it. Continuing in verses 6 – 11 of first Thessalonians 5, Rav Shaul told us how to prepare for these momentous events, saying: ***‘So then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. (7) For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. (8) But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. (9) For Elohim has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Master Yahshua Messiah, (10) who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. (11) Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing.’*** Yahshua echoed what Rav Shaul said in Luke 21: 34 – 36, 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. (36) But keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man .”*** Rav Yochanan also recorded Yahshua’s words in Revelation 3: 3 many years after His ascension into heaven, where He said: ***“Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you.”***

Elohim’s word gives us adequate direction in order to be spiritually prepared for these coming events, saying that we should watch (ourselves in terms of Torah and the rest of His words) and be sober, put on the breastplate of faith (doing righteous deeds like keeping His Sabbaths, etc.), put on the helmet of salvation (believe in what Yahshua taught and did whilst He was on earth), be on alert (be aware of your every deed to ensure it complies with the way Yahshua lived) and pray to have the strength to escape these things. But, Rav Shaul predicted that mankind will be doing just the opposite in the latter days in 2 Timothy 3: 1 – 4, saying: ***‘But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. (2) For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, (3) unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, (4) treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of Elohim.’*** Sad to say, only those who are totally naïve will disagree that most people are exactly like Rav Shaul prophesied we will be like at this time. Just as predicted people who are alive at this time are utterly selfish and self-absorbed, and as a result they have become blinded to the danger signs around them, and will most likely be taken by surprise. If we do not follow Elohim’s instructions to be sober-minded and watchful, we could fall asleep and become spiritually unprepared, and will suffer the penalties of our neglect.



In fact we have reached a period of time during which some assume that Yahshua our Messiah will not return any longer. We read fittingly from 2 Peter 3: 3 & 4: ***‘Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, (4) and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.”’*** However Rav Kepha reminds such doubters about Elohim’s perspective of the timing of Messiah’s return in 2 Peter 3: 8 & 9, saying: ***‘But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with YHVH one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (9) YHVH is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any (of those called at this time) to perish but for all to come to repentance.’*** Yes, YHVH would love to get those who used to follow His way, but were deceived and have since become lukewarm in their love for Him, to return. Kepha was saying here that some will misunderstand the conditions leading up to Messiah’s return, because they have a limited human view, rather than Elohim’s perspective. In addition to giving us details of His imminent return in His Olivet prophecy recorded in the books of Matthew, Mark and Luke, Yahshua also gave us additional details about these events in the book of Revelation.

By carefully comparing what is recorded in Revelation 6, with Yahshua’s Olivet prophecies, we see that it is in total agreement. The white horse in verse 2 represents a powerful, conquering religious deception, which is different to the white horse in Revelation 19: 11 – 16, with Yahshua the word of Elohim, as its rider. The red horse and its rider is representative of war. The black horse and its rider depict famine; and the pale horse represents sickness and disease that usually follow warfare and famine. According to this prophecy, the coming war, famines and diseases will take the lives of hundreds of millions of people. Yahshua depicts the events He discussed in His Olivet Prophecy in Revelation by means of seven seals. Revelation 6 describes the opening of the first six seals, in this way:

- First seal in verse 2 represents religious deception as Messiah described in Matthew 24: 4 & 5.
- Second seal in verses 3 & 4 represents war as described by Messiah in Matthew 24: 6 & 7.
- Third seal in verses 5 & 6 represents famine as described by Messiah in Matthew 24: 7.
- Fourth seal in verses 7 & 8 represents disease as described by Messiah in Matthew 24: 7.
- Fifth seal in verses 9 – 11 represents tribulation and persecution of true believers in Yahshua as described in Matthew 24: 9 – 13 and Luke 21: 12 – 19.
- Sixth seal in verses 12 – 14 represents a major earthquake and heavenly signs, the real cause of the final blood moon before Messiah’s return described in Matthew 24: 7 and Luke 21: 11.

We see from Revelation 8: 1 & 2 that the seventh seal is different, in this way: ***‘And when He broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. (2) And I saw the seven angels who stand before Elohim; and seven trumpets were given to them.’*** We see that the seventh seal is made up of seven trumpets which lead up to Messiah’s return. These events are described as *‘The seven trumpet plagues.’* The events to occur at the blast of the first six trumpet plagues are described in Revelation 8 & 9, summarized as follows:

- First trumpets in verse 7 of Revelation 8: devastation of the earth’s vegetation.
- Second trumpet in verses 8 & 9: devastation of the world’s oceans and seas.
- Third trumpet in verses 10 & 11: devastation of rivers and fresh water.
- Fourth trumpet in verse 12: the sun, moon and stars darkened.
- Fifth trumpet in Revelation 8: 13 & 9: 1 – 12: Satan inspired war.
- Sixth trumpet in Revelation 9: 13 – 21: A 200 million strong army killing a third of mankind.

However, we see from Revelation 9: 20 – 21 that even after all these terrible events the people still alive at that time will not repent, as follows: ***‘And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; (21) and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.’*** Next, we see what happens at the blast of the seventh Trumpet in Revelation 11: 15, in this way: ***‘And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Master and of His Messiah; and He will reign forever and ever.”’*** The sound of the seventh trumpet announces the return of Yahshua the Messiah, as Rav Shaul also described in first Corinthians 15: 51 – 53, saying: ***‘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. (53) For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.’*** Yahshua our Messiah will return to earth in the same way as He left the day on which He ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives about 2000 years ago, as is also recorded in Zechariah 14: 4, in this way: ***‘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.’*** We were given the reason for Messiah’s return in John 18: 37, as follows: ***‘Pilate therefore said to Him, “So You are a king?” Yahshua answered, “You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth (that He is coming to establish the kingdom of Elohim on earth). Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”*** Pilate asked Yahshua if the rumors about Him being a king is true; so Yahshua confirmed that He was indeed a king, but said before in verse 36: ***“My kingdom is not of this world.”*** Messiah’s purpose at that time was not to overthrow the Roman government and restore the kingdom of Israel. Yes, Yahshua was destined to rule, but His kingdom was not of the time during which He came the first time. However, when He returns one day He will be King of kings and Master of masters over all the earth.

The world was predicted to become a very dangerous place at the time of the end. The actions of mankind have brought us to the edge of self-annihilation. What is the reason for our rebellious and self-destructive ways? The main reason is the influence that Satan the devil had since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. Satan is still the major reason for mankind’s spiritual blindness as Rav Shaul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4: 3 & 4, in this way: ***‘And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, (4) in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Messiah, who is the image of Elohim.’*** Satan has influenced people from the time of Adam and Eve and has successfully turned mankind away from Elohim. Satan has brought about untold misery. To fully understand the reason for so much sorrow, we need to look no further than Satan. The problem for us living at the end of the age, is that he is particularly active just before Messiah’s return. We read accordingly from Revelation 12 : 12 , 13 & 17, ***‘For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.’*** (13) ***And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. (17) And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of Elohim and hold to the testimony of Yahshua*** (what He taught and did whilst He was on earth).’

In a similar way that Satan hated Yahshua Messiah and worked out the events that brought about His execution, he also hates those in the assembly of Elohim. He is in fact the main force behind the persecution of those who faithfully keep Elohim’s Torah and Yahshua’s testimony. Yahshua

confirmed that His followers will be persecuted, the same way He was persecuted, in Luke 21: 16 - 19, saying: ***“But you will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death, (17) and you will be hated by all on account of My name. (18) Yet not a hair of your head will perish. (19) By your endurance you will gain your lives.”*** Yahshua foretold that as events come to the peak prior to His return, some of our brethren will lash out at those who remain faithful to Elohim. Some of us will be imprisoned and some will be killed, but if we remain faithful even to the point of death, we will be given eternal life in Messiah’s kingdom.

Once Yahshua our Messiah returns one day on Yom Teruah, Satan will be bound hand and foot and cast into the abyss for a thousand years, as may be seen from Revelation 20: 1 – 3, in this way: ***‘And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. (2) And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, (3) and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.’*** At that time Satan will be banished and his power will be broken so that he cannot influence humanity any more. Only once Satan is completely out of the way, will mankind begin to obey Elohim’s law and Yahshua Messiah’s rule over us, as Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 2: 3, saying: ***‘And many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain (government) of YHVH, to the house of the Elohim of Jacob; that He may teach us concerning His ways, and that we may walk in His paths.” For the Law will go forth from Zion, and the word of YHVH from Jerusalem.’*** Satan has influenced mankind for the past six thousand years. He has ensured that his nature controls human nature and we became like him, full of vanity, greed, lust and selfishness. But once Yahshua returns to rule the earth, He will ensure that Satan’s influence is totally removed, as we read from Isaiah 11: 9, as follows: ***“They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain. For the earth will be full of the knowledge of YHVH as the waters cover the sea.”*** Once the spiritual blindness is removed from mankind, the earth will be changed into a place of peace and plenty. Halleluyah!

## **Chapter 15: Return to YHVH; return to David; return to the temple.**

The book of Hosea is a prophecy about the way the house of Israel forsook YHVH their Elohim, but also David their king and Temple worship or Torah. To determine what went wrong with the ancient nation of Israel, we need to look at the time immediately prior to King Solomon's death. Most believers know that ancient Israel's problems really started before King Solomon's death, when he appointed Jeroboam over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph, as recorded in first Kings 11: 26 – 28, in this way: ***'Then Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, Solomon's servant, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also rebelled against the king. (27) Now this was the reason why he rebelled against the king: Solomon built the Millo (or citadel), and closed up the breach of the city of his father David. (28) Now the man Jeroboam was a valiant warrior, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious, he appointed him over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph.'*** Because King Solomon was a very wise man he saw that even though Jeroboam was rebellious, he had other good qualities.

However, when reading the rest of the account from first Kings 11, we see from verses 29 – 39, that it was Elohim who specifically chose Jeroboam to take the rulership of the house of Israel away from the house of David, as follows: ***'And it came about at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Now Ahijah had clothed himself with a new cloak; and both of them were alone in the field. (30) Then Ahijah took hold of the new cloak which was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces. (31) And he said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces; for thus says YHVH, the Elohim of Israel, 'Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and give you ten tribes (32) (but he will have one tribe, for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel), (33) because they have forsaken Me, and have worship Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the sons of Ammon; and they have not walked in My ways, doing what is right in My sight and observing My statutes and My ordinances, as his father David did. (34) Nevertheless I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, but I will make him ruler all the days of his life, for the sake of My servant David whom I chose, who observed My commandments and My statutes; (35) but I will take the kingdom from his son's hand and give it to you, even ten tribes. (36) But to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may have a lamp always before Me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen for Myself to put My name. (37) And I will take you, and you shall reign over whatever you desire, and you shall be king over Israel. (38) Then it will be, that If you listen to all that I command you and walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight by observing My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build you an enduring house as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you. (39) Thus I will afflict the descendants of David for this, but not always."*** Notice the only proviso Elohim gave Jeroboam to rule the house of Israel, was to obey YHVH the Elohim of Israel the way King David did before him.

King Solomon's son Rehoboam started ruling in Solomon's place after his death. King Solomon ruled all twelve tribes of Israel for forty years, during which time the nation lived peacefully, because he demanded heavy taxes from the citizens, allowing them to dominate their neighbors economically and militarily. However, this heavy tax burden caused significant resentment among the citizens of Israel and because of Jeroboam's effective administration over the forced labor in Israel, the nation requested him to be their spokesman to try and lighten the tax burden under King Rehoboam. We pick up the account in 1 Kings 12: 4, where Jeroboam said to Rehoboam, ***"Your father made our yoke hard; therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you."*** Rehoboam required some time to consider the nation's request through Jeroboam and consulted with the elders who served under his father, who advised him in verse 7 of first Kings 12, saying: ***"If you will be a servant to this people today, will serve them, grant them their petition, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever."*** But,

Rehoboam did not listen to the counsel of the elders, and consulted with the young men who grew up with him. The young men's counsel to Rehoboam is recorded in verses 10 & 11, as follows: ***"Thus you shall say to this people who spoke to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, now you make it lighter for us!' But you shall speak to them. 'My little finger is thicker than my father's loins! (11) Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.'"*** When the nation of Israel saw that Rehoboam did not listen to them they answered the king, saying in verse 16 of first Kings 12: ***"What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse; to your tents, O Israel! Now look after your own house, David!" So Israel departed to their tents.'*** We see further from verse 20 that Israel subsequently made Jeroboam king over all Israel and only the tribe of Judah followed the house of David.

Rehoboam immediately assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin to fight against the house of Israel. Even so, we read from first Kings 12: 22 – 24, ***'But the word of Elohim came to Shemaiah the man of Elohim, saying, (23) "Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin and to the rest of the people, saying, (24) 'Thus says YHVH, "You must not go up and fight against your relatives the sons of Israel; return every man to his house, for this thing has come from Me.'"*** However, we see that despite of YHVH informing Jeroboam that He has chosen him to rule over the ten tribes of Israel, Jeroboam feared that if the house of Israel returned to Jerusalem to keep Elohim's Feast days, they will want Rehoboam to be their ruler once again. We read from verse 28 – 33 of first Kings 12, how Jeroboam went off the track, because of his fear motivated by jealousy, as follows: ***'So the king consulted, and made two golden calves, and he said to them (the house of Israel), "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt." (29) And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. (30) Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. (31) And he made houses on high places, and made priests from among all the people who were not of the sons of Levi. (32) And Jeroboam instituted a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast which is in Judah, and he went up to the altar; thus he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves which he had made. And he stationed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. (33) Then he went up to the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised in his own heart; and he instituted a feast for the sons of Israel, and went up to the altar to burn incense.'***

King Jeroboam's personal agenda led to spiritual mistakes that would bring untold misery on the house of Israel and their descendants. Soon after taking over the leadership of Israel, Jeroboam led the nation away from worshipping YHVH the Elohim of Israel, in the way that He prescribed in the Scriptures. Jeroboam's counterfeit worship, with its own festivals and priesthood was the primary reason for the house of Israel's downfall. Jeroboam like us was specifically chosen by Elohim to rule His people, but he failed to use the opportunity given him by Elohim. Similarly today, there are some leaders whom YHVH specifically called to lead His people, by teaching them to keep His weekly and annual Sabbaths specified in the Scriptures, but because of their personal agendas, motivated by fear and jealousy of other leaders, and or because of anti-Semitism, they contradict what the word of Elohim teaches. Elohim pronounced a sobering judgment against Jeroboam, through Ahijah the prophet in 1 Kings 14: 7 – 10, as follows: ***"Go, say to Jeroboam, 'Thus says YHVH Elohim of Israel, "Because I exalted you from among the people and made you leader over My people Israel, (8) and tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you—yet you have not been like My servant David, who kept My commandments and who followed Me with all his heart, to do only that which was right in My sight; (9) you also have done more evil than all who were before you, and have gone and made for yourself other gods and molten images to provoke Me to anger, and have cast me behind your back— (10) therefore behold, I am bringing calamity on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male person, both bond and free in Israel, and I***



***will make a clean sweep of the house of Jeroboam, as one sweeps away dung until it is all gone.”*** Because of Jeroboam’s sin, YHVH also rejected Israel as is recorded in verses 14 – 16, in this way: ***“Moreover, YHVH will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam this day and from now on. (15) For YHVH will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; and He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the Euphrates River, because they have made their Asherim, provoking YHVH to anger. (16) And He will give up Israel on account of the sins of Jeroboam, which he committed and with which he made Israel to sin.”***

