

The Narrow Path to
**Celebrating
Salvation**
in the Covenant Festivals

A Parent's Guide to
Shepherding Their Children

by Todd W. Elder

Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

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Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

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Festival Summary

Appointment	Earthly Event	Yahshuah's Work
Communion	Last Supper	Wedding Betrothal
Passover	Saved from Slavery	Saved from Death
Feast of Unleavened Bread	Coming out of Egypt	Coming out of Darkness
Wave Sheaf	First of the Harvest	Yahshuah's Resurrection
Feast of Weeks	Giving of Commandments	Giving of the Special Spirit
Day of Shouting	Binding of Satan	Millenial Kingdom
Day of Redemptions	Atonement for Sin	Redemption in Heaven
Feast of Booths	Temporary Dwellings	Wedding Celebration
Eighth Day	'New Beginnings'	New Jerusalem

How to Use This Book

This book is written to the parents. It is written to (hopefully) mature believers that can handle the many complex and ongoing themes found in Scripture. It is written as a reminder of those themes which are valuable to share with the next generation.

Sharing at the Level of Your Children

I personally believe the parent is the one who knows their children best. The parents are the ones who know if their children are mature enough for certain topics, able to grasp deep concepts, handle cause and effect scenarios, or know Scripture enough to see prophecy and fulfillments.

Young adults and older children can handle these things. The younger children will need to have the concepts simplified and probably have the concepts spread out across multiple years instead of giving them all at once. The simple guideline of answering the questions to the level they are asking is a good one (provided they are asking questions).

Having Fun and Making Memories

It is those moments outside of everyday life that we remember well. These days are opportunities to have fun together as we celebrate. It might become something the children look forward to each year. These are celebrations and need not be limited to a short formal service that feels academic and stale. Make them special.

Suggestions for Activities

The following list of possible activities are things we have tried and found useful or fun. Some work well for younger children, others for older children.

The Obvious Option:

Except for the Day of Redemptions, these are celebrations that call for food. Cooking and baking special dishes (possibly involving all of the family) is called for. Try to find food(s) that each person will enjoy and find special. Maybe it is dishes that take more time to cook. Maybe it is more exotic fruits that take more time to find. It can even be a favorite

food that is had often, but have it again just because it is a joy.

Simple Options:

Reading Scripture as a family

Coloring Pages (with a scriptural or festival theme)

Make Collages showing the events

Make Timelines to show the historical events

Learn new hymns or songs related to the event

Felt Story Pads and Boards

More Complex Options:

Prepare flash cards with events that must be put in correct chronological order

Record your own finger puppet video that follows Scripture

Making treasure hunts based on the theme of the Festival

Making Scripture based trivia games

Start a scroll that the children add to through the year

Make a model of the Tabernacle

Options for how to spend the day:

Time for personal and family prayer.

Reading Scripture together.

Worshiping together.

Having a picnic.

Taking a leisurely walk.

Playing with your pets.

Playing board games (not those that involve work, buying, and selling).

Drawing.

Playing a musical instrument (not for practice, but for enjoyment).

Watching a video about creation.

Putting together a jigsaw puzzle.

Eating outdoors.

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. For He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of his hand." Psalm 95:6-7 KJV

Preface

The Making of the First Edition

I was given five weeks to prepare a book on the festivals. Under that condition, it became quickly apparent it would be little more than some type of detailed outline or a summary of the main themes. It is a challenging endeavor ... to share all of these incredible themes ... to share a depth of appreciation for what the Savior has done for me and for each of us ... and to share what has been learned and experienced in my own journey of observing the festivals based on Scripture. So, as I sit here on my last day writing, this book comes ... a bit unpolished and rough around the edges ... so much has been done, but so much remains undone ... and some sections having had a reasonable time and effort and others having had little. Hopefully this first edition is able to give the reader a quick reminder how each festival and appointed time points us toward our Savior and the return to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Arriving at this point has been a long journey. I grew up in a liberal Protestant denomination. I spent a few years with Sabbath keeping groups. I looked into Messianic Judaism for a couple years. There were so many different sets of traditions all competing to be the "correct" view. Finally, I read through the Bible [in chronological order by chapter]. Suddenly, the history of man kind and the history of Israel [as His people] made sense. When taken in order, one can see the

promises, the covenants, and the prophecies all come together and play out in history. The promises are being kept. The prophecies are being fulfilled. The blessings and cursings of the covenant effect man kind, nations, and individuals. Within these writings, one can see not only His righteousness and purity but also His love and mercy. Through it all is His obvious desire for a close relationship with each and every one of us.

After learning what Scripture had to say, I was left with many questions ... especially why modern Christianity and modern Messianic Judaism look so different from the Bible. After twenty-five years, it has become clear that the traditions of the Bishops based on Councils, Creeds, and Catechisms are not the same as Scripture. Similarly, the traditions of the Rabbis based on the Talmud, Kabbalah, and the Zohar are also not the same as Scripture.

I made the decision to follow Scripture without those traditions [a learning process that is still ongoing] and it has made all the difference. This effort has not been wasted. The last twenty years of my life has been an incredible journey learning that life is precious, His creation is full of wonders, His word shows us how to navigate both the physical and spiritual aspects of life, His ways encourage life and bring peace, and perhaps the best lesson of all ... if we will follow, then He will lead.

In all of this, I do want to make one point especially clear. While I do distinguish between all these traditions, I am not questioning your salvation. If you accept the Messiah Yahshuah / Jesus as Savior, then you have been forgiven and I expect to see you in the city of New Jerusalem in the New Heavens and Earth. My position is to simply accept that believers come in a very wide range of traditions and denominations. I look forward to the day when we will all know exactly what is the correct form of worship and when fellowship with one another becomes an easy thing.

*"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."
Revelation 4:11 KJV*

Introduction

The Big Picture - Life Is Precious

Genesis 1: Created Beings

Genesis 1 states that we are created beings. Elohim created the Heavens, the Earth, and all that is within them (including mankind). This ultimately means that we belong to Elohim. This relationship is expressed many ways in the Scriptures including Him as our Master and as our Heavenly Father. This also means that He has the right to make the rules and we should obey.

Genesis 2: Relational Beings

Genesis 2 states that we are relational beings. There is a relationship with the One Most High that is above everything. Also there is a relationship with a spouse as it is found that 'it is not good for man to be alone'. With both Elohim and a spouse, life can be shared.

Genesis 3: Fallen Beings

Genesis 3 states that we are fallen beings. Mankind has produced it's first act of disobedience and we have become guilty of breaking the Creator's rules. The penalty for this act was known ... death. We now deserve to die. In the physical, this does not occur immediately, but living life now comes with a curse, distance from the Eternal, and much pain.

. . . : Sanctified Beings

Throughout over a thousand chapters of Scripture, the picture is

slowly revealed at how we are sanctified beings. Through the Eternal's promises and covenants with Israel, through the giving of the commandments, through the Tabernacle, sacrificial system, and the work of the High Priest, through the arrival, death, and resurrection of His Son as our Messiah and Savior, and through the giving of the Special Spirit we are being brought closer. Each contributes towards the goal of salvation, sanctification, and redemption. Furthermore, all of these things are celebrated, and Yahshuah is honored, within the festivals and assemblies which annually remind us of His love, mercy, and forgiveness.

Revelation 22: Restored Beings

Revelation 22 states that we are restored beings. We once again have a favored status with the One Most High. We once again have close relationship with our Creator. The effects of sin are no longer part of our lives as believers dwell in a new Heaven and Earth.

Unit A

Why Observe the Scriptural Festivals?

One of the first questions to answer with our children is why to follow Scripture. It is beyond the scope of this book to prove the historical, scientific, and spiritual accuracy and relevance of Scripture. Instead, the believer has more than ample evidence from the effectiveness and impact of Scripture, prayer, and a relationship with our Heavenly Father in our lives. Therefore, the following chapters will summarize the main issues regarding why to follow Scripture and the covenant commandments rather than the traditions of man when it comes to the assemblies and festivals.

Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Matthew 21:42 KJV

Chapter 1

What Is the Authority of Scripture?

If Scripture is true, then the Bible, as the word of Elohim, is the accurate and authoritative description of both the physical and spiritual aspects of life. We should make the effort to know and understand it in order to obey and worship properly rather than be deceived by the enemy through inaccurate doctrine, twisting of Scripture, or false prophets.

The Eternal's Word to Man Kind

As believers, we want to build our relationship with the One Most High and grow closer to Him. As with any relationship, the one with the Almighty grows by spending time together and getting to know each other better. One of the best ways we have to do this is to read His words that are written to us which are recorded in Scripture.

The Uniqueness of a Savior

There is one unique concept that belongs only to the Bible. It is the concept of a Savior ... a substitutionary atoning sacrifice that grants us righteousness and eternal life. No other religion offers this. Most religions will have a concept of an afterlife or reincarnation, but all of them have a judgement based on your good works (not your relationship to a Savior). Many religions have something like a Messiah ... an expected figure that may come with great power or authority. But that is not the same as a Savior. It is this single truth upon which everything hangs. It is this single concept the world is fighting so much; because if this is true, then

the world is convicted of sin.

History of the Covenants

The central theme is Elohim's relationship with mankind that comes in the forms of both covenants and promises. There are many ways to define and delineate the writings of Scripture from other works. Perhaps one of the simplest and most powerful is to define Scripture as the books of the Covenant and the history of the Covenant. The books of the Covenant are generally the first five books of the Bible known as the books of Moses, the Torah, or the Pentateuch. The remaining books, showing the history of the covenant, collectively show what has happened to the Almighty's people through history as they have obeyed or disobeyed the covenant.

Proof of Scripture

Science and history proclaim the truth of Scripture and the prophecies it contains which, in turn, give confidence to the future prophecies that have yet to be fulfilled. While believers would typically not have difficulty in understanding the Scriptures as being the word of the Almighty,

What Is the Authority of Scripture?

the world in general asks could they be true. There is an amazing amount of evidence to show that they are indeed true and accurate. As a whole, the Scriptures were written over a 1,500 year period from about 40 authors. These accounts include many times, cultures, and events which continue to be upheld by archaeological study. Furthermore, a unique characteristic of the Bible is predictive prophecy, foretelling what will happen in the future with many events already having been fulfilled historically.

Canon of Scripture

The modern, Protestant Bible comes to us through the Hebrew writings preserved by the Jews and the Greek writings chosen by the early Catholic church minus a few books removed in the Protestant Reformation.

Tactics of Scripture Study

Although written in ancient languages, it's message is straightforward and can be well understood with only minimal references to Israelite culture and geography. In the modern world, learning the skills of

understanding Scripture are helpful in discerning what is true and accurate versus what is not.