The major reason why Messianic Jews (who are mostly from the tribe of Benjamin) are wrong in their effort to proselytize the house of Judah, is if they truly believed what Yahshua the one they say they came to believe in taught, they will realize that the House of Judah are the ones who remained close to YHVH and His Torah, and are not the ones needing to be saved. If they like many in Christianity fully understand what Yahshua taught, they will concentrate on proclaiming the Gospel of the coming Kingdom of Elohim into the world as a witness, specifically to reach the lost sheep of the house of Israel and not to Judah. We see Yahshua’s own words to the Canaanite woman who asked Him to heal her demon-possessed daughter, saying to her in Matthew 15: 24, ***“I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”*** In addition when Yahshua sent out His disciples the first time in Matthew 10: 5 – 7, He said to them: ***“Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; (6) but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (7) And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’”*** Yahshua also told the Pharisees who asked His disciples why He eats and drinks with tax-gatherers and sinners, saying in Luke 5: 31 & 32: ***“It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. (32) I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”***

It is vitally important for those of us from the lost ten tribes of Israel to understand that we are the ones spoken about in Daniel’s prayer in Daniel 9: 7 as being far away from YHVH, in this way: ***“Righteousness belongs to Thee, O YHVH, but to us open shame, as it is this day – to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which Thou hast driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against Thee.”*** We see from Ephesians 2: 11 – 19, that Yahshua came to reconcile us to the Father, but also to Brother Judah, as follows: ***‘Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Un-circumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands— (12) remember that you were at that time separate from Messiah, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel (meaning the commonwealth of Israel consisting of both houses, which were ruled by King David), and strangers to the covenants of promise<sup>12</sup>, having no hope and without Elohim in the world. (13) But now in Messiah Yahshua you who formerly were far off (this is talking to us from the lost ten tribes who lost our faith in YHVH and the covenants that He made with our fathers in the faith) have been brought near by the blood of Messiah. (14) For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, (15) by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, (16) and might reconcile them both in one body to Elohim through***

<sup>12</sup> The covenants of promise include, (1) the promise made to the Fathers in the faith Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – that they and their descendants will inherit the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession and that YHVH will be their Elohim (essentially entailing eternal life in the Promised Land) ; and (2) the promise that YHVH made with David as we read from Psalm 89: 3,4, 34 – 37, in this way: ***“I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, I will establish your seed forever, and build up your throne to all generations (also meaning eternally). My covenant I will not violate, nor will I alter the utterances of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. His descendants shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established forever like the moon, and the witness in the sky is faithful.”***

***the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. (17) AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; (18) for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. (19) So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of Elohim's household.'***

We from the lost ten tribes of Israel are the ones Yahshua mentioned to our Jewish Brothers in John 10: 14 – 17, but especially in verse 16, when He said to them: ***"I am the good shepherd; and I know My own, and My own know Me, (15) even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. (16) And I have other sheep, which are not of this (Jewish) fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock with one shepherd. (17) For this reason*** (to reconcile them to the Father, but also to you— meaning Judah) ***the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again."*** Yahshua died to reconcile us back to YHVH, by paying the certificate of debt against us for breaking Torah or the marriage covenant that He made with us and our forefathers at Mount Sinai. Accordingly, we are also the ones who should be immersed into Yahshua's saving name for the forgiveness of our sins, as Rav Kepha also explained in Acts 2: 38 & 39, saying: ***"Repent, and let each of you be immersed in the name of Yahshua Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Set-apart Spirit. (39) For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off*** (meaning that this is only for the lost ten tribes, who have stopped obeying YHVH and His Torah), ***as many as YHVH our Elohim shall call to Himself."*** This is saying that we should only immerse those from the lost ten tribes, plus some Gentiles who are truly called by the Father, who come to believe in Yahshua because of the Good News about the coming kingdom of Elohim that we are commissioned by Yahshua to proclaim – as a witness into the world.

Think for a moment – what have we just said? If Yahshua came to bring us back to the faith of the fathers in the faith, and we know that He was Jewish, it should be clear at this point; that He came specifically to bring us back to Judaism – meaning faith in YHVH. Yahshua did not start a new religion, but as is recorded in Acts 2: 8 – 11 the people who attended the first Pentecost or Shavuot after His ascension to heaven, were mostly Jews or converts to Judaism, as follows: ***'And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? (9) Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, (10) Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, (11) Cretans and Arabs – we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of Elohim.'*** The people whom Rav Kepha was talking to in Acts 2: 39, were people who used to worship and know YHVH, who eventually moved far away from the land of Israel, but also from their original faith in Him – those Rav Kepha and Rav Shaul referred to as *'all who are far off.'* We see further from Acts 15, that Messiah's disciples, who were at that time already sent out to proclaim the good news about the coming kingdom of Elohim, included some from the sect of the Pharisees who believed in Him or what He taught (verse 5). We see further from verses 19 – 21 Rav Yaa'cov's recommendation regarding new believers, including returnees from the house of Israel and some Gentiles who come into the faith for the first time, who were not yet circumcised, saying: ***"Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to Elohim from among the Gentiles, (20) but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood*** (not eating meat with blood in it, as well as complying to the Torah laws regarding childbirth and menstruation). ***(21) For Moses*** (meaning what is written in Torah) ***from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath."*** It is vitally important for us to realize that this ruling of Rav Yaa'cov is endorsing the return, restoration and establishment of the 12-tribe kingdom of Israel based on the Torah of YHVH as taught by the Levites (the Rabbinical Jews) in the Jewish synagogues today.

We read about the house of Israel from Deuteronomy 32: 15 – 17, ***“But Jeshurun (a pet name for Israel) grew fat and kicked— you are grown fat, thick, and sleek— then he forsook Elohim who made him, and scorned the Rock of his salvation*** (the same rock Yahshua mentioned in Matthew 7: 24 & 25; and 16: 18). (16) ***They made Him jealous with strange gods; with abominations they provoked Him to anger.*** (17) ***They sacrificed to demons who were not Elohim, to gods they have not known, new gods who came lately, whom your fathers did not dread.”*** As mentioned before Yahshua who was a Jew, did not come to start a new religion at all. The way of the Nazarene only meant the way Yahshua as a Jewish Rabbi interpreted Torah, as may be read in Matthew 5, 6 & 7. Yes His way of walking out Torah was in fact stricter than the Jews of His day, but he did not come to do away with Judaism at all, as He also said in verses 17 – 20 of Matthew 5, in this way: ***‘Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.*** (18) ***For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.*** (19) ***Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*** (20) ***For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.’*** The reason why Messiah’s interpretation of Torah was stricter than that of the Jews of His day was not because their interpretation was less strict or wrong, but because He knew that the returning Israelites were prone to idolatry and fornication, as Rav Yaa’cov also showed in his ruling in Acts 15.

So what were the new gods who came lately spoken about in Deuteronomy 32 above? J\*e\*s\*u\*s\* who is definitely a different person to the Yahshua we have just read about in Matthew 5, who did not abolish any of the Torah commands given in Torah, is one of the new gods who came up lately. Yahshua’s mother or His disciples did not ever call Him by the name J\*e\*s\*u\*s\* and to say that it is merely an English translation of the name Yahshua is pure nonsense. A person’s personal name is never changed from one language to another. The name of Vladimir Putin of Russia remains the same in any language; else people in other parts of the world would not know who you are talking about. In the same way is Bill Clinton known throughout the world. Yes most English speakers know that Bill is short for William, as much as believers in Messiah know that Yahshua is short for Yahushua or Yehoshua the same name of the book of Scriptures immediately following Deuteronomy, which has been shortened to Joshua, which also means salvation (as does Hosea). Because Israel lightly esteemed the name of Elohim, He rejected them, as we read in Deuteronomy 32: 15 and as Nehemiah wrote about them in Nehemiah 9: 26 - 29, saying in his prayer to YHVH: ***“But they became disobedient and rebelled against Thee, and cast Thy law behind their backs and killed Thy prophets who had admonished them so that they might return to Thee, and they committed great blasphemies.*** (27) ***Therefore Thou didst deliver them into the hand of their oppressors who oppressed them, but when they cried to Thee in the time of their distress, Thou didst hear from heaven, and according to Thy great compassion thou didst give them deliverers who delivered them from the hand of their oppressors.*** (28) ***But as soon as they had rest, they did evil again before Thee; therefore Thou didst abandon them to the hand of their enemies, so that they ruled over them. When they cried again to Thee, Thou didst hear from heaven, and many times Thou didst rescue them according to Thy compassion,*** (29) ***and admonished them in order to turn them back to Thy law. Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to Thy commandments but sinned against Thine ordinances, by which if a man observes them he shall live. And they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck, and would not listen.’*** It is for this reason that YHVH sent the house of Israel a strong delusion, as Rav Shaul wrote in 2 Thessalonians 2: 11 & 12, saying: ***‘And for this reason Elohim will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false,*** (12) ***in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth*** (which is Torah according to Psalm 119: 142), ***but took pleasure in wickedness.’***

But J\*e\*s\*u\*s\* is one of a number of new gods that came up in the latter days. J\*e\*s\*u\*s\* was never the name of the Messiah Yahshua – it is a made-up name which is false! This is why the prophet Hosea wrote in Hosea 13: 1 – 4, saying: ***‘When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling. He exalted himself in Israel, but through Baal (the Lord) he did wrong and died. (2) And now they sin more and more, and make for themselves molten images, idols skillfully made from their silver, all of them the work of craftsmen. They say of them, “Let the men who sacrifice kiss the calves!” (3) Therefore, they will be like the morning cloud, and like dew which soon disappears, like chaff which is blown away from the threshing floor, and like smoke from a chimney. (4) Yet I have been YHVH your Elohim since the land of Egypt; and you were not to know any god except Me, for there is no savior besides Me.’*** Yes Yahshua is not a second person in the so-called trinity, He is the image of the invisible Elohim; He is YHVH the word (or form) of Elohim who became flesh! Yahshua was YHVH in the flesh, sent specifically to bring the lost ten tribes back to their original covenant relationship with YHVH – to Yahudaism – the faith of David and their other fathers in the faith.

But because of Israel’s sins another strange god came up lately, despite YHVH warning us in Revelation 18: 2 - 4 to come out of Christianity, the religion which J\*e\*s\*u\*s\* the C\*h\*r\*i\*s\*t\* supposed to have started. This is the false church spoken about in Revelation 17. This was in fact the same religion that Nimrod started in Babylon when they built a tower to reach heaven and said in Genesis 11: 4, ***“Come let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name*** (for our god to worship – despite the fact that by then believers in YHVH already called on His correct name as may be seen from Genesis 4: 26); ***lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”*** What these people feared most happened to them; but the same also happened to the house of Israel, when Jeroboam rejected YHVH, David and the Temple or Jewish way of worshipping Him. We read from Daniel 9: 11 why yet another god has been allowed to come up after the start of Christianity, in this way: ***“Indeed all Israel has transgressed Thy law and turned aside, not obeying Thy voice*** (or word, Yahshua); ***so the curse*** (alah in Hebrew) ***has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of Elohim, for we have sinned against Him.”*** The prophet who prophesied about Yahshua in Malachi 4: 4 – 6, wrote: ***“Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel. (5) Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of YHVH*** (this was talking about Yochanan the Immerser who came before Yahshua as we are also told in Luke 1: 13 – 17, but since there is duality in operation throughout the Scriptures, this is also talking about those of us who are again teaching returning Israelites that YHVH is our Elohim). ***(6) And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children*** (i.e. bringing the right relationship between latter day children and their parents), ***and the hearts of the children to the fathers*** (meaning to teach returning Israelites to return to the hearts or faith of our fathers in the faith, namely Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and even King David), ***lest I come and smite the land with a curse*** (meaning alah).”

What is the curse mentioned here? People, this is telling those of us from the lost ten tribes of Israel who in our recent past espoused Christianity, to come completely out of the Babylon of confusion! Yes it is as Yahshua told Yochanan to write in Revelation 18: 4 & 5, in this way: ***‘And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues; (5) for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and Elohim has remembered her iniquities.”’*** What we see happening in the western world today, is exactly what YHVH warned us will happen if we do not return to the original faith of our fathers in the faith, which Yahshua reintroduced to the lost sheep of the house of Israel as Nazarene Judaism, a sect of the Pharisees . YHVH does not want us to continue to espouse Christianity with all its paganism and false ways of worshipping Him. Fact is they may worship YHVH as sincerely as they are able, as long as they are not doing it the way He prescribes in Torah, they are sincerely wrong! In addition, the prophecy in Malachi clearly tells us if we do not return to Torah, He is going to send us the curses described in Torah – or more specifically Alah!



Despite Yahshua telling His disciples in Matthew 19: 17, saying in the second part: ***“But if you wish to enter into (eternal) life, keep the commandments”***, Christianity insists that Torah is not applicable to them any longer. Whereas most will agree that 2 Corinthians 3: 14 is talking about our Jewish Brothers regarding the identity of the true Messiah (as also witnessed in Romans 11: 5), verses 15 – 17 are definitely talking about Christianity (even though they will vehemently deny it), as follows: ***‘But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; (in fact I would like you to try this yourself: Read a portion from Leviticus 11 regarding Kosher food to a very good Christian, and observe their reaction) (16) but whenever a man turns to YHVH (Christianity will tell you that the word Lord here refers to C\*h\*r\*i\*s\*t\* – however we will see in the next verse where John 4: 24 is quoted that the Lord here refers to YHVH our Elohim in Yahshua’s own words<sup>13</sup>) the veil is taken away. (17) Now YHVH is the Spirit and where the Spirit of YHVH is there is liberty.”*** This is the same liberty used by Rav Yaa’cov in James 1: 22 – 25, saying: ***‘But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. (23) For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; (24) for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. (25) But one who looks intently at the perfect Law, the law of liberty (the law that set us free from sin, if we obey it), and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed (and not cursed) in what he does.’***

Why did YHVH allow the Church of G-d to slowly but surely disappear? Even though I believe they were responsible to call many from the lost ten tribes back to follow YHVH in the way He prescribes in the Scriptures, they did not reform the Catholic Church all the way and insisted to be part of Christianity, the false religion that YHVH wants us to come out of. They also did not do what the original believers in Messiah did (i.e. study both the Torah and Haftarah (Prophets) portions, together with a regular teaching of exhortation) every Sabbath, even though we as Nazarenes are not allowed in Jewish synagogues any longer, as is witnessed in Acts 13: 14 & 15, in this way: ***‘But going on from Perga, they arrived at Psidian Antioch, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. (15) And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets the synagogue officials sent to them, saying, “Brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it.”’*** Yes, even though I still believe that their members are fellow Nazarene believers in Messiah with us, I believe that YHVH wanted them to go back to the faith of our fathers in the faith, namely Judaism – although, we as Nazarenes need to get back through Yahshua and cannot attend local synagogues any longer. However, I hope that despite our faith in Yahshua the Messiah, we (including our brethren from the now almost defunct Church of G-d) will one day become one sheepfold with our Jewish Brothers, before Messiah returns.

If we are too anti-Semitic to even contemplate that from happening, we need to be aware of Isaiah’s warning in Isaiah 24: 1 – 6: ***‘Behold YHVH lays the earth waste, devastates it, distorts its surface, and scatters its inhabitants. (2) And the people will be like the priest, the servant like his master, the maid like her mistress, the buyer like the seller, the lender like the borrower, the creditor like the debtor. (3) The earth will be completely laid waste and completely despoiled, for YHVH has spoken this word. (4) The earth mourns and withers, the world fades and withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away. (5) The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant. (6) Therefore, a curse (alah) devours the earth, and those who live in it are held guilty. Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.’*** Yahshua came specifically to bring the house of Israel back to worshipping YHVH or Yahudaism; so that the kingdom of Israel, with David ruling us once again under Yahshua, may be established eternally. However, the house of Israel like the whole world have been deceived by Satan, to believe in a false messiah who abolished his strict old father’s law and have started worshipping the host of heaven.

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<sup>13</sup> John 4: 24, ***“Elohim is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”***



It is for this very reason that YHVH have sent us another false god, namely Alah in these latter times<sup>14</sup>, so that if it is still possible, we will see the error of our ways and return to YHVH through Yahshua our Messiah. But also return to King David's united Israel and worship YHVH at the times that He showed those Israelites who remained loyal to Him, namely our Jewish Brothers. Yes, we from the lost ten tribes of Israel have to return to worshipping YHVH as our Elohim, but we also need to return to studying and obeying Torah (on a weekly basis) once again. When king David ruled Israel, he confirmed that YHVH revealed to them (including us) the way to worship Him in Psalm 147: 19 & 20, in this way: ***'He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and His ordinances to Israel. (20) He has not dealt thus with any nation; and as for His ordinances, they have not known them. Halleluyah!'*** This is obviously talking of the time during which David ruled the united Israel consisting of both houses of Israel. But as we've seen before, the house of Israel lost all knowledge of YHVH and His ways, when He scattered us into the nations of the world, because of idolatry and keeping different Set-apart Days to the ones kept in Judah. The warnings regarding the curse that YHVH will unleash upon us is already happening, because even though numbers of believers have answered (YHVH)'s call to come out of Christianity, many have not returned to the faith of David, where each one is even now following calendars which are different to the one our Jewish Brothers observe.

The second false god that came up lately will continue at an ever increasing pace, and because this false religion is not like any other, in that they will not tolerate any other religion, but their own – you and I will either accept it at their preaching, or be killed! Our only weapon against them is to return to YHVH, to David and to Temple worship – the way the united nation of Israel used to do under King David's rulership! It is like Hosea wrote in Hosea 14: 9, saying: ***'Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them. For the ways of YHVH are right, and the righteous will walk in them, but transgressors will stumble in them.'*** Think about it!

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<sup>14</sup> It is estimated that within the next twenty years there will be enough Muslim voters in the USA, Britain, Canada and Australia to elect their own heads of government.

## **Chapter 16: Isaiah – a summary of the Scriptures.**

The book of Isaiah derives its name from the author whose name means the same as Yahshua our Messiah's as well as Joshua's and Hosea's, namely 'YHVH is salvation.' The book of Isaiah is quoted more than 65 times in the Renewed Covenant; it is not only a single book, but a collection of 66 with themes ranging across the history of mankind and when fully understood, it reaches into eternity. Isaiah prophesied during the period of the divided kingdom of Israel, aiming the major impetus of his prophecy at the house of Judah. He condemned the idolatry into which many of the people had fallen and prophesied the coming captivity of Judah by king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The first verse in the book of Isaiah is vitally important to understanding its contents, since it is where he defines the purpose of his prophecy and to whom it is directed, as follows: ***'The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, concerning Judah and Jerusalem which he saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.'*** Based on the time of the reigns of these kings of Judah, Isaiah wrote this book during 740 – 685 BCE.

Fulfillment of some of his prophecies in his own lifetime provided his credentials for being a prophet inspired by Elohim. One example being that many years before Cyrus the king of Persia came to the fore, Isaiah named him as the deliverer of Judah from the Babylonian captivity (Isaiah 44: 28 & 45: 1). The fulfillment of Messiah's first coming have given him further credence (Isaiah 7: 14). The examples of the literal fulfillment of his already-fulfilled prophecies give us the assurance that prophecies about Messiah's second coming will also occur in the foreseeable future. Even though there is nothing in the book of Isaiah that reveals the extended period dividing the two comings of Messiah, we know for certain that whereas John the Immerser was the first one to come in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Messiah's first coming, there will also be a second person or group who will prepare the way for His second coming as may be understood from Isaiah 62: 10, in this way: ***'Go through, go through (twice) the gates; clear the way for the people; build up, build up the highway; remove the stones, lift up a standard (meaning Yahshua) over the peoples.'***

Even though Isaiah's message is historical, in that his prophecy occurred in a specific place and time, we need to understand; despite the fact that part of his predictions already occurred, his message is universal, for people of all ages everywhere, and as such it requires that we pay close attention to it. But what should be of concern to all those whom YHVH is calling out of the world at this time, is who instructed Isaiah to record these words for people like us? Isaiah gives us the answer in verse 2 of Isaiah 1, saying: ***'Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; for YHVH speaks, "Sons I reared and brought up, but they have revolted against Me."*** This tells us that YHVH is the source of Isaiah's prophecy, as is also confirmed in Hebrews 1: 1 & 2, in this way: ***'Elohim, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, (2) in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.'*** The prophet Isaiah's vision comes directly from YHVH the King of the Universe, with a special message to Judah at the time of his prophecy, but also to the entire world and especially us who are alive at this end time.

Elohim called Isaiah around 740 BCE when king Uzziah died, as he also wrote in Isaiah 6: 1 – 3, saying: ***'In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw YHVH sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. (2) Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. (3) And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is YHVH of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory."*** Here in what Isaiah saw in a vision, is the source of his message. Here is ultimate authority. We read from John 12: 37 - 41 that Isaiah actually saw Yahshua the salvation of YHVH in Isaiah 6: 1, where he in prophecy showed that our Jewish Brothers will be blinded to the identity of Yahshua the arm of YHVH (spoken about in Isaiah 53: 1), saying: ***'But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him; (38) that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be***

**fulfilled which he spoke, “YHVH, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF YHVH BEEN REVEALED?” (39) For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, (40) “HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART; LEST THEY SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED, AND I HEAL THEM.” (41) These things Isaiah said, because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.’** In order to remove any doubt that Yahshua the image of the invisible Elohim was the power or right hand of Elohim (as also witnessed by King David in Psalm 98: 1 – 3<sup>15</sup>) before He became the Son of Man (YHVH in the flesh), Yahshua in verses 44 & 45 of John 12 cried out saying: **“He who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him who sent Me. (45) And he who beholds Me beholds the One who sent Me.”** Only Elohim can call a prophet and prepare him to utter a divine message. We see from verses 5 & 6 of Isaiah 6, that Elohim cleansed Isaiah’s lips with a burning coal allowing him to say or write this important prophecy. But what was Isaiah’s message?

Isaiah was truly a prophet who revealed the Oneness of Elohim as well as the purpose of Yahshua the Messiah to us, and starting in Isaiah 4: 2, talking about Yahshua’s rulership during the millennium, saying: **‘In that day a Branch of YHVH will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and the adornment of the survivors of Israel.’** This is followed about the vision of Yahshua in Isaiah 6: 1 and by His human birth as Immanuel, meaning Elohim with us as in Isaiah 7: 14. Next he tells us about Immanuel who will be from the tribe of Judah, who will hide His face from them saying in Isaiah 8: 8 – 17: **“Then it will sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and pass through, it will even reach to the neck; and the spread of its wings will fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel. (9) Be broken, O peoples (goiim), and be shattered; and give ear all remote places of the earth. Gird yourselves, yet be shattered; Gird yourselves, yet be shattered.** (This means that even though there was a fulfilment before, it will happen once again.) **(10) Devise a plan but it will be thwarted; state a proposal, but it will not stand, for Elohim is with us.” (11) For thus YHVH spoke to me with mighty power and instructed me not to walk in the way of this people, saying, (12) “You are not to say, ‘It is a conspiracy!’ In regard to all that this people call a conspiracy, and you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it. (13) It is YHVH of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, and He shall be your dread. (14) Then He shall become a sanctuary; but to both houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over, and a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (15) And many will stumble over them, then they will fall and be broken; they will even be snared and caught. (16) Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. (17) And I will wait for YHVH who is hiding His face (identity) from the house of Jacob; I will even look eagerly for him.”** Even though Judah is presently blinded to the identity of Yahshua ((YHVH)’s face or visible image<sup>16</sup>), they trust Elohim is with them – and even if the Arab world, as well as many others are planning to destroy them, YHVH will thwart these plans and ultimately shatter those who are devising evil against His people. We also read from this section that both houses of Israel will stumble over the identity and or purpose of Yahshua the rock of our salvation, but we understand from Romans 11 that the blinding of Judah, is (YHVH)’s doing, to allow those of us from the lost ten tribes (plus a number of Gentiles), whom He is presently calling out of the world, to return to Him; and when the full number of those whom He wants to return has been reached, all Israel (both houses) will be saved.

Isaiah confirms the Oneness of Elohim, throughout the book saying in chapter 43: 3, 10 – 15: **“For I am YHVH your Elohim, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush**

<sup>15</sup> Psalm 98: 1 – 3: **‘O sing to YHVH a new song, for He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained victory for Him. YHVH has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. He has remembered His loving-kindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our Elohim.’**

<sup>16</sup> We read about YHVH hiding His face in Isaiah 45: 15, where He also reveals His identity to us, saying: **‘Truly, Thou are an Elohim who hides Himself, O Elohim, of Israel, Savior!’**

**and Seba in your place. (10) You are My witnesses,” declares YHVH, “And My servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He (Yes, ‘I am’ means that YHVH is the Eternal, but as used in this verse, YHVH the speaker also tells us that He (Himself) is His servant whom He has chosen). Before Me there was no Elohim formed, and there will be none after Me (yes, as explained in the previous lesson, the gods who came up later – are no gods). (11) I, even I, am YHVH; and there is no savior besides Me. (12) It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed; and there was no strange god among you; so you are My witnesses.” Declares YHVH, “And I am Elohim. (13) Even from eternity I am He; and there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?” (14) Thus says YHVH your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, “For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and will bring them all down as fugitives, even the Chaldeans, into the ships in which they rejoice. (15) I am YHVH, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.”** How many times does YHVH have to tell us that He only is Elohim? YHVH also tells us through Isaiah that He cannot forget us and even though many fall over the stumbling stone (mentioned in Isaiah 8), eventually all people will know His identity, as recorded in Isaiah 49: 15, 16 & 26, in this way: **“Can a woman forget her nursing child, and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. (16) Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me. (26) And I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh, and they will become drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh will know that I, YHVH am your Savior, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”**

Ask yourself, who is coming back one day? We find the answer in Zechariah 14: 4 – 9, as follows: **“And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives which is in front of Jerusalem in 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 to Azel; yes you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. (It seems almost prophetic how Uzziah’s name comes up again in Zechariah’s prophecy about Messiah’s return, similar to the vision Isaiah had in Isaiah 6: 1 after Uzziah’s death, when he saw Messiah on His throne.) Then YHVH, my Elohim, will come, and all the holy ones (those of us who qualify to make it into the kingdom of Elohim) with Him! (6) And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. (7) For it will be a unique day which is known to YHVH, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light. (8) And it will come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. (9) And YHVH will be king over all the earth; in that day YHVH will be the only one, and His name the only one.”**

We also see from Isaiah 30: 18 – 20 that YHVH promised that He will eventually reveal His face to His people once again during Messiah’s rule from Jerusalem, as follows: **‘Therefore YHVH longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For YHVH is an Elohim of justice; how blessed are all those who long for Him. (19) O People in Zion, inhabitants in Jerusalem, you will weep no longer, He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you. (20) Although YHVH has given you bread of privation and water of oppression, He, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will behold your Teacher.’** Our Jewish Brothers will also recognize Yahshua as their Teacher and Elohim like Thomas did after Yahshua showed him His hands and side when Thomas exclaimed in John 20: 28, **“My Master (Rabbi or Teacher) and my Elohim!”** This will happen at Yahshua’s return one day on Yom Teruah, known to our Jewish Brothers as Rosh Hashanah 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 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.*** (This is when Yahshua is prophesied to return one day in the near future) ***(10) And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace*** (by which we are saved) ***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 is one of many irrefutable witnesses that the calendar observed by our Jewish Brothers is correct. The next few verses in Zechariah 12 show that they will undoubtedly be in their synagogues on that day, with their men sitting separately from their ladies. Will those of us called out of the world, also observe the Feast of Trumpets on the same date at Messiah return?

Isaiah’s second message mirrors the good news or gospel about the coming kingdom of Elohim, as recorded in the Renewed Covenant. The book of Isaiah is one of the books of the Tanach mostly quoted by Yahshua Messiah. The book is therefore correctly referred to as a summary of the entire Scriptures. The crux of the book of Isaiah is the good news about the coming Kingdom of Elohim, with Messiah ruling as King of kings and Master of masters, as Isaiah wrote in chapter 52: 7, saying: ***‘How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace and brings good news of happiness, who announces salvation, and says to Zion, “Your Elohim reigns!”’*** This is obviously a vision after Yahshua our Messiah returned to rule the world from Jerusalem, as we read from verses 8 – 10, in this way: ***‘Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices, they shout joyfully together; for they will see with their own eyes when YHVH restores Zion. (9) Break forth, shout joyfully together, you waste places of Jerusalem; for YHVH has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem. (10) YHVH has bared His holy arm in the sight of all the nations, that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation (Yahshua) of our Elohim.’***

We read from Isaiah 9: 6 & 7 about both Yahshua’s human birth, but also about His ultimate purpose to come and rule the world from Jerusalem during His second coming, as follows: ***‘For a child will be born to us, and a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Elohim, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. (7) There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of YHVH of hosts will accomplish this.’*** Continuing is Isaiah 11: 1 – 9: We read about Yahshua’s human ancestry and how He will change the face of the earth during His millennial rule, in this way: ***‘Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. (2) And the Spirit of YHVH will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of YHVH. (3) And He will delight in the fear of YHVH, and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; (4) But with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. (5) Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist. (6) And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them. (7) Also the cow and the bear will graze; their young will lie down together; and the lion will eat straw like the ox. (8) And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper’s den. (9) They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of YHVH as the waters cover the sea.’***

Even so, we do not hear a lot of good news at this time. In the same way things did not go well in Isaiah’s time and this is why he wrote in Isaiah 1: 4 - 6, saying: ***‘Alas, sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned YHVH, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away from Him. (5) Where will you be***



***stricken again, as you continue in your rebellion? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. (6) From the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it, only bruises, welts, and raw wounds, not pressed out or bandaged, nor softened with oil.*** This almost sounds like a description of us in the western world today. We have been in financial trouble since 2008, but in the same way our moral and familial lives are threatened by disaster. Nothing is safe any longer! Even so, Isaiah's prophecy remained one of hope for the future. Although he was bemoaning the sad condition of his people, he confidently encourages those who listened to him in Isaiah 1: 16 – 17, saying: ***“Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, (17) learn to do good; seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.”***

These are not the words of an antiquated political reformer – in fact they describe current state of affairs in the world. Even so, Isaiah offers comfort to the people, no matter how badly they failed as fathers and husbands, saying in verse 18: ***“Come now, and let us reason together,” Says YHVH, “Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool.”*** Isaiah draws a line between right and wrong; and perhaps why his and other prophets in the Scriptures are not taken seriously is mankind's proclivity to get trapped in a maze of uncertain moral standard. At the core of the Israelite nation's slide to lawlessness is confusion about what is right and what is wrong. Isaiah describes, but also condemns such moral disorder, saying in Isaiah 5: 20 – 23: ***‘Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. (21) Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and clever in their own sight! (22) Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink; (23) who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the rights of ones who are in the right!’*** We live and work in a society that does not exalt Elohim; our priorities are upside down. It is for this reason that YHVH asks through Isaiah in chapter 51: 12 & 13, saying: ***“I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you are afraid of man who dies, and of the son of man who is made like grass; (13) that you have forgotten YHVH your Maker, Who stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; that you fear continually all day long because of the fury of the oppressor, as he makes ready to destroy? But where is the fury of the oppressor?”*** Yes, we do not have to fear anybody, if we remain close to Elohim. Yahshua stated the same principle in a more-optimistic manner in Matthew 6: 31 - 33, saying: ***“Do not be anxious then, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘With what shall we clothe ourselves?’ (32) For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. (33) But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.”*** Elohim's Kingdom is the key and once it becomes a reality, all these futuristic prophecies will find their ultimate fulfillment.