The barriers to understanding Scripture starts with the original writings being made for a different people, in a different language, and with different customs. On top of this, the translations that we read in our own language may not accurately state what the author was writing long ago. Also, learning to study the Scriptures well takes time and practice. When studying Scripture, one must come with an open mind because a mind filled with doctrine or preconceived ideas will have difficulty in clearly comprehending what is contained in Scripture. Yet the rewards of being close to the Almighty and of having peace in life through the understanding of Scripture are well worth the effort.

Translation vs. Interpretation

A majority of the text is written as a literal and historical record without the need for allegorical interpretation. There are many English Scripture translations on the market from which to choose. Some are made for easier reading while others are more accurate

and precise to the original meaning of the Hebrew and Greek languages. When looking for a copy of the Scriptures, one is looking for a translation and not a commentary nor an interpretation.

One point to be careful of is insertions. These are words that are added to the text which do not exist in the original language. The relatively harmless insertions are those that just help make the sentence structure work in English. The harmful insertions are those due to theology. These insertions show the interpretations and theology of the translators rather than staying precisely with Scripture. One of the worst changes occurring in modern Scripture translation is the deliberate removal of phrases or sentences that directly show that salvation is only through the Messiah.

Obedience vs. Study Testimony

Many people are unable to apply Scripture to their life because they either never study the Bible or because they never finish studying the Bible. It can not be over-stated that obedience to His word brings peace and

blessing.

Attacks on Scripture

There are many philosophies, cultures, and ideas that want to take our attention away from the Almighty and have us forget the truth about creation and life. By knowing and understanding His word, we can stand strong in the truth and resist what is false, and better understand how to live in His blessing.

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. 18 And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. Genesis 2:15-18 KJV

Chapter 2

What Is the Fallen State of Man Kind?

Man kind had it perfect until the fall when he believed the first lie and committed the first sin. After that, he knew that no matter what was true, honorable, and righteous ... he could choose to do something different and go the way of pride, selfishness, and evil.

Creation of Man

In the creation of man, the Creator states 'make man in our image'(Gen 1:26). The word 'image' comes from the Hebrew word 'tselem' which refers to a representation or shadow of something. It is typically used of man being made in the form of the Creator. It is also used of idols made in the shape of a false god.

In the creation of man, the Creator also states 'after our likeness' (Gen 1:26). The word 'likeness' comes from the Hebrew word 'demuth' which refers to something similar or comparable. Man is made similar to the Creator in appearance and to some degree also in function.

Man is unique above the animals in many ways. He has an incredibly broad ability to use spoken language. He is able to understand moral concepts of good and evil. Man is mentally superior to the animals with desire and will. He is able to read and write as well as build, play, and have a sense of humor. Most importantly, he is able to pray and have communion with the Creator.

Living Beings - Body, Soul, and Spirit

As we begin studying created kinds, it quickly becomes apparent that there are many levels to examine both physically and spiritually. Within the physical, there is a strong link with reproduction associated with kinds. This is shown through the commands to reproduce and fill the Earth as well as when the animals are taken aboard the ark to refill the Earth afterwards. Examining the levels of kinds will also help distinguish life from non-life and show the value of life.

The modern concepts within Biology, the study of life, are based on secular views of life which are hidden in evolutionary terminology. Evolution considers plants, animals, and man to all be alive and related to one another. The biological sciences look at functions such as movement, growth, respiration, excretion, and reproduction as signs of life. While plants could be described as having most of the functions given in biology, they do not have all of them, most notably the absence of movement.

Within the Scriptures, a very

What Is the Fallen State of Man Kind?

different view of life is given. A simple look at the differences between the body, soul, and spirit shows that life is much more than just functions of the body which act as a response to a stimulus. Furthermore, the ability to reproduce is not limited to life. Instead, life is connected to the blood, something which is not present in plants.

The body, also translated as flesh, is translated from the Hebrew word 'basar'. The body is much more than simple dirt or crystals. This is the basic level of created kinds because it is able to reproduce, a basic requirement of kinds. Yet it is not necessarily considered alive within the Scriptures. This term is applied to organisms including plants, animals, and man. In essence, it could be comparable to referencing things containing DNA.

To find what is called alive within the Scriptures, one must look to the next level which is the soul. The soul is translated from the Hebrew word 'nefesh'. Nefesh is the level that distinguishes life. It is associated with breathing, called alive, and is strongly

connected with the blood. Animals and people are given the nefesh level. It is not immortal and it has physical needs. It is the soul which can die and which can receive salvation and redemption. It is the nefesh level, the soul, which is given plants to eat.

The next level to examine is the Spirit. The Spirit is translated from the Hebrew word 'Ruach'. The ruach is given to man and is the level that distinguishes man above the animals. It is conscious of good and evil and seems to imply motivation. It is the spirit that has communion with Elohim and a renewed spirit that comes with accepting the Messiah as Savior.

It is when man is given the 'breath of life' that he is considered to be a living being (Gen 2:7). This is connected with the Hebrew word 'nasham' which indicates breathing. Similarly, death, or the expiring of a man, comes when breathing ceases. This is also true for the animals. As breathing oxygen is a necessary part of the function of blood, this suggests that breathing is one of the best signs of physical life.

According to the terms given by the Creator in the Scriptures, the levels become clear. Plants have a body but are not considered living because they do not have a soul. Animals have both a body and a soul and are, therefore, considered living. However, it is only man which has body, soul, and spirit which places him above all other parts of the Creation.

Man Kind's Fall from Favor

Many things have changed since sin has entered the world. Death has appeared. Animals eat other animals and man hunts for animals as food as well. Man not only uses natural resources, but abuses them. Animals are also used for doing work. Plants are used for food and building. Man changes the habitats to his liking at the expense of others. It has become difficult to fulfill the responsibility to both serve and master the Earth. Man is neither righteous nor loving. Instead he has become selfish and pursues things that are destructive to life. This list includes idolatry, pride, envy, the lusts of the flesh, and acts of violence.

It is startling how little man

makes sin out to be. Although Scripture clearly states the dire consequences of sinful action, both man and Believers live and act with little regard to the consequences of their actions or their thoughts either physically or spiritually. Many disregard sin as just being a weakness of the flesh, as being indiscreet, the absence of goodness, as selfishness, ignorance, or as a sickness that is to be treated by science.

Sin is far more than any of these things speak. And of course man would want it to be only such as these because then one could explain it away, treat it with something, or not be concerned with it any further. Man must recognize the fact that sin carries a heavy price and affects both our physical and spiritual lives here in the present and also for eternity. To deny this, is to risk everything.

It is equally startling to see how much the Creator makes of sin. Sinfulness and unrighteousness is an abomination. To Him it is enough to separate us from Him temporarily, long term, and even for eternity. The fact that the One Most High has created a means by

which a sinful person can transfer their sin onto another (through substitution and sacrifice) and then live in righteousness is an incredible act of Mercy. It shows His desire for life, and especially His relationship with man, to continue.

Behind the Scenes

For the purposes of his own self-indulgent schemes, Satan has used lies, pride, and the lusts of the flesh to cause unrighteousness and rebellion to flourish and to hide what harms life. Because of this, we see angels and demons, blessing and cursing, as well as miracles and magic battling in the background of our lives. Keep in mind that blessing is not to be confused with salvation and that true blessing is not the idea of becoming rich, but in having peace.

Obedience to His Will

While we must not forget that we cannot earn righteousness and salvation by keeping the law; we must also remember, none-the-less, as members of the Kingdom of Heaven, we are expected to obey the laws and commandments given by our Elohim, our King, as

they teach us and remind us of what righteous actions are.

Many people are unable to apply Scripture to their life because they either never study the Bible or because they never finish studying the Bible; yet, obedience to His word brings great peace and blessing to our lives even while surrounded by a wicked and perverse world.

Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: 20 That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. Deuteronomy 30:19-20 KJV

Chapter 3

Responsibility In the Covenant

The Eternal has offered a series of covenants to restore relationship with man kind and offer new life, but the person must choose to leave the false, sinful, and abominable ways of the secular world behind and move towards obedience in His kingdom of truth, mercy, and forgiveness. When man kind breaks the covenant law through sinful actions, there is a Heavenly High Priest and an atoning sacrifice that returns him to righteousness; but we must repent and seek that forgiveness through the Savior if we are to make it through judgment.

Promises and Covenants

Earlier in this book, the Scriptures were defined as the books of the Covenant and the history of the Covenant. This definition refers to the Sinai Covenant, which has been a major factor in the Almighty's relationship with His people for the last few thousand years.

The basic motivation of a covenant from the Almighty is love. He loves mankind. He wants to care for them and have a close relationship with them. The basic premise of a covenant is that those within it will care for each other and support each other even to the point of death. The One Most High has already shown He is willing to do this with the death of His Son.

The covenants are a primary means of accomplishing His promises to His people. As such, the promises are greater than the covenants and we enter into those promises by joining the covenants.

The Children of Israel

The covenants found in Scripture are part of the relationships the Eternal has with mankind, nations, and

individuals. Certain promises were made to the physical descendants of Jacob, but the better promises and covenants are made with believers who are the spiritual descendants of Israel.

Types of Covenants

There are many types of covenants, including a wedding betrothal, but the unconditional promises made by Elohim and the conditional agreements with people and nations are the main types that we find in Scripture. As King of the universe, we are to fear and give reverence to Elohim and to worship Him as well as accept His Word as the authority in our lives.

Sinai Covenant

The Sinai covenant was made with His people, the Nation of Israel, which includes believers today. The Sinai Covenant is summarized by the Ten Commandments which work to sanctify and separate His people from the world. Obedience to all ten of these commandments is expected and does not constitute legalism (unless someone actually tries to earn salvation by keeping them). They also give strong

warning against the things that harm life. It also includes the Tabernacle, where Elohim may dwell with His people.

Spiritual Aspects of the Covenant

The covenant is basically a spiritual contract with physical ramifications. The blessings and cursings in this covenant are a direct result of Israel's obedience or disobedience to the covenant laws. The Nation of Israel accepted this for themselves and for all their generations at Mt. Sinai and formally repeated it as an oath at Mounts Gerazim and Ebal when they entered the land of Israel. To sum up these passages, if we obey Him he will bless us and we will prosper and see good. If we disobey, we will be cursed and see evil. The history of Israel clearly shows the effects of how well they kept the covenant.

New Covenant

The New Covenant is the promise of a future relationship, made through the Savior, to have a better and everlasting relationship with the Eternal. The covenant will be fulfilled at the end of this age. It will be deeper

and fuller because it will be in our hearts and we will not experience sin anymore. The timing is heralded by the great white throne judgment, the wedding of the Lamb, and the new Heavens and Earth. It includes New Jerusalem, and the Heavenly Tabernacle, where He will be able to dwell with His people.

Through the Messiah

We should realize that typically there is no room for mercy in a covenant. When one side messes up, there is a punishment waiting. However, the Father is Merciful. He makes provision for mercy through atonement. When someone would sin, it could be placed upon an animal and it would be torn up (sacrificed) instead. Yahshuah's atonement on the cross was another great act of mercy ... the greatest act of mercy possible. Humans have broken the covenant many times, were it not for the mercy of Elohim, we would be long gone ... the covenant null and void. But through His love, it continues.

Covenant Confusion

Satan desires lawlessness and attempts to stop the keeping of the

covenants, tries to convince people there are no consequences, tries to confuse people about which laws are still in effect (dispensationalism), or falsely makes law observance to be considered legalism when it is not. Quite often, denominations will also produce lawlessness by taking man-made laws and customs and make them, and/or their leaders, of equal or greater weight than the Scriptures or the Ten Commandments.

Priesthood

Perhaps the biggest difference between the Sinai covenant and the new covenant is probably the priesthood that accompanies each. The Sinai covenant had the Levitical priesthood here on earth and that lasted until the Messiah came and left and began his work as the high priest in the heavenly tabernacle. While we are still under the Sinai covenant and must obey its rules and regulations, when we break that covenant we no longer go to an earthly priest. Instead, we have I heavenly high priest which brings true forgiveness and makes us pure and spotless as the betrothed who is awaiting the marriage of

the Lamb. It is this access through the heavenly high priest that also brings an earnest or down payment of the spirit which is preparing us for that future event. And it will be after that future event after the wedding, when the new heavens and new earth appear, that the new covenant will be in full effect.

A Personal Covenant

Today, we are near the 6000 year mark. It is interesting that most people do not consider the possibility of making a personal covenant with the eternal and it must be stated that this is not something to enter into lightly. However we also have a relationship with him, and he might asks certain actions on our part such as becoming a missionary. Making our own personal covenant brings responsibilities, but it also brings with it the help that the kingdom of heaven can offer when doing that work.

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; 27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. 28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. 29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. 31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. 32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. John 1:26-34 KJV

Chapter 4

Who Is the Savior?

Yahshuah, the Savior, is the ultimate righteous warrior holding the roles of priest, prophet, and king and is our best example of how to encourage life and live life to the fullest both now and eternally. He is the Great Shepherd taking care of His sheep. All of these roles add up to our Savior.

Translating Concepts

The concepts involved in salvation start in the Hebrew portion of the Scriptures ... a good example is the substitutionary atonement achieved through the sacrifices at the Tabernacle. These concepts, which are found in the Hebrew language, are not necessarily found in other languages which makes translation and understanding a difficult process. In the early 1500's William Tyndale made a translation of the Scriptures into English. His translation is used as the base for many other translations including the King James Version. The English language of the time did not have words to cover the salvational concepts in the Hebrew. It was Tyndale who invented many words such as 'passover' and 'atonement'. Such words cover deep concepts which need to be understood to appreciate what is necessary for the salvation of mankind to be possible.

Salvation

The English word 'salvation' comes from the Hebrew word 'yahshuah' and the essential

meaning is 'to rescue'. When something or someone is in trouble, another can come to the rescue. In the physical this can refer to things that can be destroyed. An example of this is a city during a time of war in which a military leader comes to defeat the enemy and rescue the city from destruction. In the spiritual, this refers to things which can die. The primary example is our soul which is in danger of death because of sin. We need someone who can come and rescue our soul from that death.

The Messiah Is Salvation

The concept of salvation is so wrapped up in the work of the Messiah, that His Hebrew name 'Yahshuah' is identical with the Hebrew word for 'salvation'. Not surprisingly, many of the passages of Scripture that speak of salvation also contain prophecies of the Messiah. Such examples include Is 49:5-8 and Zec 9:9-11. It is only through Yahshuah, our Savior, that the concepts of atonement and redemption come together and the process of our salvation is possible.

Atonement

Who Is the Savior?

The English word 'atonement' comes from the Hebrew word 'kippur' and the essential meaning is 'to cover, cleanse, or wipe out'. Sin creates a large spot in our lives which brings the penalty of death. This spot must be cleansed and wiped out which can only be done by the shedding of blood which typically is the blood of the sinner. For atonement to be complete, the penalty of death must also be covered or satisfied which, again, is typically by that of the sinner. In order to understand the importance and magnitude of salvation we need to understand two things. First, we must realize that each and every person, including ourselves, is a sinner. Second, we must accept that initially our blood and our death are needed to cleanse and cover that sin.

The Messiah our Atonement

The effect of atonement on sin is to make something or someone pure before the Almighty. Interestingly, the first time atonement is used in Scripture is during the consecration of the high priest of the Tabernacle. It was only the high priest that was able to enter the most set apart

place in the Tabernacle on the Day of Atonement to make atonement for all of Israel. Yahshuah is the High Priest of the Heavenly Tabernacle and it is He, and He only, who is able to make the ultimate atonement for the covering of sin which makes all believers pure before the Almighty.

Substitution

It is by the great mercy of our Heavenly Father that the blood and death of a substitute is allowed in the place of a repentant sinner. When a person took an animal to the Tabernacle as a sacrifice made by the priest, that animal was a substitute for the person's blood and death in the act of covering the sin. But this process will have an impact on an individual. The person who has committed a sin must choose an animal to die in his place, must place his hands upon the animal's head at the Tabernacle to show it is his replacement, and then kill the animal. Such an act can tear at the emotions, show us face to face the cost of sin, and the value of a substitute. But the sacrifice of an animal is only a temporal solution ... we still need and eternal solution.

The Messiah our Substitute

In an incredible act of love, our substitute in the shedding of our blood and in place of our death comes Yahshuah the Messiah. He shed His blood and suffered the torture on the cross to take our place in punishment and death. He is the ultimate substitute in the atoning process. Yet we must choose to do this. In our act of repentance, we must come to the Messiah and ask Him to be our Savior which makes Him our substitute, and then witness His death on the cross which takes us face to face with the cost that comes with our sins.

Redemption

The English word 'redemption' comes from the Hebrew word 'geullah' and the essential meaning is 'to buy back' but carries with it a connection to blood relatives. This is a difficult concept for those accustomed to a western style monetary system like that used in the United States. Yet in Scripture, the concept of a redeemer comes up in many ways. One example is that of a kinsman redeemer in regards to an inheritance. The land that belonged to a tribe was to remain

with that tribe. If a person were to die in such a way that the land would be lost to another tribe or people, the nearest kinsman had both the right and the responsibility to buy it back. Such an example happened, in Messiah's ancestry no less, when Ruth's husband died and left her, a Moabitess, with land from Israel. In that case, Boaz acted as a kinsman redeemer in taking both Ruth and the land back into Israel.

The Messiah our Redeemer

The relationship with the Almighty is so close that Yahveh is known as our Heavenly Father and His Son Yahshuah became a man who can be called our Brother. In many ways, He acts as a kinsman redeemer. When something is redeemed, a price must be paid. In the act of being our substitute in atonement, Yahshuah has paid the price for our souls. In so doing, He has brought us back into close relationship with the One Most High and to gain the promise of eternal life that was lost in the Garden of Eden.

Justification

The English word 'justify' comes from the Hebrew word 'tsadaq' and has the essential meaning of 'to be just or righteous' and carries with it the connotation of 'acquittal' when used in a legal sense. When sin and salvation are mentioned in the Scriptures, it is often within the context of the legal language used for courts. As uncomfortable as an appearance in a court and a judgment can sound, this is what all people face at the end time judgment. When the judgment comes, a person hopes to be found just or righteous because, only in this way, is a person not given a punishment. To be found just in the eyes of the Almighty is to be able to have not only close relationship but eternal life as well.

The Messiah our Justification

How can a sinful people become just before Elohim who is perfectly righteous? This is one of the great questions in the life of the believer. When we come to the Great White Throne Judgment, we want to hear the verdict of acquittal which carries the meaning of not guilty or even declared as righteous. When we

repent, confess our sins, and seek forgiveness in Messiah we are forgiven our trespasses against the Almighty and when we stand in court and the judgment comes we are then able to be found righteous.

Judgment

The English word 'judgment' comes from the Hebrew word 'shephet' and the essential meaning is 'to judge or punish'. The idea of a judgment is not so difficult to grasp as courts do this on a regular basis around the world. Such courts are needed because a crime has been committed and a punishment must be given. However, the judgment that comes at the end of Scripture is the end of the salvation process that began in the Garden of Eden. The judgment is simple. Those who die in their sins are found guilty. Those whose sins are covered through atonement are acquitted (set free and declared righteous).

The Messiah our Judgment

In the book of Revelation, we find that at the time of judgment there are books and also the book of life. We will be judged on our

works in the books. However, of more importance is the Book of Life in which our guilt or our innocence is shown and where eternal life is at stake. In this book, the only matter of importance is whether we have accepted Yahshuah as Savior. Have we heard the word of salvation that comes through Him and then believed? Those who have chosen to accept Him are the same ones who are acquitted at the time of judgment and obtain eternal life because they are found just and righteous.

Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? 6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. 7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. 8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. 9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. Mark 7:5-9 KJV

Chapter 5

What Are the Traditions of the Rabbis?

Man-made traditions are the rules and regulations that change, add to, or subtract from the commandments of Scripture. At the time of Yahshuah, the Nation of Israel [made up mostly of Jewish people], was already straying from the commandments. Since that time, the commandments of Scripture have been heavily modified or replaced with either Rabbinic rules and traditions and / or with pagan mystical forms of worship.

Who follows Rabbinic Traditions?

In recent centuries, there has been the development of Ultra-Orthodox, Orthodox, Reformed, and other versions of Judaism who observe the Torah and the Talmud to various extents. There are also Messianic Jewish, Hebrew Roots, and the Two-House Movement who believe in the Messiah, but then interpret His life through Rabbinic traditions from the Talmud in much the same way.

Denying the Messiah and Savior

Sadly, Rabbinic traditions were made to deny Yahshuah as having been the Messiah. They completely miss the need for a Savior. Instead, they often focus on Israel being a light to the nations and produce new forms of worship. It is a very strange irony to take these traditions that deny the Messiah and try to add a thin veneer or covering of meaning that supports the Messiah.