Yahshua came specifically to bring the lost ten tribes back to worshipping YHVH, as he also told the Canaanite woman who asked Him to heal her demon possessed daughter, saying in Matthew 15: 24, ***“I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”*** In fact Isaiah also prophesied about Messiah's purpose in Isaiah 49: 5 – 7, saying: ***‘And now says YHVH, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, in order that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of YHVH, and My Elohim is My strength), (6) He says, “It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones (or remnant) of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” (7) Thus says YHVH, the Redeemer of Israel, and its Holy One, to the despised One, to the One abhorred by the nation, to the Servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes shall bow down; because of YHVH who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You.”*** Isaiah revealed Messiah's purpose to bring back a remnant of the lost ten tribes to once again serve David their King, and YHVH their Elohim, and to eventually when He returns to also make priests and Levites of some, as witnessed in Isaiah 61: 6, 9 – 11, saying: ***“But you will be called the priests of YHVH; you will be spoken of as ministers of our Elohim. You will eat the wealth of***

*nations, and in their riches you will boast. (9) Then their offspring will be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples. All who see them will recognize them because they are the offspring whom YHVH has blessed. (10) I will rejoice greatly in YHVH, My soul will exult in my Elohim; for He has clothed me in garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland (a peer-shaped head covering like that worn by a priest), and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. (11) For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes the things sown in it to spring up, so YHVH Elohim will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.”* A second witness to this comes from Isaiah 66: 20 & 21, where YHVH tells our Jewish Brothers that He will also make some of us priests, in this way: *“Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as a grain offering (first fruits) to YHVH, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules, and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem,” says YHVH, “just as the sons of Israel bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of YHVH. (21) I will also take some of them as priests and for Levites,” says YHVH.’*

Finally, but more importantly Isaiah also tells us about the people who will be resurrected in the second resurrection before the Great White Throne judgment saying in Isaiah 25: 7 – 9, *‘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 (this will only happen after the great white throne judgment when the books of the Scriptures will have been opened to the understanding of those in the second resurrection, as may be seen from Revelation 20: 12 – 14), And YHVH Elohim will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth (at the moment Judah and the Israelite nations are some of the most hated people on 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; lets us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.”*

The people who will be in the second resurrection will be given a period of time in which to learn about Elohim and His ways, after which they will be able to make an informed decision as to whether they want to follow His ways or not. They will upon acceptance of Yahshua as their personal Passover, be given the Set-apart Spirit and be changed into immortal children of Elohim, after which the ones whose names are not written in the book of life, will be burnt up as per Revelation 20: 15 and also mentioned in Malachi 4: 1, as follows: *“For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze,” says YHVH of hosts, “so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.”* We read about the period of a hundred years in Isaiah 65: 17 – 20, in this way: *“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. (18) But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing, and her people for gladness. (19) I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; and there will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the sound of crying. (20) No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not 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.”*

According to the Talmud King Manasseh of Judah was responsible for Isaiah’s death at ninety years of age. One vague Scriptural record that we have about this comes from 2 Kings 21: 16, as follows: *‘Moreover, Manasseh shed very much innocent blood until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; besides his sin with which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of YHVH.’* A second hint at Isaiah’s death comes from Hebrews 11: 32 - 38, in this way: *‘And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, (33) who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, (34) quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the*

*sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. (35) Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a better resurrection; (36) and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. (37) They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword, they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (38) *(men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.'* It was because of Manasseh's sin that the nation of Judah was eventually taken captive by king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, as witnessed in 2 Kings 24: 3 & 4, as follows: ***'Surely at the command of YHVH it came upon Judah, to remove them from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, (4) and also for the innocent blood which he shed, for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; and YHVH would not forgive.'*** We are truly thankful that YHVH blessed us with prophets like Isaiah to foretell what is awaiting mankind in the foreseeable future. Halleluyah!*

## **Chapter 17: The Scriptures is the foundation of knowledge.**

YHVH spoke to the prophet Daniel about the time of the end in Daniel 12: 3 & 4, saying: ***“And those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. (4) But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase.”*** From this we understand that we are definitely living during the end times, as it is only during the last 70 years since World War II that mankind has been traveling across the globe at great speed, but more importantly is the fact that we live in a dynamic age of information driven by scientific communications and digital innovation.

Both scientific knowledge and knowledge about the way of Elohim are being ‘discovered’ at an ever increasing pace. In line with Daniel’s prophecy, Yahshua told His disciples in Matthew 13: 11 & 12, saying: ***“To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. (12) For whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance, but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.”*** Even though there is an excess of information available about almost any subject that man’s mind can contemplate, humanity is unfortunately lacking the basic knowledge so essential for their well-being. Yes, we are at this time drowning in an information over-load, but starved of knowledge about Elohim and His ways. But, what is the problem? Why doesn’t mankind understand the way of Elohim? We get the answer in Hosea 4: 1 (KJV), where Isaiah wrote: ***‘Hear the word of YHVH, ye children of Israel: for YHVH hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth (Torah)<sup>17</sup>, nor mercy, nor knowledge of Elohim in the land.***

Yes, something vitally important to the very existence of mankind is lacking. However, notice carefully that it is not missing because it cannot be found any longer, but it is missing because people have rejected the available knowledge and will as a result be destroyed, as Hosea wrote further in verse 6 of Hosea 4, saying: ***‘My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law (Torah) of your Elohim, I also will forget your children.’*** The prophet Jeremiah prophesied about our people (Israel) in Jeremiah 2: 8, saying: ***“The priests did not say, ‘Where is YHVH?’ And those who handle the law did not know Me; the rulers also transgressed against Me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal (the Lord) and walked after things that did not profit (them spiritually).”*** Jeremiah continues in verses 11 – 14, telling us Israelites why we are being punished at this time, saying: ***“Has a nation changed gods, when they were not gods? But My people have changed their glory for what does not profit. (12) Be appalled, O heavens, at this, and shudder, be very desolate,” declares YHVH. (13) For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. (14) Is Israel a slave? Or is he a home born servant? Why has he become prey?*** Jeremiah gives us the answer in verse 19, saying: ***“Your own wickedness will correct you, and your apostasies (backsliding) will reprove you; know therefore and see that it is evil and bitter for you to forsake YHVH your Elohim, and the dread (fear) of Me is not in you,” declares YHVH Elohim of hosts.’*** Ever since the late 1980’s with the invention of internet and the world-wide web mankind has amassed information previously unheard of. But what concerns YHVH is our lack of spiritual knowledge. Rav Shaul accurately described many people of our time who are always searching more information on the internet, saying in 2 Timothy 3: 7, they are ***‘always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.’***

Why is it that we who are so much better educated than our parents know so much less? By the way, It is senseless to look for the answer on the internet. Yes you will find lots more information, but will still not know the true answer. The reason is that the answer is only available in the word of

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<sup>17</sup> Psalm 119: 142, ***‘Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is truth.’***

Elohim. YHVH tells us through Jeremiah the prophet, talking specifically to those of us who think of ourselves as being 'learned' saying in Jeremiah 9: 23 & 24: ***'Thus says YHVH, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast in his riches; (24) but let him who boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am YHVH who exercises loving-kindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares YHVH.'*** It is only when we humble ourselves before YHVH that we will learn anything. If we come to Sabbath services for teachings, thinking and believing we know it all, we will not learn anything. Yahshua told His disciples about spiritual knowledge concerning the coming kingdom of Elohim in Matthew 13: 16 & 17, saying: ***"But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. (17) For truly I say to you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it; and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."*** Let me tell you, knowing Elohim's word is priceless – it is indeed the foundation of understanding all knowledge.

But why has mankind rejected true knowledge from Elohim? We find the answer in 2 Corinthians 4: 3 & 4, in this way: ***'And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, (4) in whose case the god of the world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Messiah, who is the image of Elohim.'*** Most people do not believe that Satan is the god of this world. In fact many modern Christians are uncomfortable with the reality of Satan; nevertheless, we read from first John 5: 19 as follows: ***'We know that we are of Elohim, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.'*** It is also for this reason that Rav Shaul wrote about Yahshua our Messiah in Galatians 1: 1 – 4, saying: ***'Shaul, an apostle (not sent from men, nor through the agency of man, but through Yahshua Messiah, and Elohim the Father, who raise Him from the dead), (2) and all the brethren who are with me, to the congregations of Galatia: (3) Grace to you and peace from Elohim our Father, and the Master Yahshua Messiah, (4) who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of the present evil age, according to the will of our Elohim and Father.'*** One reason for Messiah's coming to the world was to disarm Satan, as witnessed in Hebrews 2: 14, in this way: ***'Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.'***

Messiah's death was the first step in Elohim's plan of salvation for all mankind. Satan would dearly love us to cut Elohim's plan short, with Yahshua still remaining on the cross, as portrayed in the Roman Catholic Church. It is for this reason that Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 5: 10, saying: ***'For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to Elohim through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.'*** One way in which Satan has managed to deceive believers in Messiah, is by allowing them to believe that the Scriptures contain two sections; the one old and outdated, and the other new and to be seen as a separate book. The problem with Satan's disinformation is that mankind had been fed so much erroneous teachings for many centuries that even intelligent people started believing that the two parts of the Scriptures represent two totally opposite views, namely that of the so-called *'Old Testament'* with a strict old G-d of wrath as opposed to the *'New Testament'* with a much more lenient G-d of love. It is also for this reason that some believe the so-called *'Old Testament'* became obsolete and had to be replaced by the *'New Testament'* and as a result they have neglected three quarters of Elohim's inspired word to their own peril.

Many who say they believe in Messiah today reject most of what is recorded in the Tanach, but specifically the Torah written by Moses. Even though these people claim to believe in Messiah, most of what they believe is directly opposite to what Yahshua the Messiah taught whilst He was on earth. In fact we see from what He personally told His audience in John 5: 46 & 47, that unless we believe the Torah written by Moses, we cannot believe in Him, in this way: ***'For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. (47) But if you do not believe his writings, how***



***will you believe My words?"*** In full support of this we see that after Yahshua's death and resurrection He met up with His disciples before His ascension teaching them in Luke 24: 44 & 45, saying: ***"These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."*** (45) ***Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.'***

If we are truly interested in how the two parts of Elohim's word join seamlessly into His complete revelation to us, we will recognize how the book of Malachi speaks about *'Elijah who is to come'* in Malachi 4: 4 – 6, and how the book of Matthew in Matthew 11: 13 & 14, in the words of Messiah, says: ***"For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until (or concerning) John (the Immerser) (14) And if you care to accept it, he himself is Elijah, who was to come.'*** Luke in Luke 1: 16 & 17, wrote about Yochanan the Immerser, saying: ***"And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to YHVH their Elohim. (17) And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Master."*** In fact Yahshua the Messiah confirmed historical accounts in the Scriptures in His teachings, one of which being His Olivet prophecy where He referred to the creation of the world in Genesis 1, saying in Matthew 24: 21, ***'For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.'*** He further spoke about Noah's time in verses 37 & 38, saying: ***"For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. (38) 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.'*** Yahshua also confirmed that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have already qualified to be in the kingdom of Elohim, where He warned in Luke 13: 28, saying: ***"There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth there when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of Elohim, but yourselves being cast out."*** Messiah therefore authenticated the Tanach, by accepting Scriptural history and quoting the same in His teachings.

Elohim takes His word very seriously and Yahshua tells us at the end of the book of Revelation in Chapter 22: 18 & 19, saying: ***'I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them Elohim shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; (19) and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, Elohim shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.'*** We know that the warnings given here in Revelation extends to all the other books of the Scriptures, as is witnessed in Deuteronomy 4: 2, in this way: ***"You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of YHVH your Elohim which I command you."*** Yahshua confirmed as recorded in Matthew 4: 4 and Luke 4: 4 that as human beings we need to eat daily, but also to study the word of Elohim to survive both physically and spiritually, saying: ***"It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF ELOHIM.'"*** How can words be more important to human survival than food? Elohim gave us His commandments for our own good – if we live by what He taught in His word, we will not only benefit in this life, but also inherit eternal life in Messiah's Kingdom to come.

We need to understand that human life is more than an existence from the cradle to the grave. YHVH has a plan for every human life lived on earth and wants to use our earthly life as a training period in preparation for an eternal position in the universe to come. Each one of us needs to get to know how to cooperate with YHVH to be able to handle the responsibility He planned for us in the future. It is for this reason vitally important that we start cooperating with YHVH in this life and learn to do His will, at this time; right Now! It was for this very reason that immediately after Yahshua's immersion that He preached the gospel of Elohim, saying in Mark 1: 15: ***"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of Elohim is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*** It is important to understand that the Scriptures are the words that YHVH is communicating to each one of us on an individual

basis. It was for this reason that Yahshua said in John 6: 63, ***“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.”*** This tells us that Scriptural principals are empowered by spiritual forces that cannot be seen. It is for this reason that we read from John 1: 1, ***“In the beginning was the word, and the word was with Elohim, and the word was Elohim.”*** YHVH talks to us through His word – we must therefore respect it as we would YHVH Himself!

Yes, Elohim’s word is truly the foundation of knowledge. It gives us important information not readily available from other sources. An example being where YHVH forbids the eating and or cooking of meat of an animal in its mother’s milk in Exodus 23: 19; 34: 26 and Deuteronomy 14: 21. To most people’s minds this is one law that does not make sense at all. I am sure for many years since the giving of this command many struggled to find reasons for YHVH to have such a command. However, with hindsight and with medical science having discovered the problem that many of us have with cholesterol, it is beginning to make sense for those with discerning minds. Yes, it is simply a health law which YHVH has given along with laws forbidding the consumption of fat and blood, the last named also mentioned by Rav Yaa’cov in Acts 15: 20, as one of four initial commandments that new believers need to obey when they are called into the faith by YHVH; but the main point is that if we do not obey these so called least commandments – we are disobedient to Elohim. Elohim’s word also provides us with a framework with which we may apply other knowledge. For example the Jewish clock reads 5774 years, but scientist estimate the universe to be more than 13 billion years old. We need to understand that both these views are correct; but that Torah looks forward in time from different time space coordinates, when the universe was small. Since then the universe has expanded and because space stretches, the stretching totally changes the perception of time.

This fact is recorded on the NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory webpage, in this way: *“Our universe burst into existence in an event known as the big bang 13.8 billion years ago, moments later space itself ripped apart, expanding exponentially in an episode known as inflation.”* The universe is not static; it has been expanding from the very beginning when it was first created. The Scriptures attest to this in the first part of Job 9: 8, where Job said: ***“Who alone stretches out the heavens.”*** A second witness comes from Psalm 104: 1 & 2, where David wrote: ***‘Bless YHVH, O my soul! O YHVH my Elohim, Thou art very great; Thou are clothed in splendor and majesty, (2) covering Thyself with light as with a cloak, stretching out heaven like a tent curtain.’*** The prophet Isaiah mentioned the stretching out of the heavens a number of times, one of which appears in Isaiah 42: 5, saying: ***‘Thus says Elohim YHVH, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and its offspring, who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk in it.’*** According to scientists our moon has slowly moved away from the earth by a few feet annually. The moon is presently about 239,000 miles away from earth. If we could turn the clock a few thousand million years back, the moon would be very close or even joined to the earth. That means that creation must have taken place less than a thousand million years ago, with the moon being created some distance away from the earth. In other words there was a beginning. Even though the world of man was created about 4000 BCE the universe including the earth were created at an earlier time.