The Loss of the Temple

The time of Yahshuah was far more complicated religiously, politically, and socially than most people realize. In a simplified

explanation, the Sadducees were associated with the Temple and the sacrifices while the Pharisees were associated with study and teaching. When the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD, the power and control shifted from the Sadducees to the Pharisees and the slow progress towards Rabbinic Judaism began.

The Oral Torah

The Pharisees believed in the authority of the Oral Torah, which is another set of commandments that they claim had been given to Moses and orally handed down through the centuries. This would be written down in the third century AD and is known as the Mishna, or first part of the Talmud. Commentaries about what these laws mean were written down and became known as the Gemara, which is the latter part of the Talmud. This new book of law is the primary focus of Orthodox Judaism and it is heavily copied within Messianic Judaism.

The Midrashic Teachings

The Rabbis say that the written Torah (the Tanakh or Old Testament) cannot be understood

without knowing the Oral Torah. Under this idea, the Rabbis become the only ones who are able to correctly interpret Scripture and, therefore, are the only ones who have authority. They further claim that Scripture is written in a 'code' that must then be interpreted. The midrashic form of interpreting the Scriptures often uses filters which ignore the wording or context of the passage and enables the making of new traditions.

Talmud, Kabbalah, and the Zohar

The basis for many of the Talmudic writings comes from Kabbalah and the Zohar. These are basically a Jewish form of mysticism ... think witchcraft with a Jewish twist that tries to impact both physical and spiritual aspects of life.

Sanctified Tradition

The customs and actions of the Rabbis are often made into commandments that must be kept by everyone. Further, some traditions are made simply because a Rabbi said it must be so without any basis from Scripture whatsoever. This takes the customs and the

commandments of men and calls them the commandments of the Almighty. These are the very things from the teaching of the Pharisees that the Messiah warned the people not to follow.

The Rabbis in their Synagogues

While not truly a new priesthood (the Rabbis reserve certain functions for true Aaronic priests), the Rabbis have certainly taken on some priestly roles and have developed their own codes of worship and sanctification in the absence of a Temple. But it is simple to point out that a Rabbi in a Synagogue with the Talmud is not the same as a Priest in a Tabernacle with the Covenant.

Replacement Theology

Within Messianic Judaism, there exists a strong social pressure to become 'Jewish' in both culture and worship while still maintaining belief in the Messiah. However, this neglects that the Nation of Israel was originally made up of the twelve tribes plus people from other nations and that worship was based around the Temple. Furthermore, it neglects that modern Jewish culture has

formed during the last two thousand years and is not the same as what would be found in Old Testament times. Becoming 'Jewish' is not a necessity to becoming a believer in the Messiah.

Ephraimite Heresy

There also exist, within Messianic Judaism, those who desire to become part of Israel by claiming descent from the lost northern tribes. This is difficult, if not impossible, to prove and is sometimes claimed on faith alone. There are some prophecies about the reunification of the Northern and Southern Tribes of Israel. However, some groups overemphasize this concept, attempt to make these prophecies come true today, or make theories of how it will occur in the future. In the extreme, these groups claim a superiority to the tribe of Judah. This type of attitude separates the people rather than uniting them in the Messiah.

Jew and Gentile

There is a general belief in Orthodox Judaism that the keeping of the commandments is something only for the Jewish

people and not for the gentiles. This concept sometimes carries over into groups within Messianic Judaism. This produces a two level system of believers with one group keeping and the other group not keeping all of the commandments. Yet the commandments and laws are for all of the Almighty's people and are His instructions for living life. There is no distinction between Jewish, Israelite, and gentile believers in the Messiah.

Metonic Cycle and Postponements

The Rabbis have claimed the authority to set the times of the calendar, including the beginnings of the months and years as well as the timing of the Festival Days of Assembly. They basically follow the Metonic Cycle that works on a 19 year lunar pattern with some additional postponements that have the effect of making it easier to follow other Rabbinical traditions. Although this calendar will be similar to that found in Scripture, this method neglects the direct connection that the festivals had with the times of harvest.

Rejecting the Messiah

The Rabbinical interpretations of the festivals focus on the literal history of the Nation of Israel or of what the people can do to attain salvation. Because they have not accepted the Messiah who has come (and will come again) the true meaning of the Festival Assemblies, which picture the work of the Messiah, is missed. Furthermore, some traditions of the Rabbis which lack or deny the Messiah are taken by Messianic Judaism and given a layer of new meaning and symbolism meant to celebrate the Messiah.

The Seder Example

One of the most elaborate and well-known Rabbinical festival celebrations is the Seder ceremony that has replaced the Passover observance. The Seder ceremony is a symbolic ritual used to emphasize freedom from slavery and for teaching the historic event of the exodus to the children. Messianic Judaism has taken the many customs which focus on the leaving of Egypt, mostly involved with eating certain kinds of foods (primarily fruits, vegetables, and grain), and has overlaid them with a new meaning that points to the Messiah and His work for the

salvation of mankind.

Summary

Messianic believers seek salvation through the Messiah. However, Messianic Judaism has accepted the commands of the 'rabbinical priesthood', a new set of Scripture interpretation, a new set of holiday meanings, and various levels of believers in the Messiah. Such changes divide the Almighty's people rather than making them all one body in the Messiah. It is time for all believers in the Messiah to return to Scripture and to leave behind the traditions of man.

Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? 27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.
Luke 24:25-27 KJV

Chapter 6

What Are the Traditions of the Bishops?

Man-made traditions are the rules and regulations that change, add to, or subtract from the commandments of Scripture. When Yahshuah came, He revealed many things about both the Old and New Covenants. Since then, secular and pagan beliefs and philosophies, especially from the Roman Empire, have mixed with Scripture both removing most of the covenant commandments and adding many new forms of worship never given by the Eternal.

Who Follows the Bishops?

Christianity is a large and diverse group of believers that include Catholics and Protestants of all kinds (Anglicans, Amish, Baptist, Presbyterian). It also includes Sabbath keeping groups like Seventh Day Adventists or the early Worldwide Church of God. It could be argued whether or not it includes fringe groups like Jehovah's Witnesses or the Mormons.

What they all have in common is they follow the many traditions made by the early Bishops (including the Bishop of Rome known as the Pope) with modifications by more recent Bishops (as the leading body of the denominations) ... or by a recent 'prophet' in some cases.

A New Priesthood

Almost 2000 years ago, the Bishops, and particularly the Bishop of Rome known as the Pope, declared themselves to have the authority to decide what commandments people are to follow in worshiping the One Most High and what observances they do in daily life. This was the birth of the Roman Catholic Church

and of Christianity in general. This is not the Earthly Temple and the Aaronic priesthood sanctified by the Almighty nor is it the Heavenly Temple with the Messiah as High Priest. Instead, it is a man made priesthood that is not in Scripture.

If the popes are genuine prophets of the One Most High, then we should listen to them. If they are not genuine prophets, then we should not listen to them. Does the papacy add laws to the Scriptures? Yes. Does the papacy remove laws from the Scriptures (say they do not need to be followed)? Yes. Does the papacy bring in forms of worship from the pagans? Yes. Do they worship and venerate people (idolatry)? Yes. Therefore, they and their teachings should not be followed. It does not matter if they claim the authority to change Scripture through an obscure verse in a gospel account. The Covenant the Almighty made with His people states that this is not to be done and shows their obscure claim is invalid.

Clergy and Laity

For thousands of years, the modern church has had a clergy

What Are the Traditions of the Bishops?

and laity format where the clergy, whatever their title, has placed themselves equal or superior to the Scriptures and made rules, customs, and practices of worship that eventually form multiple denominations. These customs, rites, and practices are passed from one generation to the next. This has the effect of causing the laity to stop growing in their relationship with the Eternal directly. Instead, they become passive listeners in the pews not reaching the fruits and gifts of the Spirit that would otherwise be possible.

Rise of the Preacher

Within Catholicism, one of the main duties of the priest is to administer the Mass [communion]. When the Protestant Reformation came, a change occurred and what is now known as preaching a message from the pulpit became a common event and the rise of the preacher, pastor, reverend, or minister suddenly took place.

Authority of the Pulpit

The pulpit is generally considered the place where one has authority over a congregation.

To have authority over a person or a group is a form of covenant and there are bonds, both physically and spiritually, within a covenant. For one person to have authority over a large or mixed group of people is inappropriate. One of the great problems associated with a regular preacher is that the position lends itself to the idea of a spiritual superman. This person is expected to have a special relationship with the Almighty and then dispense what he has to offer to the entire group.

Preaching of this type stifles the growth of everyone involved and only helps a few in any given message. It is much better if each individual in the group is learning the techniques for studying Scripture and developing the disciplines of worship so that each person can have that relationship with the Almighty. This enables each person to become mature in the Messiah and allows each to pass that on to their children and to other people as well.

A New Set of Commandments

Within Christianity, there is a belief that the Messiah ended the Old Testament covenant and law because He had fulfilled it's

purpose and made it no longer necessary. Without this covenant relationship in place the teachings of the Messiah and the Apostles had no basis from which to be interpreted. Therefore, new meanings and forms of worship began to appear.

Allegorical Interpretation

The Christian religion chose to use an allegorical or spiritual interpretation even though most of Scripture is given in a direct and literal writing style. An interpreter was encouraged to first consult the church's orthodox creed before making an allegorical understanding of Scripture so that the two would match. This effectively adds the meaning to the text that the interpreter wants and does not seek what is truly there.

Dispensationalism

The Christian religion views its relationship with the Almighty through the concept of dispensationalism. This dispensation is the release from the commandments and laws of the Sinai Covenant. The Christian religion often separates the covenant law into the three major sections of moral, civil, and

ceremonial laws. Then it declares that the civil and ceremonial laws have been done away with while maintaining the moral laws. [Scripture never states these things.]

Councils, Creeds, and Catechisms

The development of modern Christianity has taken centuries of effort and debate. These have been recorded, summarized, and taught in the councils, creeds, and catechisms. Sadly, hundreds of bishops debating a doctrine for months on end does not sound like it is inspired by Elohim. It would be preferable to have one true prophet than to have 1000 bishops debating philosophy and religion.

The Example of Tithing

Since around 800 AD, the Christian religion states that one-tenth of a person's earned income is to be given to the church. This has been mostly spent on large ornate buildings and on the priesthood. The tithing system in Scripture was on the increase of the crops and animals given by the Almighty so that the Levites and the poor people would have

food. It was never money that people worked hard to earn. Such changes oppress the people and make wealth an overly important aspect of the church.

Pagan and Occult Worship

Although Scripture warns not to worship as the pagans worship, many pagan, occult, and new age practices have been absorbed into the church and branded as good by merely masking them with a new and christianized title as well as sometimes adding a veneer of symbolic meaning. This is nothing new as it has been going on for two thousand years. However, it has had a recent surge in the relatively recent New Apostolic Reformation.

Replacement Theology

The Christian religion claims the day of Pentecost and the giving of the Spirit as the time of it's birth. With this claim comes the idea of rejecting the Jewish and Hebrew cultures as being part of the Almighty's people. Israel is now considered to be made up of an entirely different group of people rather than have new believers added into the already

existing Nation of Israel. In many ways, we have forgotten our Heritage and our community.

New Festival Meanings

In removing much of the Old Covenant, Catholicism also removed the festivals and appointments that Elohim has made with His people. Instead, they have chosen to replace these with festivals and appointments of their own making.

Example of the Sabbath Day

The seventh day rest known as the Sabbath was sanctified by the Almighty from the time of creation. A quick reading of Scripture shows how important this day is to Him and how He has made it a sign of His people. The Christian religion has changed that rest to the first day of the week in order to memorialize the resurrection of the Messiah. This ignores the fact that this memorial was already given in Scripture through the wave sheaf offering made during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Example of Christmas

Christmas is one of the biggest Christian celebrations of the year. Yet there is no commandment in

Scripture to celebrate the birth of the Messiah. The focus on His birth is given only to show the fulfillment of prophecy and prove that He is the Messiah. Further, the traditions associated with Christmas come from other sources with many of them being forms of worship for other religions.

Summary

Christians are believers in salvation through the Messiah. However, the Christian religion has made a new definition of the Almighty, a new group of His people, a new covenant, a new priesthood, a new source of income, a new set of holidays, and a new set of Scripture interpretation. These changes are things that divide the Almighty's people rather than making them all one body in the Messiah. It is time for all believers in the Messiah to return to Scripture and to leave behind the traditions of man.

And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. 7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. 8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Exodus 12:6-8 KJV

Chapter 7

Scripture Versus Traditions Example

There has been much confusion regarding the relationship of the Last Supper to the Passover Sacrifice. To be clear, they are not the same thing. Some traditions have said the Communion Meal has either replaced the Passover or was the Passover or even was a part of the Rabbinic Passover Seder. However, the evidence shows that these two events could not be the same. The Passover was to be eaten with unleavened bread (azumos) while Communion is eaten with leavened bread (artos). The Passover occurs once a year while communion is held as often as believers get together. The two events are linked because He gave a promise of returning just before going away, but they are two separate events.

Are Passover, the Seder, and Easter the same? It seems an absurd question to need to ask ... but two thousand years have blended, mixed, and matched these events in surprising ways. Hopefully, a quick look at each observance will show they are very different from one another.

Short Answer

The time of Passover is a joyous time of remembrance, both in what was done in Egypt when Israel was taken to freedom and in the actions that Yahshuah our Savior has done in taking us out of death from sin. Let's take some time this year to focus on the true meaning of the time ... it is not to be found in the man made customs in the Seder or Easter, but in the genuine truth of Scripture, the Word of Elohim. The High days of Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Firstfruits offering, and Feast of Weeks cover all of the Messiah's death, resurrection, atonement for sin, and new life for us that we need to know. It is what the Eternal wants us to recognize.

The Passover Memorial

The Passover sacrifice fore

shadowed the atoning sacrifice that Yahshuah made for us as the lamb of YHVH ... the blood that saves all people from the death that comes from sin. It is the theme of redemption from slavery and death, both in the physical and in the spiritual, that we are commanded to remember and to observe and ought to be the focus of our celebrations and our joy.

The Scriptural Passover

In the Scriptures, the original Passover and the memorial of Passover thereafter is a relatively simple thing. The first Passover occurred when Israel was taken from Egypt by YHVH's mighty hand ... with the blood of the lamb being the mark that saved the children of Israel from death. After that, Israel is told to remember that night with a simple meal consisting of bitter herbs, lamb, and unleavened bread which is to be eaten while standing with sandals on their feet and staff in hand ... all to remind them to be ready to leave Egypt and the hurried way in which it had happened.

The Rabbinic Seder

In contrast to the Scriptural

Scripture Versus Traditions Example

Passover, we have the Jewish Seder which comes out of the Rabbinic system. By the time of Yahshuah, there was already a rift between the Sadducees who kept the written law of Elohim (the Scriptures) at the Temple and the Pharisees who kept the oral law (those instructions purportedly handed down from Moses above and beyond the written law) which were taught in the synagogues. After the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, the Pharisees came to power and the modern Jewish people with their traditions and lifestyles was born. This includes the Seder meal which celebrates the account of the exodus in a very specific way.

The current Seder ceremony was brought into general acceptance around 200 AD when the Mishnah (the first part of the Talmud (a collection of Rabbinic writings)) was written. In the Seder, an elaborate ritual emphasizing the freedom from slavery and of teaching this to the children was put in place. It usually includes: a blessing of sanctification, a ritual washing of the hands, a vegetable like parsley dipped in salt water to represent the lowly beginning of the Jews

and the tears of slavery, part one of the 3 matzah, the telling of the story of the Exodus which is done by having the children ask 4 questions, the washing of hands and blessing of the grain, eating bitter herbs to symbolize the bitterness of slavery, a sandwich with a sweet mixture and matzah, a meal, part 2 of the matzah by finding the hidden piece which is "ransomed" back, a blessing after the meal, praises from the Psalms, and a closing.

The Jewish people recognize that there will be a Messiah and acknowledge the themes of salvation and redemption found within Scripture ... but it must be clearly noted that they have refused to acknowledge Yahshuah as The Messiah and that this ceremony is ominously lacking of Him even though it is based on the same text which actually describes Him. This ceremony is made up almost entirely of man-made customs which reduces the importance of the Lamb and the purchase from slavery and focuses more on the bitterness of slavery and the joy of freedom. Rather than eat standing ready to go, they recline in this many hour long dinner. It is a meal that is

rich with symbolism, but the symbolism points in the wrong direction. the Seder points us to a one time event in the distant past., but Scripture also points us forward to Yahshuah,

The Christian Easter

Within the Protestant denomination I grew up in, the importance of Easter far exceeded anything around it. There was no memorial for Unleavened Bread and the events of the Last Supper were underplayed or somewhat oddly mixed together with or replacing the Passover events. So I will focus more on Easter.

What we know as modern day Easter has, for the most part, come through the traditions taken in by the Catholic / Christian Church. Until the time of the printing press and the reformation caused by Luther, the history of the church meant the history of the Roman Catholic Church which was officially formed by the Council of Nicea under Emperor Constantine. Sadly, the RCC has used the same methodology the Roman Empire used when it expanded and conquered people ... it does not convert them so much as absorb them into its culture

taking with it the customs and traditions of the people. For the church, this included electing Bishops from the local peoples and taking the pagan worship methods found there and altering them slightly to put a Christian veneer on them so that outwardly it looked like worship to the One Most High.

Thus, most of the customs now used to celebrate Easter actually come from the pagan rituals used to worship many other false gods. This was easily done since the church had thrown out the Hebrew Scriptures as being authoritative in life ... a whole new set of worship customs and methods needed to be created or taken in to fill in the gap. This sadly misses all the symbolism and meaning of Messiah and His actions here on earth already found in the Scriptures. So instead, we have the last supper in place of the Passover meal, a sunrise service in place of the firstfruits offering, and sometimes even the cross instead of the lamb. We see easter eggs used even in the church as resurrection eggs, traditions including white lilies, easter bonfires, and hot cross buns ... these all have pagan roots

Scripture Versus Traditions Example

dating back to before the time of Messiah and pre-date any 'christian' worship. Even the name of Easter (or Ishtar) itself seems to come from the name of the great mother goddess of the Saxon people in Northern Europe which was representative of dawn and fertility. The customs and the name are still in place for the worship of this false goddess, but it has been altered to be used for Elohim ... this is not right! In fact, the Scriptures say that worshiping Elohim through pagan methods is an abomination and not be done.

As the next Passover season approaches, let us shake off the man made and pagan traditions that mar our rejoicing and our prayers being heard. Let us return to Scripture and follow the ways given to us by the Eternal. And may we truly celebrate what our Savior has done for us.

Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. Leviticus 23:4 KJV

Unit B

Scriptural Calendar

When YHVH created the sun, the moon, and the stars He made them to be for signs and seasons and days and years. He also established the harvests and their related festivals as days we are to observe and remind us of the work that He has done. These signs not only have meaning in the physical world by telling us what part of the day or of the year we are in, but they tell us what is happening in our relationship with the One Most High as well. Yet we are far removed from the cycles of nature by our artificial and virtual environments. As someone who has grown up in the country with farmers nearby, and as someone who spent many years camping, these cycles became more familiar to me. And when these are known, the ability to connect with scriptural passages and commandments grows as calendar issues all seem to melt away. No elaborate methods and rituals are needed to separate one thing from another ... it simply happens. The protestant church ignores the natural cues and follows the liturgical calendar year.

And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. Is. 66:23 KJV

Chapter 8

Harvests and Festivals

Throughout Scripture, there are similes, metaphors, parables, and other types of word pictures used to describe the relationship of man kind with the Eternal. One of the main groups of such description are related to farming. Seeds, sprouts, harvest, fruits, etc. all are used to describe what is happening. The times of sowing and reaping and, especially the joy or gathering a harvest are times of celebration both in the physical and represented within Kingdom of Heaven. In modern life, with most people getting groceries at the market or store rather than directly from fields, we have forgotten the importance of a successful crop and harvest ... just as we have forgotten the value of people being saved for eternal life.

Understanding Agriculture

If we had grown up in an agricultural society, we would be familiar with many things. We would know the times of planting and harvesting, how to watch the direction the wind blows to know what weather will soon be, and how to recognize different soil conditions or plant pests. Instead, we have grown up in a society that dwells primarily in the city and have lost touch with the cycles of nature and their impact on farming. For us, food comes from the supermarket and we do not have to think about all the signs and cycles that effect crops. We do not know what is happening around us in the natural. Regarding symbolism, do we recognize and know the signs and prophecies given to us in the Scriptures? They are happening around us whether we pay attention or not.