Einstein taught that the Big Bang theory does not only bring space and matter into existence, but that there is also a time dimension to be taken into account. How we see time is from where we are viewing it. Einstein’s equation  $E = MC^2$ , informs us that energy can change into matter. Once it changes, time starts. Energy is said to travel at the speed of light, namely 300 million meters per second. At the speed of light, time does not pass, it only grabs hold or starts when matter is present. The moment of time prior to the clock starting for the Scriptures lasted 1/100,000 of a second - a very short time. But in that time the universe expanded from a tiny speck, to the solar system. That is when energy changed to matter and time started. The Theory of Relativity informs us that the difference in the rate at which time passes in different frames of reference, depends on the ratio of the strengths of the gravitational fields in the systems. For example a minute on the moon goes

faster than a minute on the earth. Similarly is a minute on the sun slower than a minute on the earth. If you could look from one system to another, you would see time differently. Because, depending on factors like gravity and velocity, you observe time in a way that is very different. For example there are planets in the universe where time is so stretched out that in the time we live out about one year on earth, only one and a half minute go by on such planets. If one could look down on earth from such a planet, our perception of earth time would be that everyone on earth is moving very fast. If we could look up at that planet from earth, our perception would be that it moves very slowly. But which is correct? Like I said earlier, both are correct, since both are happening at the same time. There are numerous locations in the universe, where if you could put a clock, it would tick so slowly from our perspective (if we could live that long) 13 billion years would go by, but the clock at that remote location would tick away only six days. So even though the universe is more than 13 billion years old, Torah looks forward in time, from very different time-space coordinates, when the universe was small. However, since the universe has expanded, space stretched out, and as a result the perception of time has totally changed.

King David similarly used foundational knowledge to summarize Elohim's plan of salvation in five short verses. He described in seven steps how mankind needs to be prepared to ultimately share the universe with Elohim in Psalm 103. The first two steps deal with mankind's responsibility to trust and obey YHVH, and to confirm this by willingly accepting His instructions, then YHVH will do all the rest to ensure our place in eternity with Him. We read from verse 1 of Psalm 103, ***'Bless YHVH, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name'***<sup>18</sup>. The transliterated Hebrew word for bless is 'Baruch' – meaning to give oneself to YHVH without reservation and to respect Him as the Almighty. It means that we should let His will become our will and trust that everything that He does is for our good in preparing us for life as His spiritual children. But, the word 'Baruch' also implies the thought of giving; in this case giving YHVH the honor and respect due to Him. If the principle given in Psalm 115: 8<sup>19</sup> also applies to YHVH the only Elohim, then if we trust in Him, we will become like Him. Therefore if we admire YHVH and His ways, we will eventually become like Him. It is perhaps for this reason that we are told by Rav Shaul to conform to the image of Yahshua 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.'***

We read the second step from verse 2 of Psalm 103, as follows: ***'Bless YHVH, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits.'*** This means that we are to claim (YHVH)'s benefits and remind ourselves and others that YHVH loves to give them. If we conform to the image of Elohim, we will like Yahshua become heirs of Elohim, as we are told in Romans 8: 16 – 17, in this way: ***'The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of Elohim, (17) and if children, heirs also, heirs of Elohim and fellow heirs with Messiah, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.'*** (YHVH)'s greatest gift is of Himself. The prodigal son described in Luke 15 asked his father to give him everything due to him, but when he came to himself, he understood his own shortcomings and with a changed attitude said ***'make me as one of your hired men.'*** If we truly understand what Yahshua taught here, this should become our approach to (YHVH)'s throne.

The third step in David's plan in Psalm 103: 3, i.e. ***'Who pardons all your iniquities'***, to prepare us to share the universe with YHVH is to establish our current status as needing forgiveness as sinners and by our own nature unworthy of Elohim's goodness and grace. It is for this reason that we read from

<sup>18</sup> To be able to bless (YHVH)'s holy name, we need to be taught about it by someone before we can do so, as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 10: 13 & 14, saying: ***'For "WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF YHVH WILL BE SAVED." How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?'***

<sup>19</sup> Psalm 115: 8 states that ***"Those who make them will become like them, everyone who trusts in them."***

Romans 3: 23, ***'For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of Elohim.'*** Yes, we all need forgiveness of our sins, which is effected by us acknowledging our sins; the transgression of the Law, and returning to Torah obedience, but also accepting Messiah as our Passover lamb, acknowledging that He shed His blood for the forgiveness of the sins of the world, including ours. The fourth step, i.e. ***'Who heals all our diseases'*** deals with provision of physical and spiritual healing. Even though we need medical doctors to set broken bones, to prevent blood loss, to identify viruses and treat infections, we need to understand that YHVH is ultimately our healer. The fifth step, i.e. ***'Who redeems your life from the pit'*** (or destruction) only applies to those who have gone through the four previous steps. Those who will ultimately not bow before Yahshua the Messiah will be destroyed as per Malachi 4: 1. The words ***'who redeems your life from destruction'***, refers to the whole man; that his body, soul and spirit be preserved complete without blame at the coming of our Master Yahshua Messiah, as per 1 Thessalonians 5: 23.

The sixth step, i.e. ***'Who crowns you with loving kindness and compassion'***, refers to the coronation of those in the first resurrection as Rav Shaul assured us as in 2 Timothy 4: 7 & 8, saying: ***'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; (8) in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Master, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearance.'*** The seventh step, i.e. ***'Who satisfies your years'*** (desire) ***with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle.'*** The words ***'good things'*** do not mean material things, but involve adornment of your spiritual character, when you will be fitted for the next perfect world. This is implied in the reference to the eagle. The Imperial Eagle is the king of birds. The eggs of the Imperial Eagle hatch in 35 days, as compared to all other eagles which hatch in 28 days. They mate for life and have a life span equal to that of mankind. When they get old, their feathers are torn and disarrayed from long use, they sit in their nests day after day doing nothing, and without food and water, as if awaiting translation. After some time the body shrinks, the old feathers drop off and the wrinkled skin appears, to leave a sorry looking mess behind. But soon new skin appears to take new life and color. A little while longer and the bird is covered with fuzz, which eventually turns into feathers, and within a few weeks he is again covered with new plumage. Like a miracle, one day he lifts his powerful feathered wings and soars off into the sky in search of a new life. King David under Divine inspiration likens this miraculous transformation to that of a believer in the hands of His Creator, using the invisible Word and Spirit to remove the weaknesses of human life in favor of spiritual life in the Kingdom of Elohim.

YHVH wants us to like David apply the basic knowledge that He provides to understand the deeper things in life. The point is that Elohim commands us to live in harmony with His revealed way of life. His laws define the true values and He expects us to get to know them to the point where they become a way of life. The Scriptures are contained in a single book of spiritual instructions that reflect both Elohim's mind and character. Yahshua our Messiah as the image of the invisible Elohim is not a separate entity away from YHVH our Elohim, but is very much part of Elohim, and as such did not view the laws that YHVH gave through Moses in a different light. We read accordingly from Matthew 22: 35 – 40, ***'And one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, (36) "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" (37) And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE YHVH YOUR ELOHIM WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' (38) "This is the great and foremost commandment. (39) The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' (40) "On these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets."*** Elohim's Laws are spiritual according to Romans 7: 14 and is based on love – since Elohim gave it for our good. Elohim's laws define love toward Him as our Creator, as well as to our neighbor. Messiah cited both these commandments from the Torah and thereby authenticated the same. Similar to the law of gravity, YHVH put laws of cause and effect in place from the beginning. He also gave mankind His word, the Scriptures as a manual on how to apply these laws, to live happy productive lives. The Scriptures also inform us to continue to grow in the grace (mercy) and knowledge of our Master and Savior Messiah Yahshua. In other words, in

addition to obeying Torah, we need to study the words and life of Yahshua the Messiah whilst He was on earth and start living the way that He lived. Yes, it is as we read earlier in Romans 5: 10, ***'we shall be saved by His life'***; meaning the life that He now lives in us.

From Genesis to Revelation the Scriptures is a book of spiritual instruction. Its main focus is on Elohim's spiritual Law, which is embodied and summarized in the Ten Commandments. As the foundation of all knowledge the Scriptures show the root cause of every problem that has plagued mankind since creation. Elohim's word reveals true values by which we are required to live, if we need to solve our enormous relationship problems and other insolvable problems that threaten to overwhelm us. Messiah's disciples left a permanent record or testimony in the Renewed Covenant about His life and teachings for believers in Messiah to follow as witnessed in John 20: 30 & 31, in this way: ***'Many other signs therefore Yahshua also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; (31) but these have been written that you may believe that Yahshua is the Messiah, the Son of Elohim; and that believing you may have life in His name.'*** Think about it!



## Chapter 18: Obedience?

The Scriptures repeatedly state how we show our love to Elohim; and it is definitely not acceptable to just know and feel in your heart that you love Him, the way some in the biggest group of believers in G-d say they do. Elohim created mankind to have a loving relationship with Him and reveals Himself to those of us who love Him as our heavenly Father. When Yahshua was on earth He taught His disciples a model prayer known in English as the 'Our Father' which is transliterated in Hebrew as 'Avinu'. The title Avinu is reserved for our heavenly Father only, since the title for our earthly fathers, transliterated in Hebrew would simply be 'Abba'. It is for this reason that Jewish people disapprove of the way that some refers to YHVH as our Abba instead of Avinu.

Obedience is a main component of true faithfulness in the way of Elohim. YHVH our Elohim is not interested in our offerings and sacrifices, since everything belongs to Him anyway. As Israelites YHVH tells us through Moses in Deuteronomy 10: 12 & 13 saying: ***"And now, Israel, what does YHVH your Elohim require from you, but to fear YHVH your Elohim, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul, (13) and to keep (YHVH)'s commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good."*** Similarly, when you ask any parent how they know their children love them, they will tell you they know, because their children usually do what they tell them to. We read from Hebrews 2: 10 & 11, ***'For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. (11) For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.'*** Yes, YHVH is presently busy 'bringing many sons to glory' so that we will eventually be of the same family.

Many people who confess belief in Messiah regard this close Elohim-mankind loving relationship exclusively a 'New Testament' idea and simultaneously believe the 'Old Testament' to be strictly a relationship of commandments and enforced obedience. However, if we truly know YHVH the Elohim of our fathers in the faith, we will understand that love and obedience are not two mutually exclusive concepts. When a certain lawyer asked Yahshua in Luke 10: 25, saying: ***"Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"*** Yahshua answered in verse 26, saying to him: ***"What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?"*** Knowing the Torah, the lawyer quoted Deuteronomy 6: 5, saying (IN VERSES 27): ***"YOU SHALL LOVE YHVH YOUR ELOHIM WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."*** Yahshua's reply in verse 28 was: ***"You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE."*** So, it is clear, if we want to inherit eternal life in the kingdom of Elohim as His children we must love Elohim. But what does that mean? One thing is certain, love is not only a fuzzy warm feeling toward Elohim, but it involves action. A perfect example showing how action is involved in love, is in the way Elohim has already proven His love for us as witnessed in John 3: 16 & 17, in this way: ***"For Elohim so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. (17) For Elohim did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him."***

Even though love can be both a noun and a verb, it is clear from the above that love is shown by an action – something has to be done. If we love someone, we show our love by spending time with the one we love. We get to know the person better and try to do things that are pleasing to him/her. How do we know that we love Elohim? By getting to know Him; finding out from His word what is pleasing to Him and to obey Him as our loving Father. Elohim begins the Ten Commandments in both Exodus 20: 2 and Deuteronomy 5: 6, saying: ***'I am YHVH your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.'*** Here YHVH tells us that because of His love for the ancient nation of Israel, He freed them from slavery in Egypt to establish a new nation out of them. Elohim offered kindness to Israel, by doing something for them, which they did not earn. However,

as with most lovers we also read from verses 7 - 10 of Deuteronomy 5, ***'You shall have no other gods before (or besides) Me. (8) You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on earth beneath or in the water under the earth. (9) You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, YHVH your Elohim, am a jealous Elohim, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, (10) but showing loving-kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.'***

Here we see a theme that is found throughout the Scriptures; i.e. that loving Elohim is clearly linked with obedience to His commandments. Elohim informs us that we show our love for Him by obedience to His Torah teachings. Yahshua our Messiah, who is the image of the invisible Elohim, told believers in Him the same thing in John 14: 15, saying: ***"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."*** Even though the exhortation is clear, there is a great deal of confusion regarding this verse. The confusion about this verse is not because Yahshua told believers to observe something, but it has to do with which commandments was He talking about here. Because some teach that Yahshua abolished His Father's strict commandments and introduced new commandments for His followers, some believe that when Yahshua says in the Sermon on the Mount (in Matthew 5 – 7) that He came to specifically *'fulfill'* the Torah and the prophets, He thereby did away with them. Messiah's Sermon on the Mount was in fact His stricter way of interpreting Elohim's Torah for the returning lost ten tribe believers in Him (whom the Father is busy calling out of the world), than the way the scribes and the Pharisees interpreted the same. The reason for doing so was not because the interpretation of Jewish believers such as the scribes and the Pharisees were too lax, but because returning Israelites needed to keep a great deal closer to Elohim, because of their tendency to eat unclean foods and idolatry. Messiah's comments in this message on the Law and the Prophets are the higher standards that He expected from His followers from the lost ten tribes and laid the foundation for understanding His instructions to keep Elohim's commandments, statutes and judgments.

Prophecies in the Tanach describe what would occur when the promised Messiah returns to earth. Isaiah 42 describes Messiah's teaching on the Law of Elohim. Commencing in verse 1 of Isaiah we read: ***"Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations."*** We read further about the fantastic work that Yahshua came specifically to do for returning Israelites from the lost ten tribes as in verses 16 – 21: ***"And I will lead the blind by a way they do not know, in paths they do not know I will guide them. I will make darkness into light before them and rugged places into plains. These are the things I will do, and I will not leave them undone."*** (17) ***They shall be turned back and be utterly put to shame, who trust in idols, who say to molten images, "You are our gods."*** (18) ***Hear you deaf! And look you blind, that you may see.*** (19) ***Who is blind but My servant*** (note this is talking about a different servant to the One mentioned in verse 1, since this one is written using the lower case's'), ***or so deaf as My messenger whom I send? Who is so blind as he that is at peace with Me, or so blind as the servant of YHVH?*** (20) ***You have seen many things, but you do not observe them; your ears are open, but none hears.*** (21) ***YHVH was pleased for His righteousness' sake to make the law great and glorious.'*** Yahshua had to come and do this simply because the house of Israel had adopted the wrong view of Elohim's Torah and was not obeying it. He was prophesied to come and lead a remnant from the lost ten tribes, who were excluded from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants and promise, to reconcile us with Brother Judah and ultimately back to the Father as explained in Ephesians 2: 11 – 19. In addition He was prophesied to come specifically to magnify the Torah for those of us returning to the way of Elohim, so that in keeping it better than the scribes and Pharisees, we will make our Jewish Brothers jealous, as explained in Romans 11: 5 – 11.

The prophet Ezekiel typifies the common view the house of Israel had of Elohim's law in Ezekiel 18: 25, saying: ***"Yet you say, 'The way of YHVH is not right.' Hear now, O house of Israel! Is My way***

**not right? Is it not your ways that are not right?** YHVH continues to exhort the house of Israel to return in verses 26 – 32, saying through Ezekiel: ***“When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity, and dies because of it, for his iniquity which he has committed he will die. (27) Again, when a wicked man turns away from his wickedness which he has committed and practices (do over a period of time) justice and righteousness (Torah), he will save his life. (28) Because he considered and turned away from all his transgressions which he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. (29) But the house of Israel says, ‘The way of YHVH is not right.’ Are My ways not right, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are not right? (30) Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, each according to his conduct,” declares YHVH Elohim. “Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you. (31) Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! For why will you die, O house of Israel? (32) For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies, declares YHVH Elohim. “Therefore repent and live.”*** Ezekiel writes about this conspiracy by the house of Israel’s wicked leaders in Ezekiel 22: 26, saying: ***“Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane, and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they hide their eyes from My Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.”*** Is this not exactly what they do in Christianity? Yet, there are those who try and defend what they do!