Harvests and Festivals

The harvest of the crops of Israel are related to the feast times. The barley crop must come in during springtime before Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread occurs. The

wheat harvest comes in before the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost). The full harvest of all crops and fruit comes in by the Feast of Sukkot (Tabernacles). The harvest and festival times are rich with meaning. Basically, the harvests represent the Eternal's relationship with mankind. Likewise, the festivals are guidelines to our future because they show the redemption of mankind in them. Thus, as we go through the appointed times as found in the Scriptures, we are looking at our relationship with Him in the past, present, and future states. As we go through the growing season, He is continually drawing us closer to Him.

Yahshuah's Appearance and Return

Yahshuah's early and latter appearances are also contained in the Spring and Autumn festivals. In the Scriptures, two pictures of the Messiah are presented. The first is the suffering servant and the second is the conquering king. The role of Suffering Servant, described so well in the latter chapters of Isaiah, were fulfilled when Yahshuah came to earth,

Harvests and Festivals

suffered, and died in our place so that we could become sons and daughters of YHVH. These events were symbolized and foreshadowed by the spring harvests and high days of Passover (Pesach), Feast of Unleavened Bread (Hag HaMatzot), and Feast of Weeks / Pentecost (Hag Shavuot). It takes little effort to see the fulfillment of the role of Conquering King in His return symbolized by the fall high days. The fulfillment of these days includes (but is not limited to) the millennial kingdom, final judgment, and the new Heavens and Earth which are found in the Autumn Festivals of Day of Shouting, Day of Redemptions, Feast of Booths, and Eighth Day Assembly.

Celebrating Our Savior

We are separated from the Eternal because of our sin and rebelliousness to His authority. That is why we need the perfect atoning sacrifice which is found in our Savior Yahshuah's death. Without this, we would be nothing. With it, we become sons and daughters of the One Most High with the promise of being with Elohim through eternity. Is

this show of favor and love something to celebrate? Is Elohim, the One who does all this, worthy to be worshiped and praised and remembered at the time that He does these things? The Scripturally commanded High Days ask us to do just that. They act as a wonderful reminder each season and each year of what He has done for us.

Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings. Leviticus 23:3 KJV

Chapter 9

What Is His Sabbath Rest?

The Almighty desires a special relationship with mankind and the desire of our life should be that close relationship. This is no less true regarding the seventh day as the day of rest. Elohim's relationship with mankind comes in the form of a covenant. The Almighty used the Sabbath as a remembrance of the creation, as a sign of His people, and as a test of His people which carried with it a judgment. It is clearly stated that the Sabbath was given to the people of Israel through all generations as a sign that He is setting His people apart. That it shall be considered set-apart because it is set-apart to YHVH. It is perpetual, to all generations, and forever. He gave Israel the Sabbaths so they would know it is He who sanctifies them.

Elohim's Sabbath

As we read Scripture, one of the striking elements regarding the Sabbath is that it belongs to Elohim and that it was given to man for his sanctification. Elohim made the rest on the seventh day of the creation week and set it apart. He rested not because of tiredness or fatigue. Instead, He ceased His work of building up and creating the universe and the world because it was complete. Afterwards, observance of the Sabbath becomes part of mankind's relationship with the Almighty through past, present, and future and is used to identify His people.

My Sabbaths: Exo 31:12-17, Lev 19:1-3, Lev 19:29-31, Lev 26:1-4, Isa 56:1-7, Ezek 20:10-24, Ezek 22:7-8, Ezek 22:25-28, Ezek 23:37-39, Ezek 44:23-24

Sanctifying His People

The Almighty used the Sabbath as a remembrance of the creation, as a sign of His people, and as a test of His people which carried with it a judgment. It is clearly stated that the Sabbath was given to the people of Israel through all generations as a sign that He is setting His people apart. That it shall be considered

set-apart because it is set-apart to YHVH. It is perpetual, to all generations, and forever. He gave Israel the Sabbaths so they would know it is He who sanctifies them.

Sign: Exo 31:12-17, Ezek 20:10-24

The Seventh Day in Scripture

The Hebrew language distinguishes between the seventh day and the action of resting. The seventh day comes in the form of (pronounced hayom hashvee'ee) while Sabbath comes in the form (pronounced shabbat). A literal reading of the Hebrew language reveals where the emphasis is placed regarding this topic. The phrase 'Sabbath Day', as commonly in many translations, comes from the Hebrew phrase (hayom hashabbat) which more literally reads as 'day of rest'. Just as the phrase 'son of David' would emphasize the topic of the son and not David himself, the phrase 'day of rest' emphasizes the day and not the rest which is only a modifier of day. This phrase is frequently used to refer to the seventh day when instructions and commandments are being given to the people of Israel.

Sabbath unto Yahveh: Exo 16:23, Exo 16:25, Exo 31:15, Exo 35:2, Lev 23:3, Lev 23:38-39, Lev 25:2, Lev 25:4, Deu 5:14-15,

The Sabbath at Creation

During the week of creation, Elohim made the Heavens and the Earth for six days. On the seventh day, the work was complete and He rested from His labor. At this time Elohim blessed and sanctified the seventh day thereby setting it apart for special use for all time. The Hebrew word, normally translated as holy in most English Bibles, is qadosh, but more accurately means “to set apart”. So we see that the Sabbath is the very first thing that the Scriptures record as being set-apart by our Creator. The Sabbath of Elohim is mentioned in Scripture over 100 times and always refers to the seventh day of the week.

Sanctified Sabbath: Gen 2:1-3, Ex 16:22-30, Ex 20:8-11, Exo 31:12-17, Deu 5:12-15,

Sabbath in the Sinai Covenant

After the Egyptian slavery, the time had come for the Nation of Israel to physically receive from the promises given to Abraham by going to the promised land. During this journey Elohim made a covenant with the people that, if obeyed, would give them blessing and that, if disobeyed, would bring

cursing and the eventual removal from the land. This covenant is summed up in the Ten Commandments which were written in Stone. The fourth commandment states that the Sabbath, the seventh day rest, is to be observed. Furthermore this rest, which was set-apart to Yahveh, was chosen as a sign of the sanctification of the Nation of Israel.

Tabernacle Instructions: Num 28:9-10, 1 Chr 9:32, Mat 12:5

The Messiah and the Sabbath

The Messiah was perfect and righteous in every way and serves as our example for both thought and action. In regards to the Sabbath, His example shows clearly some of the things that are and are not allowed. Messiah regularly attended synagogue on the Sabbath. He also regularly did good deeds like healing on the Sabbath which is against Pharisaic tradition but not against Scripture. The Messiah regularly visited with others on the Sabbath. The disciples were His students and followed what they were taught. After the resurrection, the disciples went out and continued the practice of attending fellowship on the

seventh day of the week.

Messiah and Pharisees: Luke 6:6-11, John 5:1-18,
Mark 2:24-28, Luke 13:10-17, John 9:1-16

Attacking the Sabbath

From the beginning of the rebellion, Satan has tried to imitate or steal away from the Almighty. Continuing in this approach, there are attempts by both believers and non-believers to remove the Sabbath and even further to discredit the Almighty's claim as Creator. Much of this is intentional by non-believers and unintentional by believers. In particular, the Bishops declared for themselves the authority to decide which commandments people are to obey in worshiping the Almighty. One of the foremost of these changes was the keeping of the Sunday Sabbath.

Doing Good on the Sabbath

Often, Yahshuah is accused of breaking the Sabbath rest. Often, He did not break a commandment of Elohim, but rather one of the man-made laws of the Pharisees. Yet through His actions and teachings we see that there is a time to make effort on the day of rest. This often involves stopping or preventing the loss of something. Such examples of a

persons health being lost and having a healing, or of an animal falling in a pit and being rescued, of gathering food when suffering from hunger, or sharing with others who have a need. These types of situations are all answered by Messiah with a message of guiltless or innocent. In our rest we are instructed not to build up or increase what we have on the Sabbath and yet effort is allowed to prevent suffering and loss. A great work indeed is loosing those that are bound by Satan.

Family Observance

The Rabbis have made a great many rules, regulations, and traditions regarding the beginning and end of the Sabbath day. These are almost all entirely man made and some may have pagan connections. In reality, it is much simpler. For example, while we try to avoid cooking on the Sabbath, we will cut fresh fruit that will be eaten at the moment.

When does Sabbath begin?

A simple answer is at sunset, with more complex answers dealing with the fading light. Having camped extensively, one

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thing that stands out to me personally is that when the light is fading, there is a moment when the night animals (frogs, crickets, cicadas, bats, etc.) all suddenly burst out in chorus. It happens whether or not you have that minute with a golden or pink glow in the sky. The animals know it is becoming night. That is the cue I use quite often and it works in all time zones.

Due to extensive traveling, I have found that fellowship is a sweet thing. Yet this does not have to be a formal congregation ... worship in the home with family is also good. Sometimes, personal communion with the Eternal is needed as well. All of these can be worshipful.

Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: {15} And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. {16} And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. {17} And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, {18} And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. {19} And the evening and the morning were the fourth day. Gen 1:14-19 KJV

Chapter 10

What Is New Moon Day?

The new moon and the new month are recognized by a lunar calendar in Scripture. When the first crescent is sighted, a new month begins and the first day of the month becomes a day for worship and sacrifices at the Tabernacle. Although no specific reason for this is given, it is a significant day and one of the times of assembly with the Eternal that is given in the covenant.

The Moon as Part of Creation

During the act of creation, Elohim did not just speak, but rather He declared that something should occur. In the fourth day, Elohim was not creating just any light to exist, but He was declaring for His lights to exist in the Heavens. These lights were to serve His purposes that include separating light from darkness, acting as a calendar, as signals for the festival meetings, and as signs of the time.

As a part of creation, the moon came on the fourth day and was placed in the firmament of heaven along with the sun and the stars. This was after the creation of the earth's land, seas, and plants on the third day and before the creation of animals and mankind on the fifth and sixth days.

The Moon as a Light

The main purpose of the moon, as well as the sun and stars, was to separate the light from the darkness and to give light to the earth. It is the quantity and quality of the moon's light that allows it to serve in all of its other functions. The moon is referred to as the lesser light

because it is the second brightest object in the earth's sky after the sun. Furthermore, the moon was given dominion over the night which is opposite of the daytime which has the sun.

The Moon as a Calendar

The sun, moon, and stars were made to act as a calendar. The sun and moon separate the day and the night. The moon is also used to measure the months of the year. This is shown in the Hebrew language as the word for month, chodesh, is the same word used for the new moon. The moon is also used as a reference to the timing of the three annual feasts: the feast of unleavened bread, the feast of weeks, and the feast of booths.

Some lunar calendars are based on a nineteen year cycle. Although known in Babylon, it is known as the Metonic cycle and named after the Athenian astronomer Meton. This goes against the sighting of the moon (as well as sighting crops and other items to help determine the seasons and festivals). The use of equinoxes and solstices to determine calendar events also seem to come largely from

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paganism and mysticism. The scriptural instructions for determining the first month of the year specifically say to look at the barley crops as the first of the harvest must be available for the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The Moon as a Sign

The moon was also made to be a visible sign for great events. Scripture records that during the end times there will be periods when the moon does not shine, when it will shine like the sun, that it will appear as blood, a third part will be darkened, and it will not be needed in New Jerusalem.

On an interesting sidenote, the moon is 400 times smaller than the sun and 400 times closer. It is this condition which allows for the moon to eclipse the sun so precisely. Historically, this also allows us to know that the calendars made and used by the Old Testament writers was accurate.

The New Moon Day Observance

There are instructions in Scripture about assembling together and of special burnt offerings being made for the first

day of the month (new moon day). Historically, this is an event that is taken away from Israel during times of punishment. In the future, it will be the prince's job to do the offerings. There does not seem to be a stated purpose or commemoration connected with this event.

The Moon and Idolatry

The moon is a highly visible part of creation. The moon also has some emphasis within Scripture by the number of times it appears in the writings. Because of this, many warnings are given in Scripture about not worshipping the moon. Idolatry in any form is prohibited.

How To Determine the Beginning of the Month?

There are many disagreements on how to determine the beginning of the month. For example, does a single trained spotter in the Golan Heights who sees the crescent moon for five seconds in a break in the clouds say the new month has begun? Some would say yes, while most would say no for various reasons. It is not supposed to be complicated. If a majority of people cannot simply

look out their windows and see that first crescent .. it has not begun.

Predicting the Date

Real life does not always give the option to access the internet and read if people have spotted the moon in Israel or Jerusalem. That is when many turn to local observation. This can also be difficult because some areas have dense cloud cover. Therefore, predicting the date can be useful (although not the best option).

Through the years I have watched one specific metric ... how long after sunset is moonset. If moonset is more than one hour after sunset, it is typically visible. If moonset is less than one hour after sunset, it is less likely to be seen up until about thirty minutes after sunset before which it is practically impossible to see. So, personally, I just use the one hour mark when necessary.

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 2 Peter 3:8 KJV

Chapter 11

One Day is as One Thousand Years

While nobody knows the exact timing of the Tribulation and the Messiah's return, multiple ways of estimation point towards the near future. A symbolic look at Creation Week can be compared to the history of man kind ... the parallels are remarkable and such a comparison suggests we may be within a century of these events. The events expected to lead up to the End Times also seem to be occurring. Most notably the rapid increase in knowledge would match the past century.

Symbolism

There is a theory that each day of creation symbolically represents a thousand years of man kind's existence on this earth. This theory suggests that there is a seven thousand year calendar to be fulfilled. We are approximately in the year 5,916 which suggests we are nearing the completion of the sixth millennium.

Included in this brief summary are: Major historical events during each millennium which correspond with the time frame in mind. individuals who lived about the time of the turn of the millenniums will also be included. A background subject involved with this concept is that of numbers having a symbolic meaning attached to them. For example, the number '7' is used to refer to 'completion' and 'rest'; an example of which can be found in the Sabbath day as the seventh day rest.

[Please note, this symbolism is not the same as Kaballah's use of numbers, letters, and names to try and mystically cause something to happen].

Day 1: Unity

The number '1' is used to express 'unity' especially with YHVH. On the first day of creation, He created light and then separated it from darkness. Throughout the Scriptures, light signifies being with the Almighty and darkness signifies being separated from Him. When Adam was created and placed in the Garden of Eden, there was unity. He lived almost 1,000 years, but did not live to see the second millennium (nor the second day on this time scale). Adam was separated from the Almighty because of the darkness of sin. Adam was told he would die the day he ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Day 2: Division

The number '2' is used to represent 'division'. On the second day of creation there was the separation of the waters by a firmament. During the second millennium, mankind became wicked and were destroyed by a worldwide flood by the waters from above and below the earth. After the flood, the water on the earth is put into its place and divided by the land. It is interesting to note that Noah is

the tenth generation (the number '10' being used to symbolize 'law' and 'responsibility') because this is a generation which receives judgment.

Babel

In the second millennium there is also the building of the Tower of Babel. It is at this time that man kind is divided into the nations by the separation of languages. Here it is interesting to take note of Nimrod, who founded Babel, and who was in the 13th generation. The number '13' is used to symbolize 'depravity' and 'rebellion'.

Day 3: Resurrection

The number '3' is used to symbolize 'resurrection'. On the third day of creation plants and trees yielding seed were made. Through the Scriptures there are many examples of plants and trees being used to represent peoples and nations. For example olive trees, fig trees, and vineyards can all be used to represent Israel. During the third millennium the main event is the exodus from Egypt when the Nation of Israel is brought up from a captivity that is like death to a spacious and

beautiful land filled with life for them. This is a 'planting' of Israel in the promised land where they are to grow and be fruitful and a type of resurrection from death (slavery) to life (freedom). The beginning of the third millennium is filled with the lifetimes of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Abraham was in the 20th generation. The number '20' is used to symbolize 'redemption'. He was, of course, the father of those who were separated and called out for a closer relationship with YHVH.

Day 4: Witness

The number '4' is used to represent The Almighty's 'creation' and His 'testimony to the world', and His 'witnessing'. On the 4th day of creation, the lights in the Heavens (the sun, moon, and stars) are set in place to show us the signs and the seasons. At the beginning of the fourth millennium, is the time of the kings of Israel. It is also the time of the prophets. It is a time where the Nation of Israel acts as a witness to the Almighty's love and blessing. It is through the kings and prophets that so many signs and wonders of what is to come

are given, especially of the coming Messiah. However, before this millennium ends, the captivities of Israel and Judah will come by the Assyrians and Babylonians. This acts as a witness against those who forsake the Almighty. King David lived near the beginning of the fourth millennium. He is in the 33rd generation. The number '33' signifies 'promise'. There are many possible promises to look at, but one of the biggest is that of the coming Messiah, Savior, and King who will come through David's line. David specifically receives the promise that his descendants will have a king whose kingdom will not end.

Day 5: Favor

The number '5' is used to symbolize 'favor' (grace). On the fifth day of creation, the One Most High made the living creatures. Shortly before the start of this millennium, Yahshuah comes as Messiah and Savior. After His resurrection and ascension to Heaven, He sends the Spirit to man. All of this, in the effort to bring salvation to humans. This is an incredible showing of favor from the One Most High. It is through these things that all

those who choose to believe go from spiritual death to life and are made into new living beings. Over the next few centuries of the fifth millennium, this favor continues, despite persecution, with the rapid spread of faith and belief in YHVH and Yahshuah across all the nations. This continued strongly until the time of the dark ages and of the next millennium.

Day 6: Man

The number '6' is used to represent 'man' in the sense of 'incompleteness'. It carries the connotation of all man's weakness and sin. On the sixth day of creation, man and woman enter the scene, are given the command to multiply, and to subdue the earth. During the sixth millennium, the one in which we now live, we have certainly seen this played out. During the last several centuries man has been prolific and now numbers in the billions of people on earth. We have also seen our dominion over the animals and this planet [many animals taken to the point of extinction and a planet stripped of its natural resources]. A terrible show of man's abilities.

Day 7: Completeness

One Day is as One Thousand Years

The number '7' is used to represent 'perfection' and 'rest'. On the seventh day of creation, a day of rest was called for because the creation was complete. It is YHVH's Shabbat, a day set apart for rest and to remind of us of His creation. We cannot look at history to see what has happened in the seventh millennium because it is yet to come. What comes next, according to Scripture, is the Millennial kingdom. This is the age when our Messiah will rule as King. This is also the time when Satan will be bound up for 1,000 years. We do not know what it will truly be like, but it sounds like perfection and rest to me.

Day 8: New Beginnings

The number '8' symbolizes 'new beginnings'. There is not much to be written about this day based on the Creation account. Instead, the eighth day is represented by the 8th day gathering following the Feast of Tabernacles. It likely symbolizes the new beginning we have in the new Heavens and earth as the Bride of Messiah and starts our journey through eternity. This time is far beyond our

comprehension. All that can really be written for now is that the Book of Revelation shows that things continue after the Millennial kingdom.

Summary

Throughout the Scriptures, we see the use of symbolism, types, and foreshadowing to help illustrate for us what the Almighty wants us to understand. He does create patterns for us to follow. The concept of 1 day equaling 1,000 years has many merits to it as the Scriptures are read. In particular, the time of creation symbolizes for us a timescale which the Almighty has made for His overall plan in making us part of His family and through it, we can understand His majestic ways just a little more.

Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.
Luke 2:25-32 KJV

Unit C

What Are the Spring Festivals?

The Spring Festivals and Assemblies represent the first coming of the Messiah that occurred about two thousand years ago. It is at this time He comes as the Suffering Servant and as the Lamb. His life, death, and resurrection which occur around the Feast of Unleavened Bread represent the ultimate atoning sacrifice that wipes away our sin. His giving of the Special Spirit at the Feast of Weeks furthers the process of our sanctification and ultimate return to the Kingdom of Heaven as sons and daughters.

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. Matthew 26:26-29 KJV

Chapter 12

What Is the Last Supper Memorial?

The evening before the Passover sacrifice, the Messiah gathered His disciples together at the last supper. He then performed the equivalent of a Hebraic wedding betrothal with them, and with all believers, in offering the cup of wine and giving the promise of His return. The communion meal, which is to be eaten often, serves as a constant reminder that He went away to prepare things and that He will return for His bride - all of which are a part of the promised New Covenant.

Many times, the Messiah had challenged His listeners and disciples with eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Initially, they could not understand the symbolism and significance of how this would come to pass - nor could they as they did not realize the necessity of the sacrifice of His life. In using the bread and the wine, He instituted the elements that would act as a reminder of His departure and coming return for thousands of years.

Prophetic Pictures

There are many prophecies and foreshadowings of the Messiah and His work as Savior within Scripture. Some of these point to the communion meal and a wedding betrothal.

The Prophecy in Joseph's Life

The life of Joseph is one large prophetic picture of the two comings of the Messiah. In regards to the Last Supper and the Messiah's death we look at Genesis chapter forty. Joseph is in jail and the wine bearer and the baker have dreams. It is shown that in three days the wine bearer shall be raised up to his position near the pharaoh and the baker

shall die by being hanged on a tree. The wine and the bread, being lifted up, and being hanged are all pictured in this short segment which comes shortly before Joseph became as king and was the second most powerful leader in all of Egypt.