Elohim gave the prophets in the Tanach visions regarding Messiah’s ministry, but also how He will successfully accomplish this magnification process when He returns. The prophet Jeremiah wrote about this in Jeremiah 31: 31 – 33, saying: ***“Behold, days are coming,” declares YHVH, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, (32) not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares YHVH. (33) “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares YHVH, “I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their Elohim, and they shall be My people.”*** From this we understand that YHVH regarded the covenant that He made with both houses of Israel at Mount Sinai, as a marriage covenant. Secondly, we notice that YHVH will make a new (marriage) covenant with both houses at Messiah’s return. However, we see from verse 33 that He will only write His Torah (as specified in Deuteronomy, which is essentially the renewed covenant) on the hearts of the house of Israel, since the Jews who remained faithful are already Torah observant, and because He only gave the house of Israel a writ of divorce (as per Jeremiah 3: 8). But, we also know that Yahshua is already busy writing His Torah on the hearts of the remnant of the returning lost ten tribes, who repented and were suitably immersed into His saving name<sup>20</sup>, and partake of His annual Passover – His blood ratified the new covenant (as He said in Luke 22: 20) similar to the way the blood of young bulls ratified the original covenant in Genesis 24: 5 – 8.

We see from Hebrews 8: 6 and 9: 15 that obedience to this new covenant, will result in better promises including eternal life, in this way: ***‘But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. (9: 15) And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.’*** What is noteworthy here, is that there is not a single scripture that states that the New Covenant is based on new laws. Rather, the New Covenant is based on the same laws that were given in the Tanach! However, also notice that the New Covenant is the availability of Elohim’s Set-apart Spirit,

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<sup>20</sup> At Immersion we are betrothed to Messiah in that He set us apart for His use only, and if we remain faithful to the end, He will remarry us as His bride at His return.

which enables us to understand the deeper spiritual intent of Elohim's law and obey it. Elohim explains this through Ezekiel in chapter 36: 21 - 27, saying: ***"But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went. (22) Therefore, say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says YHVH Elohim, "It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. (23) And I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst, Then the nations will know that I am YHVH." Declares YHVH Elohim, "when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. (24) For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land. (25) Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. (Note: It is the house of Israel who are prone to uncleanness due to eating unclean foods and fornication, as well as idol worship) (26) Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. (27) And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."***

In His Sermon on the Mount Yahshua laid the foundation for separation of His followers from the lost ten tribes specifically, from the pagan ways they accepted over time from their neighbors. From the start of His ministry He introduced repentance as a fundamental shift in the direction of the theology of the day and so prevalent in society today, saying in Mark 1: 15, ***"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of Elohim is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*** What did Yahshua mean when He said ***'the kingdom of Elohim is at hand.'*** Yes, we all know that when Yahshua returns one day in the now near future, He is going to establish Elohim's Kingdom on earth, but He also meant that if we believe that the Kingdom of Elohim is at hand, we will start making YHVH King in our lives, and make His rule of law applicable in our lives right now – not wait until Yahshua returns one day. Our Jewish Brothers have ever since their return from captivity in Babylon, started addressing YHVH as the King of the universe, commencing most of their prayers with the words: ***"Blessed are You, Adonai, our Elohim, King of the universe, ..."*** Yahshua in a similar way to the other Rabbis of His day, build hedges around Elohim's commandments in Matthew 5,6 & 7 to teach His followers and especially those of us who are from the lost ten tribes that a mere letter-of-the-law approach with its focus on minimal standards are simply not acceptable.

In Matthew 5: 17, Yahshua as the word of YHVH made flesh could perceive attitudes, and it was for this reason that He said: ***"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill."*** Even though the meaning of destroy is easy to understand, Yahshua's use of the word ***'fulfill'*** has been a source of confusion for many readers of the Scriptures. But, as Yahshua continued to teach in Matthew 5, He clarified what He meant by ***'fulfill'***. The word ***'fulfill'*** as used in verse 17 of Matthew 5, comes from the Greek word ***'plenosai'*** meaning fill. Some believe this meant that Yahshua somehow fulfilled the need to keep the law for His followers, thus freeing them to obey it in the future. It is also because of this belief that such people do not ever take the rest of what is written in the Tanach seriously and somehow neglect to understand or even read prophecies such as the one given by Isaiah in chapter 42: 21 (KJV), where he foretold that Yahshua ***'will magnify the law, and make it honorable.'*** Even so, the remainder of Yahshua's words in Matthew 5 clearly show that by using the word ***'fulfill'*** he confirmed the meaning of Torah and made it more binding, by adding the necessary hedges required to keep the remnant of the lost ten tribes from missing the mark. In fact in Matthew 5: 21 – 48 we find the crux of the magnification of the law, filling up the meaning that Elohim intended from the beginning. Yahshua therefore concluded with the words: ***"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."*** This means that we from the lost ten tribes need to follow Messiah's way of obeying Torah in order to eventually conform to the image of Elohim.



Notice some of the many examples that show the connection between love and obedience. We read from Deuteronomy 6: 5 & 6, YHVH saying: ***'And you shall love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart*** (belief system) ***and with all your soul*** (the way you live) ***and with all your might.*** (6) ***And these words, which I am commanding you today*** (refers to the commandment given in Deuteronomy 5), ***shall be on your heart.'*** This is the verse quoted by the lawyer when he spoke to Messiah mentioned earlier. Continuing in Deuteronomy 11: 1 Moses says: ***"You shall therefore love YHVH your Elohim, and always keep His charge, His statutes, His ordinances, and His commandments."*** The theme of loving Elohim by obeying His commandments are continued in verses 13 and 22, in this way: ***"And it shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love YHVH your Elohim and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul. (22) For if you are careful to keep all this commandment which I am commanding you, to do it, to love YHVH your Elohim, to walk in all His ways and hold fast to Him."*** From verse 22 we get to understand that we need to be careful to keep all the commandments – it takes conscious effort on our part to know that what we are doing conforms to what YHVH requires in Torah. We need to become aware of everything we do and say, to make sure that we live in accordance with (YHVH)'s requirements. If we become more aware of our every action and word in life; we will recognize the bad habits that we allowed to slip into our way of life, and slowly but surely start replacing it with good habits.

Deuteronomy 13: 1 - 4 warns us about false prophets (and messiahs) who even if they are able to predict something to come to pass, or are able to perform miracles like healing the sick, if they say we need not obey Elohim's Torah, then we as Elohim's people should not pay attention to them. Elohim tells us in verse 3 that He uses such false prophets to prove and test us, ***'to find out if you love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul.'*** It is no wonder that our Jewish Brothers reject the C\*h\*r\*i\*s\*t\* of Christianity, who believe he taught his followers that he came to abolish Torah. But, how then do we prove to Elohim that we love Him? We find the answer in verse 4 of Deuteronomy 13, as follows: ***"You shall follow YHVH your Elohim and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him."*** The theme of love by obedience is continued in Deuteronomy 30: 6 & 8, in this way: ***"Moreover YHVH your Elohim will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live. (8) And you shall again obey YHVH, and observe all His commandments which I command you today."*** Circumcising the heart is also spoken about in Ezekiel 44 and means conversion of the mind by immersion as may be understood from Colossians 2: 11 & 12. We see in verses 7 & 9 of Ezekiel 44 that those men from the house of Israel who will become priests during the millennium will need to be circumcised in both the heart and the flesh. We see from the last part of Deuteronomy 30: 9 and verse 10, that: ***'YHVH will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers; (10) If you obey YHVH your Elohim to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and soul.'***

Love is a two way street, and should accordingly flow both ways. The reason why we are required to love Elohim is given in first John 4: 19, as follows: ***"We love, because He first loved us."*** Rav Yochanan explained further in verses 9 – 11 of this chapter, saying: ***'By this the love of Elohim was manifest in us, that Elohim has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. (10) In this is love, not that we loved Elohim, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (11) Beloved, if Elohim so loved us, we also ought to love one another.'*** In fact Rav Yochanan defined love exactly the same way as it was defined in the Tanach, by stating in first John 5: 3, ***'For this is the love of Elohim, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.'*** As mentioned earlier, love requires action. How do we know that we love Elohim? The Scriptural answer is given again and again; that we know that we love Elohim, if we obey His commandments! Think about it!



## Chapter 19: Trust?

In a recent study we've learnt that there are three component parts essential to start a fire, namely fuel, oxygen and heat, but also that the same fire may be extinguished by removing anyone of these three essential component parts. In addition we learnt that Scriptural faith or more specifically faithfulness, transliterated in Hebrew as *'emunah'* likewise depends on three essential component parts, namely (at the foundation level) an intimate knowledge of truth, (faithful) obedience and trust. Again without any of these three components parts present, our faith is worthless. So, contrary to what many in the biggest group of believers in G-d say, there is more to faith, than just to *'believe'*. In Psalm 119: 142 King David agreed with most Rabbis that the entire revelation of Elohim's truth is contained in Torah, saying: ***'Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is truth.'*** Even doctrines about the Messiah appear in texts such as Genesis 3: 15, Genesis 49: 10 and Numbers 24: 17. The Torah is the most essential and fundamental revelation ever given to mankind. It remains true that if a particular doctrine or teaching is not found in the Torah, at least at an intimated level; then it is to be rejected.

Yahshua the Messiah the one in whom Christianity say they believe, also declared in the real Master's prayer recorded in John 17, that Elohim's word the Scriptures is truth in verse 17. If we bear in mind that the only section of the Scriptures available during Messiah's lifetime was the Tanach, then it is clear that He also agreed in principle with King David and most Rabbis of today. However, for those of us from the lost ten tribes, called specifically by the Father to conform to the image of His Son, are also required to have faith in the testimony of Yahshua our Messiah – meaning what He taught and did whilst He was on earth<sup>21</sup>. Since we've already discussed (in the previous lesson) how obedience as one of the essential components of faithfulness is the only way in which to show our heavenly Father that we love Him, we will now concentrate on to the third and final essential component necessary for faithfulness; namely trust or specifically trust in Elohim the rewarder of those who believe in Him. This begs me to ask the following questions: Do you know someone you can trust explicitly with anything and everything you possess? Are you someone that can be trusted by your closest friend? A rather lengthy but necessary dictionary definition of the word trust is: A reliance or resting of the mind on the integrity, genuineness, justice, friendship of another person; a firm reliance on promises or on laws or principles; hope, belief without examination to take the transfer of goods, property, etc. in confidence of future reward or payment; the state of being confident in another's care and guard, safe-keeping, management, law, the conveying of property to one party (trustee) in confidence that he will apply it for the benefit for a specified purpose or person.

Most of us have another human being that we know we can trust explicitly, but also knowing the saying: *'that everyone has a price'* to be true, we should think carefully about trusting any other human being! The price need not always be money or riches. Ask yourself: If the person you trust in's life or the lives of his/her children are in jeopardy unless he/she betrays you, will he/she still be trustworthy? This might sound unreasonable at this time, but there might be a time in the future where it could become a reality<sup>22</sup>. It is perhaps for this reason that Psalm 118: 8 said to be the middle or center-point of the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, reads: ***'It is better to take refuge in YHVH than to trust in man.'*** In fact this is exactly what Yahshua the Messiah or Emanuel (Elohim with us) did, He died for the sins of all the human beings that He ever created, who will eventually accept Him as their personal Passover, to give them eternal life. This is also what we are

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<sup>21</sup> As believers in Messiah, we are referred to in the Scriptures as saints, and as such we read from Revelation 14: 12: ***'Here is the perseverance (meaning the drive and purpose) of the saints who keep the commandments of Elohim and their faith in (or the faith of) Yahshua.'***

<sup>22</sup> Talking about the last days Yahshua said in Matthew 24: 9 & 10: ***"Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name. And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another."***

promised in John 3: 36, in this way: ***“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but He who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of Elohim abides on Him.”*** What’s more this is exactly what YHVH promised Moses in Deuteronomy 18: 18 & 19, saying: ***‘I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. (19) And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.’***

We the modern day disciples of Messiah (like His original disciples) have been granted the mysteries of the kingdom of Elohim<sup>23</sup>, since we, if we qualify, will become the bride who will remarry Messiah at His return, together with our Jewish Brothers who remain Torah observant until then. Our Jewish Brothers already believe in the coming kingdom of Elohim, with Messiah administering Elohim’s Laws. But, YHVH has at this time blinded their minds to the identity of Messiah, until such time as the fullness of the Gentiles (or more correctly those who used to believe they are Gentiles, plus some real Gentiles) have come in, then, He will remarry His bride united Israel as per Jeremiah 31: 31 – 33. It is in fact as Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 11: 15; when Yahshua returns one day on Yom Teruah, He is going to save the tents of Judah first (Zechariah 12: 7), when He goes to their synagogues and when they see His hands they will accept Him (Zechariah 12: 10), at which time the dead in Messiah will be resurrected (first Corinthians 15: 50 – 52). Those who are resurrected or changed from mortal to immortal at Messiah’s coming will have qualified to reign with Him for a thousand years as witnessed in Revelation 20: 6, in this way: ***‘Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of Elohim and of Messiah and will reign with Him for a thousand years.’*** This confirms what Rav Shaul wrote in Galatians 3: 26 – 29, saying: ***‘For you are all sons of Elohim through faith in Messiah Yahshua. (27) For all of you who were immersed into Messiah have clothed yourselves with Messiah. (28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Messiah Yahshua. (29) And if you belong to Messiah, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.’*** The question is: what was promised to Abraham?

To find the answer we turn to Genesis 12, where YHVH first spoke to Abram when he was already 75 years old, telling him to leave Haran in Mesopotamia and go south to the land of Canaan, saying to him in verses 1 – 3: ***“Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; (2) And I will make you a great nation, (3) and I will bless you and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”*** Immediately after Abram’s arrival in the land of Canaan, YHVH appears to him a second time and saying to him in verse 7 of Genesis 12: ***“To your descendants I will give this land.”*** In these few verses in Genesis 12 we find the beginning of Elohim’s plan of redemption, which He initiates through Abraham, and it involves both a promise of ‘seed’ or offspring and a promise of ‘soil’ or land. These are the two indispensable components of Elohim’s Redemptive Plan through Abram, and as recorded in the next few chapters in Genesis, it was to involve a specific group of his lineal descendants and their strategic possession of a specific land. Elohim continued to appear to Abraham over the next 25 years, and confirmed these promises to him repeatedly. Even though Abraham’s other children were also to be blessed, the offspring who are to fulfill these seven initial promises are to come through Isaac, his son born by his wife Sarah, as recorded in Genesis 17: 15 – 19, in this way: ***‘Then Elohim said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. (16) And I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her.***

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<sup>23</sup> When asked by His disciples, why He speaks in parables, He answered them in Matthew 13: 11 & 12, saying: ***“To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them (who are not His disciples) it has not been granted. For whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.”***

***Then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.” (17) Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” (18) And Abraham said to Elohim, “Oh that Ishmael might live before thee!” (19) But Elohim said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.”***

Reading from Genesis 13: 16 we see that these descendants through Isaac are to become ***‘as the dust of the earth’***; and further from Genesis 22: 17, ***‘as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the seashore’***. To be sure Abraham’s offspring were to become so numerous that he is properly called not only the father of a great nation, but the father of many nations. These promises were repeated to Isaac and later to Jacob, who received both the birthright and the blessing, as witnessed in Genesis 26: 3 – 5, as follows: ***“Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. (4) And I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; (5) because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.”*** The language and terminology that Elohim used in speaking to Jacob is even more interesting. When Elohim appeared to Jacob in a dream, the first time, He gave him the amazing promise recorded in Genesis 28: 13 & 14, saying: ***“I am YHWH, the Elohim of your father Abraham and the Elohim of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. (14) Your descendants shall also be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”*** A few years later, when Jacob’s name was changed to *‘Israel’*, YHWH gave him more details in Genesis 35: 11, saying: ***“I am Elohim Almighty; be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company (or commonwealth) of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come forth from you.”*** We understand from these verses that the Hebrew term for people (*am*) and nations (*goyim*) are used interchangeably. Even so, the descendants of Abraham through Isaac were to become an assembly of peoples, which is more than the tribal designation used for the descendants of Ishmael and Esau, who were both Abraham’s offspring, but not part of this *‘seed’* and *‘soil’* promise. Ishmael was to become a great nation, but never was it said that he would become *‘many’* nations or an *‘assembly’* of peoples. Ishmael became the father of the Arabian people, consisting of many tribes, but still only spoken about as one nation. The descendants of Esau listed in Genesis 36, are likewise seen as the Edomite people, despite numerous tribal divisions. The Hebrew word translated *‘assembly’* literally carries the notion of a large group or commonwealth of many nations.

Nevertheless, the most common way in which this language is understood, is in reference to the twelve tribes of Israel, descended from the sons of Jacob. Even so, the words Jacob himself used when he blessed the two sons of Joseph, immediately prior to his death shows otherwise. It seems that the *‘multiplicity’* of Abraham’s seed will be accomplished specifically through Ephraim and Manasseh, Joseph’s two sons. Jacob started in Genesis 48: 4 by reminding Joseph that YHWH had promised him years before that he, Israel, would become *‘a company of people’*. Jacob continued blessing his grandsons in verse 16, saying: ***‘The angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and may my name (Israel) live on in them, and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.’*** When Joseph question Jacob for blessing Ephraim first, using his right hand, he explained that while Manasseh the firstborn would become a *‘great people,’* his younger brother Ephraim would in fact become even greater, as recorded in Genesis 48: 19, in this way: ***“I Know, my son, I know; he also shall become a people and he also shall be great. However, His younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.”*** This special position of the tribes of Joseph is further revealed in the blessings which Jacob pronounced upon all twelve tribes on his deathbed in Genesis 49.

Even though each of the sons of Jacob received an equitable share, Joseph was undoubtedly singled out by the most extraordinary language, as witnessed in Genesis 49: 22 – 26, as follows: ***“Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring; its branches run over a wall. (23) The archers bitterly attacked him, and shot at him and harassed him; (24) But his bow remained firm, and his arms were agile, from the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), (25) From the Elohim of your father who helps you, and by the Almighty who blesses you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. (26) The blessings of your father have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; may they be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers.”*** An important element to note about the blessings of the various tribes, is that they are to be fulfilled mainly ***‘in the days to come’***, meaning the last days as is recorded in Genesis 49: 1. Even though the tribes of Joseph were amongst the largest and most affluent tribes of ancient Israel, they achieved an extraordinary level of greatness after 1800 CE. Moses mentions these tribes in particular, saying in Deuteronomy 33: 16 & 17: ***‘And with the choice things of the earth and its fullness, and the favor of Him who dwell in the bush. Let it come to the head of Joseph, and to the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers. (17) As the first-born of his ox, majesty is his, and his horns are the horns of the wild ox; with them he shall push the peoples, all at once, to the ends of the earth. And those are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and those are the thousands of Manasseh.*** These blessings seem to indicate the global influence of these two tribes, during their best years, which are fast coming to an end because of their sins.

The book of Hosea contains a blistering message and warning to the lost ten tribes of Israel, but more specifically for the United States and British Commonwealth of which South Africa was once part and still is in the mind of YHVH. The day of reckoning that we have been warned about since the 1920 by people like Herbert W Armstrong is upon us. We are at this time being punished and the severity of the punishment is slowly increasing, but most do not even realize that YHVH is like a loving father busy correcting us. Instead of turning to YHVH at this time these Israelite nations are seeking alliances with those nations who persecuted them in the past, as YHVH described through Hosea in chapter 2: 6 – 9, in this way: ***“Therefore, behold, I will hedge up her way with thorns, and I will build a wall against her so that she cannot find her paths. (7) And she will pursue her lovers, but she will not overtake them; and she will seek them, but will not find them. Then she will say, ‘I will go back to my first husband, for it was better for me than now!’ (8) For she does not know that it was I who gave her the grain, the new wine, and the oil, and lavished on her silver and gold, which they used for Baal. (9) Therefore, I will take back My grain at harvest time and My new wine in its season. I will also take away My wool and My flax given to cover her nakedness.”*** In South Africa and the other parts of Joseph’s inheritance (The USA and the British commonwealth) YHVH has been punishing us through violent strikes by workers, and inclement weather conditions, such as floods and excessive heat waves.

The latest development is that the government in South Africa is planning to take half of all white owned farms, and give it to the farm laborers. This could only result in great losses to both the farmers and the country and will result in even greater food insecurity. If the system was based on a model wine farm in the Western Cape, where the owners gave 33.33% of the share value of the farms to the laborers, meaning they do not actually own the land, but shares in the farming business. In addition to payment for their labor, they also get paid dividends based on the successful operation of the farm annually. When they want to retire one day, or leave the farm for another reason, they may sell their shares back to the owner, who will then re-allocate the same to new employees. This makes perfect economic sense since it motivates workers to help increase the profits earned by the business, and it results in a win-win situation for all. Let’s pray that this more sensible idea gets communicated to the powers that be, as it will definitely improve the position of the workers, as well as us food security.



Now that we have narrowed down whom the recipients were, who essentially received a double portion as the first-born of Jacob in place of Reuben who defiled his father's bed, let's again consider the promises that YHWH made to our father in the faith, Abraham. We see from Galatians 3: 8, ***"And the Scripture, foreseeing that Elohim would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS SHALL BE BLESSED IN YOU."*** Yes, the gospel was preached directly to Abraham by Elohim. The quoted section here comes from Genesis 22: 18, in this way: ***'And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.'*** This blessing was to come from the 'seed' of Abraham's body. The gospel was the promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through his seed. At this point we do not know what the blessing is, and we do not know who the 'seed' is. To find out additional details, we jump thousands of years ahead, to the time of Stephen the martyr, when he was on trial before the Sanhedrin. At that time he related the account of Abraham and the promise given to him becomes clear in Stephen's report. We read consequently from Acts 7: 2 – 5: ***'And he said, "Hear me, brethren and fathers! The Elohim of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, (3) and said to him, 'DEPART FROM YOUR COUNTRY AND YOUR RELATIVES, AND COME INTO THE LAND THAT I WILL SHOW YOU.' (4) "Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans, and settled in Haran. And from there, after his father died, Elohim removed him into this country in which you are now living. (5) And He gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot of ground; and yet, even when he had no child, He promised that HE WOULD GIVE IT TO HIM AS A POSSESSION, AND TO HIS OFFSPRING AFTER HIM."'***

Although at that time, Abraham had no children – no seed through whom the promised blessing could come, Elohim promised the land of Canaan to him as an inheritance. He was to inherit and possess the land that Elohim allowed him to dwell in, through his promised seed. In Romans 4: 13 Rav Shaul told the Nazarene congregation in Rome, that Abraham was promised the world, in this way: ***'For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.'*** We see from verses 10 & 11 of Romans 4, that Abraham was circumcised as a seal of the righteousness through faith, which he had while he was uncircumcised. Even though these verses make it clear that the blessing promised to Abraham included the inheritance of land, he did not inherit one square foot whilst he was alive. We find another passage in the Scriptures regarding the blessing that was promised Abraham in Hebrews 11: 8 - 13, as follows: ***'By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. (9) By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; (10) for he was looking for a city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is Elohim. (11) By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised; (12) therefore, also, there was born of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE. (13) All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.'***

The gospel message is in part about inheriting the world, and was also foretold a number of times in the Tanach, one example being in Isaiah 52: 7, in this way: ***'How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace and brings good news of happiness, who announces salvation, and says to Zion, "Your Elohim reigns!"'*** We see here that the gospel has to do with salvation with Elohim reigning once again as King in Israel. Isaiah continues telling us how YHWH is about to redeem His people saying in verses 9 & 10 of Isaiah 52, ***'Break forth, shout joyfully together, you waste places of Jerusalem; for YHWH has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem. (10) YHWH 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.'*** Isaiah explained further in Isaiah 53 that when Messiah



comes the first time, He would be pierced for our transgressions (verse 5), but when He comes the second time, as shown in verse 7 above, He is coming to rule the world from Jerusalem. A second example where the gospel is proclaimed in the Tanach comes from Nahum 1: 15, as follows: ***'Behold on the mountains the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace! Celebrate your feasts, O Judah; pay your vows, for never again will the wicked one pass through you; he is cut off completely.'*** Here, as we have learnt, the good news about the coming kingdom of Elohim is directly related to the Feast Days of Elohim, given in Leviticus 23 and as kept by Judah. It is also for this reason that our Jewish Brothers already believe in the gospel of the coming kingdom of Elohim.

The truly Torah obedient Jews already have the faithfulness required for salvation and it is for this reason that Yahshua did not have to come for them during His so-called first advent. This is then also why He indicated a number of times that His first advent was specifically to come and save those from the lost ten tribes of Israel (as per Matthew 15: 24). Even so, because Yahshua is the only name by which we may be saved, He is coming to save the tents of Judah first at His second coming (as per Zechariah 12: 7 – 10). It is also for this reason that Rav Shaul wrote about our Jewish Brothers in Romans 10: 11 – 19, saying: ***'For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."*** (12) ***For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Master is Master of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him;*** (13) ***for "WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF YHVH WILL BE SAVED."*** (14) ***How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?*** (15) ***And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!"*** (16) ***However, they did not all heed the glad tidings; for Isaiah says, "MASTER, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?"*** (17) ***So faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Messiah.*** (18) ***But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have; "THEIR VOICE HAS GONE OUT INTO ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR WORDS TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD."*** (19) ***But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? At the first Moses says, "I WILL MAKE YOU JEALOUS BY THAT WHICH IS NOT A NATION, BY A NATION WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING WILL I ANGER YOU."*** YHVH is at this time calling a remnant from the Lost ten tribes (as per Romans 11: 5) specifically to make the Jews jealous and keep them on their toes until Yahshua's second coming ( as per Romans 11: 11). Are we busy doing that?

This brings us to an apparent insoluble problem. Abraham had an inheritance pending, but he already died. To understand the situation better, we need to consider the promise involving Abraham's 'seed'. Firstly, who is this seed of Abraham? We are given the answer to the identity of this seed in Galatians 3: 16, as follows: ***'Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Messiah.'*** We read accordingly from Hebrews 1: 2, ***'in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.'*** We have already read from Galatians 3: 29, ***'if you belong to Messiah, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.'*** Elohim considers an inheritance in the same way that we as human beings look at an inheritance. Earthly parents in a similar way will at the end of the day give their earthly possessions to their children, provided they meet the conditions specified in the parent's will. However, our inheritance from Elohim differs from any earthly inheritance as flesh and blood human beings, in that we will die, never to live again, unless obviously Elohim absolves us of the penalty due to us, because of our sins; and unless He resurrects us from the grave; our spiritual inheritance will be of no benefit. Rav Shaul explains how we are able to conquer these problems, how the death penalty was abolished and how we may become everlasting inheritors like Abraham was. We read from verse 13 of Galatians 3, ***'Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the law*** (the death penalty due to us for breaking the law), ***having become a curse for us – for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE."***

Messiah even though He never sinned, took our curse of the law upon Himself like a law breaker, by dying on our behalf. Why did He do that? Rav Shaul continues explaining in verse 14, saying: ***'In order that in Messiah Yahshua the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles (those of us who think that we are Gentiles and some real Gentiles), so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.'*** This is telling us, that if we are properly immersed in the Name of Yahshua and are given the Set-apart Spirit with the laying on of hands by a teaching elder of the congregation (as per first Timothy 4: 14), we will again become part of the commonwealth of Israel and will share in the promise to Abraham (as per Ephesians 2: 11 – 19). It means that we will live again, since Messiah paid the death penalty due to us, as our kinsman redeemer. Rav Shaul further explained to the Ephesian congregation in Ephesians 1: 13 & 14, saying: ***'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 (or deposit) of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of Elohim's own possession, to the praise of His glory.'*** This is in fact similar to what he (Rav Shaul) explained to the congregation in Rome in Romans 8: 10 – 11, saying: ***'And if Messiah is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. (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.'*** It is no wonder that Yahshua answered the Jews of his day in John 8: 56, saying: ***"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.'*** The reason was that He already satisfied the promise made to Abraham. Even though the blessings that the tribes of Israel received were physical and they received a great deal of it in this life, the one blessing that came through Messiah the single seed of Abraham, and the promise of eternal life through Him is available to all who eventually accept Him as their personal Passover.

But the second part of the promise that Abraham did not receive as yet – the part where he and his descendants will inherit the world with Jerusalem as headquarters, he will only receive later as explained in Hebrews 11: 39 & 40. In this way: ***'And all these (our fathers in the faith, as well righteous people mentioned in the Tanach, and those of us who already died in Messiah), having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, (40) because Elohim had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect.'*** Yes, Abraham and those who will be in the first (better) resurrection, because of their faith in His one 'seed' (namely Yahshua the salvation of YHVH) will only inherit the Promised Land eternally, after they are resurrected at Messiah's return. That is when those in Messiah will all be made perfect, as explained in first Thessalonians 5: 23, as follows: ***'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 Yahshua Messiah.'*** But, that is also when we will as co-heirs with Messiah rule the world and ultimately the universe, as witnessed in Romans 8: 16 & 17, in this way ***'The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of Elohim, (17) and if children, heirs also, heirs of Elohim and fellow heirs with Messiah, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.'***

Rav Kepha knew exactly what Yahshua meant when He told him that he was a building block (or stone) that will together with the other disciples and we who came later be used to build the temple of Elohim, on Him (Yahshua) himself as the foundation stone (as per first Peter 2: 5 – 9). Rav Kepha also confirmed in Acts 4: 11 & 12 that Yahshua is the only name by which we may be saved, saying: ***"He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone. (12) And there is salvation is no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."*** Do you trust in the promise made to Abraham to inherit the Promised Land for an everlasting possession once you have been glorified with eternal life, or are you also going to be excluded like the ancient Israelites were because of unbelief (as per Hebrews 3: 19)? Do you believe in the gospel of the coming kingdom of Elohim, by

not only trusting in His promises to us through Abraham, but getting to know His Word intimately and by obeying His voice?

Yes YHVH blessed our forefathers as David confirmed He would in Psalm 105: 42 – 45, saying: ***‘For He remembered His holy word with Abraham His servant; (43) and He brought forth His people with joy, His chosen ones with a joyful shout. (44) He gave them also the lands of nations, that they might take possession of the fruit of the peoples’ labor, (45) so that they might keep His statutes, and observe His laws, Hallelujah!’*** Even though our forefathers failed miserably in their role to teach the nations about the true gospel, YHVH will remain faithful, and if we show our faithfulness to Him, by obtaining a solid knowledge of His truth; showing our love to Him by obeying His truth, and trusting in His promise to Abraham, we have a guarantee (pledge) of our inheritance in the Kingdom of Elohim with our fathers in the faith, as Spiritual children of Elohim! Baruch HaShem YHVH!

## Chapter 20: A new beginning?

YHVH our Elohim is not the cruel old taskmaster the way some groups who confess faith in Messiah, betray Him. In fact just the opposite is true as witnessed in Ezekiel 18: 23 & 32, in this way: ***“Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked,” declares YHVH Elohim, “rather than that he should turn from his ways and live? (32) For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies,” declares YHVH Elohim. “Therefore, repent and live.”*** Elohim’s Torah is like the law of gravity for our benefit, as long as we do not transgress it. We need to walk around with our wits about us all the time, if we want to avoid sinning. Similarly we need to walk around with our eyes wide open when walking around in unfamiliar territory - we need to be aware of sudden slopes and uneven steps on the way, or else we could fall down to the ground.

Even those of us who are busy practicing righteousness by keeping Elohim’s Torah to the best of our ability in a very imperfect world, miss the mark on a daily basis. We are all familiar with baseball; in the game of baseball the batter is out after only three strikes. At the beginning of the season and at the start of a game this is a limiting factor to ensure that the game remains exciting to both who watch and play. However, when a batter is playing in the final innings of the game at the end of the season and his team members are counting on him to pull them out of the throes of another defeat and keep them in the race for the championship, he does not want to hear the words – strike three, you’re out! Our struggle with sin is much like a game of baseball, except that instead of a professional player spending up to 15 years in the game, we spend 60 to 80 years in our fight against sin.

Like in professional baseball despite our competition being very strong and highly skilled, we as believers need to keep coming back to the plate. Some might ask why we continue in our struggle to overcome the pulls of the flesh. The answer is partly in the gift of salvation which depends on the way we lived our lives, striving against sin and doing battle against the enemy – as a result of Messiah’s sacrifice and our repentance of sin. Because most Nazarene believers in Messiah are familiar with the parable of the talents in Matthew 25, we would all like to hear our Master say to us (as Messiah explained in verse 21): ***‘Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter the joy of your master.’*** That is something that lies in the future for all of us alive at this time, but people like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has already qualified to be in the kingdom, as Yahshua warned in Luke 13: 24 – 28, saying: ***“Strive to enter by the narrow door, for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. (25) Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, ‘Master, open up to us!’ then He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from.’ (26) Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets’; (27) and He will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you are from; ‘DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS.’ (28) There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth there when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of Elohim, but you yourself being cast out. (29) And they will come from east and west, and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of Elohim. (30) And behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last.”*** What did Yahshua mean by saying: ‘some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last’?

We find the answer in Hebrews 11: 39 & 40, where talking about our fathers in the faith we read: ***‘And all these having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, (40) because Elohim had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect.’*** The Scriptures assures us that if we continue in our fight against the pulls of Satan, the world and our own human nature, we will ultimately succeed as long as we continue to strive to the end, as witnessed in 2 Peter 1: 10 & 11, in this way: ***‘Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these***

**things, you will never stumble; (11) for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Master and Savior Yahshua Messiah will be abundantly supplied to you.'** Elohim created mankind because He has a fantastic plan for us all. Rav Shaul wrote about Elohim's plan for us in first Timothy 2: 3 & 4, saying: **'This is good and acceptable in the sight of Elohim our Savior, (4) who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.'** This tells us that salvation requires that we obtain knowledge of the truth (the word of Elohim as Yahshua said in John 17: 17), and thereafter obviously practice the truth we have learnt from the word of Elohim, the Scriptures, to be saved (eternally). Elohim knows the depths we sink into when we fail to meet His standards for us. Elohim knows the penalties that He put in place for breaking His commandments, and as His potential future spiritual sons and daughters He wants a great deal better for us.

If Elohim kept a record of the times we failed Him, no one could ever hope to succeed; we would all be lost, as king David also observed in Psalm 130: 1 – 3, saying: ***'Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O YHVH. (2) Master, hear my voice! Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. (3) If Thou, YHVH, should mark iniquities, O Master, who could stand? Even so, YHVH tells us through King Solomon in Ecclesiastes 7: 20, saying: 'Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and never sins.'*** By righteous men Solomon means people who walked with Elohim, such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and even David. At times we might feel that we are the worst of sinners, we are definitely not alone in our battles; people like David walked this path before. Elohim did not leave us in a hopeless situation. He is aware that as flesh and blood human beings we need help to make it into His glorious Kingdom, and He does provide that help for us, as David witnessed in Psalm 34: 4, 6, 7, 15 - 19, saying: ***'I sought YHVH, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. (6) This poor man cried and YHVH heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. (7) The angel of YHVH encamps around those who fear Him, and rescues them. (15) The eyes of YHVH are toward the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry. (16) The face of YHVH is against evildoers, to cut the memory of them from the earth. (17) The righteous cry and YHVH hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. (18) YHVH is near to the broken hearted, and saves those who are crushed in spirit. (19) Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but YHVH delivers him out of them all.'*** If we get to know YHVH as a loving Father and trust and obey YHVH, He will deliver us, as David wrote in Psalm 130: 4, saying: ***'But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.'*** But, we need to understand that our merciful Father is also Almighty YHVH the Elohim of Israel, and as His chosen people He promised to redeem us as also witnessed in verses 7 & 8 of Psalm 130, in this way: ***'O Israel, hope in YHVH; for with YHVH there is lovingkindness, and with Him is abundant redemption. (8) And He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.'***

Elohim is our redeemer, who paid the penalty for our sins with His own blood, as Rav Shaul declares in Acts 20: 28, saying to those who teach Elohim's people: ***"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Set-apart Spirit has made you overseers to shepherd the congregation of Elohim which He purchased with His own blood."*** Those who believe in two (YHVH)'s like to emphasize the point that that Elohim provided a redeemer for us, but we see here as also witnessed in Psalm 34: 22, where David wrote: ***'YHVH redeems the soul of His servants; and none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned.'*** This is confirmed in Psalm 49: 7 & 15, as follows: ***'No man can by any means redeem his brother, or give to Elohim a ransom for him— (15) But Elohim will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol (the grave); for He will receive me.'*** Yes, some like the Institute for Scripture Research (Pty) Ltd in South Africa, who published their version of 'The Scriptures' in 1998 and believed in two (YHVH)'s at the time, added as a footnote to Thomas' exclamation in Yochanan 20: 28 where he said to Yahshua after seeing His hands: ***"My Master and my Elohim!"***, that: ***'יהושע(Yahshua) is also Elohim.'*** Yahshua is not also Elohim He is Elohim in the flesh or Immanuel, Elohim with us! It is when we want to separate Elohim that we come up with ideas that there are two different sets of law – one given by YHVH and the other by Yahshua, which is as shown in our previous lesson a fallacy. It is as YHVH said in Deuteronomy 4: 39, ***"Know***



***therefore today, and take it to your heart, that YHVH, He is Elohim in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other.***” It is for this reason that I prefer to use the ‘New American Standard Bible’ which even though it is aimed at mainly a Christian audience, most of us are aware of the few mistakes in it compared to say the King James Version. I believe most Scriptures specifically written for groups like the Messianic believers and/or Assemblies of YHVH always contain the agendas of those who wrote them, as is the case with the version published by the Institute for Scripture Research mentioned earlier.

Different to human beings, Elohim has an enormous capacity to forgive. It does not give us leeway to sin or treat Elohim’s redemption lightly. As mentioned before, Elohim knows our heart, but He also knows the power of sin. If we trust Him when we step back on the plate when it is our turn to bat again, and this time we hit the ball, getting to first base, and eventually home, he will be there when we need His help. He paid for our sins once for all and will continue to forgive us up to the time when the season of our life is over, as Yochanan wrote in first John 1: 9, saying: ***‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’*** Knowing that Elohim is all-knowing David knew that Elohim was fully aware of His sins, and that he could not blame anyone for what had happened. Therefore, after he was approached by Nathan, he wrote Psalm 51: 3 - 13, saying: ***‘For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. (4) Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, and done what is evil in Thy sight, so that Thou art justified when Thou dost speak, and blameless when Thou dost judge. (5) Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. (6) Behold, Thou dost desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part Thou wilt make me know wisdom. (7) Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. (8) Make me to hear joy and gladness, let the bones which Thou hast broken rejoice. (9) Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. (10) Create in me a clean heart, O Elohim, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (11) Do not cast me away from Thy presence, and do not take Thy Holy Spirit from me. (12) Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, and sustain me with a willing spirit. (13) Then I will teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners will be converted to Thee.’***

As David requested, Elohim’s mercy and forgiveness shown him, is a strong motivator for us today, knowing that despite David’s sins, because he acknowledge his transgressions YHVH willingly forgave him and referred to David, as ‘A MAN AFTER MY HEART’, as witnessed in first Samuel 13: 14. When we get to the point where we are ready to turn back to YHVH, the only proviso for Him to forgive us for our past sins is that we must be willing to go before Elohim and acknowledge personal responsibility for our past sins or our transgressions of His Torah commands. Tell YHVH that you are truly sorry for bowing before the image of a man Christianity calls J\*e\*s\*u\*s\* who even though He was buried, resurrected and ascended to heaven, are still portrayed wearing a thorn crown on a cross; and stop doing it. Tell Him you have come to understand His command given in Exodus 20: 4 & 5<sup>24</sup>, and understand that you did wrong in times past. Tell Him that you are sorry for not obeying His commandments about His weekly and annual Sabbaths; for not being careful to ensure that all the fat and blood from the meat you eat from kosher animals have been removed, as per Leviticus 3: 17. It is only once, we have committed our hearts to doing what YHVH requires, can we expect the forgiveness Elohim makes possible. Even because of our hurried lifestyle we at times consume meat and milk products together without being totally aware of our every action, we must never give up. Every time you are at the plate staring the enemy in the face, you need to ask Elohim to provide you with the means to live up to the standard that He requires. It is important for us to measure our

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<sup>24</sup> Exodus 20: 4 - 6: ***“You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness (including pictures of J\*e\*s\*u\*s\* as shown in some Bibles where he is portrayed with long blond hair) of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them, for I, YHVH your Elohim, am a jealous Elohim, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”***

every action against Torah and to know how much we need Elohim's guidance, direction and protection every time we bat.

If we truly want to be in the kingdom of Elohim and want victory in the game of life, Elohim will provide us help to overcome those sins which so beset us, as the prophet Hosea assured us in Hosea 14: 1 - 4, saying: ***'Return, O Israel to YHVH your Elohim, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity. (2) Take words (Torah) with you and return to YHVH. Say to Him, "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, that we may present the fruit of our lips. (3) Assyria will not save us, we will not ride on horses; nor will we say again, 'Our god,' to the work of our hands; for in Thee the orphan finds mercy."*** (4) ***I will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from them.'*** However, it takes the right attitude as YHVH told Solomon in 2 Chronicles 7: 13 & 14, saying: ***"If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, (14) and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.'*** Elohim provides a Nazarene believer the opportunity for a new beginning— not only once, but numerous times. In fact He has given us His annual Passover to remind and encourage us of His help.

Rav Shaul wrote about his personal battle to encourage us in Romans 7: 22 – 25, saying: ***'For I joyfully concur with the law of Elohim in the inner man, (23) but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. (24) Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? (25) Thanks be to Elohim through Yahshua Messiah our Master! So then on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of Elohim, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.'*** Rav Shaul found a way to start over again and even though we may be overwhelmed with regret because of our sins, we have the same help which Rav Shaul had. Rav Shaul wrote accordingly in Hebrews 9: 8 – 14, saying: ***'The Set-apart Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing, (9) which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshipper perfect in conscience, (10) since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. (11) But when Messiah appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; (12) and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. (13) For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, (14) how much more will the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to Elohim, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim?***

Messiah our Passover is a power greater than anything physically available to us, and much more valuable than the cost of human sin. It is so important for us to know who Yahshua is, and it was for this reason that in explaining about His power to forgive sin, even the sin of those in the second resurrection, such as the sinners who lived anciently in the land of Sodom (in Matthew 11: 23 & 24), He said in Matthew 11: 25 – 27, ***"I praise Thee, O Father, Master of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and intelligent and did reveal them to babes. (26) Yes, Father, for thus it was well-pleasing in Thy sight. (27) All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son, except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father, except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."*** When we understand the meaning of Messiah's memorial Passover, we should be strengthened because we will realize that we can start afresh, in spite of our mistakes. Continuing in verses 28 – 30, Messiah promised that He will give us rest in the Kingdom of Elohim, if we take His yoke (meaning His stricter way of interpreting Torah) upon us and learn from Him, saying: ***"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will***

*give you rest. (29) Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. (30) For My yoke is easy, and My load is light.*" If those who are called by Elohim hears and understands the gospel of the Kingdom of Elohim, will act upon it and realize despite our present physical nature, we will ultimately become sinless as children of Elohim, as witnessed in Hebrews 2: 11, in this way: ***'For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.'***

To demonstrate His ability as well as His willingness to help us to start over, we read from Matthew 9: 1 – 6, as follows: ***'And getting into a boat, He crossed over, and came to His own city. (2) And behold, they were bringing to Him a paralytic, lying on a bed; and Yahshua seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Take courage, My son, your sins are forgiven."*** (3) ***And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This fellow blasphemes."*** (4) ***And Yahshua knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts? (5) For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, and walk'? (6) But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" – then He said to the paralytic— "Rise, take up your bed, and go home."*** The forgiveness of sins is the healing of a person's life, release from thoughts that may be crippling to him and an opportunity to a new beginning. However, our forgiveness is also depended upon the way we show our love to our neighbors. Though we cannot grant anyone a new beginning in the spiritual sense, we are able to help make the way easier for others. By so doing it helps us understand Elohim's will for us and help us to develop some of His character. After asking Yahshua how often we shall forgive our neighbor for sinning against us, Yahshua answered in Matthew 18: 22, saying: ***"I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven."*** Yahshua explained the idea of forgiveness to His disciples when he taught them the prayer to model their prayers after in Matthew 6, saying in verses 12 – 15: ***'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. (13) And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amein.'*** (14) ***For, if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. (15) But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.*** Although we cannot provide a fellow human being with a guilt-free conscience, by being forgiving, we are busy developing Elohim-like character necessary to conform to the image of His Son. In addition, we know that when we repent a new beginning is ours every time we need one.

It is also for this reason that we as Nazarene believers in Yahshua, are appointed as watchmen by Elohim to warn like-minded believers of their sins, as we read from Ezekiel 33: 7 – 11, in this way: ***'Now as for you, son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel; so you will hear a message from My mouth, and give them warning from Me. (8) When I say to the wicked, O wicked man, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require from your hand. (9) But if you on your part warn a wicked man to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he will die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your life. (10) Now as for you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have spoken, saying, surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we are rotting away in them; how then can we survive? (11) Say to them, As I live! Declares YHVH Elohim, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from you evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?'*** A second witness to this comes from Isaiah 58: 1, as follows: ***"Cry loudly, do not hold back; raise your voice like a trumpet, and declare to My people their transgression, and to the house of Jacob their sins."*** Even though as watchmen we are required to warn fellow Israelites about their sins, I am often criticized for writing 'harsh' sermons. But, knowing that YHVH our Elohim is a merciful Father Who forgives those who return to Him and His way, I write these sermons to try and bring back some of our brethren who were misled by the likes of king Jeroboam who instituted a feast a month

later than the one kept in Judah, and have as a result fallen away from the faith once delivered to the saints.

It is important for those of us who are called by YHVH to come out of the world, not to become rebellious because of unbelief like our forefathers did in ancient Israel, and were not allowed to enter the Promised Land (as per Hebrews 3: 19). We read from Ezekiel 20 : 33 – 38, that the same fate is awaiting the rebels among (YHVH)'s elect, in this way: ***“As I live,” declares YHVH Elohim, surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you. (34) And I shall bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out; (35) and I shall bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I shall enter into judgment with you face to face. (36) As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you,” declares YHVH Elohim. (37) “And I shall make you pass under the rod, and I shall bring you into the bond of the covenant; (38) and I shall purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I shall bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am YHVH.”*** Think about it!

This book is published on behalf of the Nazarene Israelite Two House Congregation of Port Elizabeth an Internet ministry based in Port Elizabeth South Africa. Postal Address: P O Box 15935, Emerald Hill. 6011. Port Elizabeth. South Africa.

Note: I learnt a great deal of what I know from Herbert W Armstrong who died in January 1986, but I would like to refer you to another important teacher that YHVH sent us in these latter days. He is OvadYah Abrahams and is related with Kol Hator a group in Israel whose vision is for a reconciled 12-Tribed Kingdom of Israel. The Kol Hator web site is at: [www.kolhator.org.il](http://www.kolhator.org.il) Bless you YHVH Elohim King of the universe for letting me cross paths with people like these.

All our material may be downloaded from the Hebrew Roots Teaching Institute's website at [www.hrti.co.za](http://www.hrti.co.za) at a nominal cost to help cover their administrative costs.

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