Appearance of Bread and Wine

Now how many times do we see bread and wine come together in scripture? Abraham brought bread and wine to the three angelic strangers that visited Him. Joseph had to interpret the dreams of the baker and the cup-bearer. Regarding the Feast of Booths (Sukkot), Elohim says when you have gathered from your threshing floor [bread] and from your wine press [wine] then you shall rejoice for seven days. Time and time again we see the combination of bread and wine.

The Table of Showbread

Another place we see bread and wine come together is in the Tabernacle at the Table of Showbread. This table would have twelve loaves of bread each week. In addition, there would be frankincense, salt and oil as these were needed for the grain

What Is the Last Supper Memorial?

offerings. Also, wine was needed for the oblation offering. This shows His sacrificial duties to ensure His people are righteous. It also implies that to be able to commune together and eat this bread, we are to be priests and that He is our Head in His position as High Priest. We are to be set-apart (holy) to consume this bread.

Prophecy in Adam and Eve

Prophecies and foreshadowings of the Messiah begin very early in Scripture. In fact, what might be the first such picture comes before there is even a sinful act and a need for a savior. The Scriptures state that it is not good for man to be alone and then describe how Adam was put into a deep sleep, his side was opened, flesh was taken out, and this was fashioned into his wife. Likewise we can see that Messiah was put to death (like a deep sleep), His side was pierced (opened up), blood and water came out, and the believer is purified and made spotless by His blood which was shed so as to become His bride.

Similarity to a Wedding Betrothal

There are many similarities

surrounding the Last Supper to a traditional Hebraic wedding betrothal. Typically the father will choose a bride for his son much like our Heavenly Father has chosen the bride for His Son. When the marriage proposal is given, an agreement by the bride is shown by accepting a glass of wine much as the Believer does at the communion meal. When it is publicly declared the bride goes through a period of immersion or cleansing much like the act of baptism. During the betrothal period, the groom goes to prepare a house and does not know the time of his return but must wait until the father states the house is ready. This matches how the Messiah prepares for us our Heavenly home and his return at a time no one but the Father knows. Often, a gift is given to the bride-to-be for which the Believer has received an earnest of the Spirit.

Mat 22:1-14 Wedding Feast for King's Son

Mat 25:1-13 Parable of the Ten Virgins

John 14:1-4, all Going to Prepare a Place

Eph 5:25-32 Messiah and His Wife / Church

Rev 19:7 Marriage Feast has Come

Rev 22:16-17,20 Come!

Rev 21:3-4 No More Tears

Rev 22:3-5 Living Together

The Communion Meal

The word 'communion'

describes a person who is a participant, partner, or in fellowship. All who are believers in the Messiah are described as being in communion with the Messiah, with one another, and in the promise of eternal life. The evening before the Messiah would fulfill the prophecies of the Passover sacrifice, He gathered together the apostles for one last meal together. During this meal He used a loaf of bread and a cup of wine as a promise of His return. The wine and bread used in the communion meal are symbols used in accepting the Messiah and the promise of eternal life that He brings.

John 6:30-59 bread of life

Mat 26:26-30 last supper

Luk 22:14-20 Last Supper

1 Cor 11:23-29 Showing His Death

Personal Inspection

When we partake of the bread and the wine, we are warned to inspect ourselves and to make sure this is not done in an unworthy manner. We can ask ourselves many questions, including:) do I understand I am a sinner in need of a Savior?) am I ready to accept a marriage proposal and begin the process of preparing for the Groom's

return?) am I ready to make Him my Head [Master] and do His work alongside the rest of His body in this world?) Can I remember, with joy, the promise of His return to take us where He is? These are not things to be taken lightly.

What Do We Remember?

We have ... in our hands ... a reminder that we are His special people. We have in our hands, the reminder that He is the bridegroom and that He is preparing a place for His bride - that is us - and that He will be returning to take us where He is. We have in our hands, the reminder that He is in us and we are in Him ... and that together ... we are to act as His body on this earth and in this lifetime. We hold in our hands, the remembrance of His love for us.

Serving Others

During the Last Supper, Yahshuah also took time to wash the disciples feet. A reminder that we need to remember humility and our place in serving and helping each other until His return.

Family Observation

Throughout the year,

What Is the Last Supper Memorial?

communion is often taken within a group setting and we will simply follow along with how the group does it. That is often passing small cups of grape juice and bread around. Usually there is a short message. Within larger denominations, a standardized liturgical statement that is repeated each time. These can be meaningful, but it helps to come in having already prepared for communion personally.

In the spring, just before Passover, it is often done just as our family or occasionally with a few close brethren. It is taken in the evening and is a completely separate event from the family dinner. It will often have a home made loaf of bread with a little bit of wine. We will take the time to prepare our hearts, have a short message similar to the themes above, pray before taking each element, have some hymns or songs. It is followed by pairing up and doing a foot washing with simple basins and towels. In all, it takes a couple hours and it is a more somber event even though there is joy mixed within. It is a reminder that we love Him and we are to care for each other, ... and we are all waiting for His return.

Hymns

How Beautiful
I Need Thee Every Hour
Shepherd of My soul
Softly and Tenderly
Take My Life and Let It Be
The Church's One Foundation
Then Shall the Virgin Rejoice
We Will Dance

General Hymns

More Precious Than Silver
Praise Him Praise Him
We've a Story to Tell
Wonderful Words of Life

Activities

Share an aspect of the Messiah you appreciate.

Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: {6} And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. {7} And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. {8} And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Ex 12:5-8 KJV

Chapter 13

What Is the Passover Sacrifice and Memorial?

The purpose of the Messiah's first coming was to bring atonement to Elohim's people through His sacrificial death. As part of this purpose, the writings of Scripture and the timing of the events reveal that the original Egyptian Passover was a prophecy of a much greater event. This prophecy was fulfilled in exacting detail as the Messiah was sacrificed, unbroken, on the fourteenth day of the first month. The blood of the true sacrificial lamb, the Messiah, would remove believers from the slavery and bondage of eternal death.

Fulfilling Promises and Covenants

Not enough can be said about this pivotal moment in history where the Messiah fulfilled His role as Savior and took upon Himself the sin of man kind. Many of the promises and covenants made by Elohim hinge on this point in time to fulfill the concepts of making believers His special people both now and for eternity.

Prophecy with Abraham and Isaac

In a blood covenant, such as Elohim made with Abraham, one must do everything one is able in order to keep the covenant - even to the extent of risking his children's life (Gen 15:7-18). An incredible challenge was given as Abraham was asked to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22:2). But the events become prophetic of the crucifixion of the Messiah. Isaac had done no wrong, Isaac was the one through whom was the promise to bless all nations, Isaac was a miraculous son (of old age), the sacrifice was in the land of Moriah (meaning chosen by Yah) and later became the site of the Temple by Solomon. The wood was

placed on Isaac to carry (Gen 22:6), Abraham prophecies that Yahveh will provide the lamb for the sacrifice (Gen 22:8), a ram with its horns is caught in a thicket (or 'crown') of thorns (Gen 22:13), the place is called Yahveh-Yirah meaning Yahveh is seen (Gen 22:14).

Prophecy in Psalms

In Psalm 22 we read of the agony and grief associated with this type of death, including details specific to His death . Yet, Yahshuah gives praise to the Father and looks forward to the deliverance and satisfaction that will come and instructs Israel to fear and honor Yahveh.

Prophecy in Isaiah

In Isaiah 53 we read an incredible description of the role of the Savior's sacrifice. It includes not only details of His suffering, but the great results which follow. These show that He CHOSE to go through this suffering for each one of us. He had the power to call 12 legions of angels, therefore, He surely had the power to walk away ... but He took the suffering to bring about our righteousness.

Passover Instructions

What Is the Passover Sacrifice and Memorial?

The scriptural instructions for this day are few and simple. Each family is to take a lamb and slaughter it on the 14th day of the 1st month. That night, it is to be eaten with bitter herbs while the person stands and is dressed ready to go as a reminder of how Israel left Egypt in haste. Once they entered the promised land, the people were instructed to make the sacrifice not in their homes, but in the place where YHVH would set His name. This was instructed to be done throughout the ages as a memorial because this was the night that Israel was taken out of Egypt.

Egyptian Passover

In Egypt, the time of Passover was the culmination of the work Yahveh was doing to bring the Nation of Israel out of the bondage and slavery it suffered under Egypt (Ex 3-12). The plague of the death of the firstborn was to be the final act that would force the Egyptians to drive Israel away to freedom. The Passover sacrifice was needed to protect the Israelite children from the deadly plague (Ex 12). On the 10th day of the 1st month a lamb of the first years

was chosen and watched for four days to make sure it was without blemish (Ex 12:3-6). On the fourteenth day of the first month, it was to be sacrificed and its blood placed on the doorposts of the houses of Israel (Ex 12:6-7). This would be the sign that the Destroying Angel was to pass over that house and leave it unharmed (Ex 12:12-13). The meal was then eaten in the night and the people were to wear their sandals and have their staff because they were in haste to leave (Ex 12:11).

In Israel

In the land of Israel, the Passover sacrifice was a memorial of how the One Most High had taken His people out of Egypt (Ex 12:24-25, Deu 16:1-3). This observance was strongly linked with teaching the children what this event means (Ex 12:26-27). It was to be kept by native born Israelites and by strangers who had been circumcised (Ex 12:43-45, 48-49). Also the place of the sacrifice was moved from in each home to where 'Yahveh' would place His name. It is a night to be observed (Ex 12:42) and was strongly linked with teaching the children what this event means.

Yahshuah as the Lamb

The Apostolic writings reveal that the Passover sacrifice was a type and foreshadowing of an even greater event. It is Yahshuah's blood that covers us and allows us to be 'passed over' by death because of sin. Yahshuah, the true Lamb, would be sacrificed and His blood accepted as protection from eternal death for those who choose to accept it. It is to be kept by those who believe in the Messiah. The role of His death was atonement. The blood saves all people from the death that comes from the bondage of sin.

Joh 19:33-36

Between the Two Evenings

The Passover sacrifice is to be done on the 14th day of the 1st month 'between the two evenings' (bein haarbayim). Some groups have argued what this means (even suggesting the entire preparation of the lamb must be done between sunset and darkness - an almost impossible task). In Hebrew, evening can refer to the 12 hour period that the sun goes from it's highest point, noon, to it's lowest point, midnight. It can also refer specifically to sunset. Between the two evenings

refers to the afternoon, from noon to sunset. Messiah Himself showed the fulfillment of this by dying on the cross at 3:00 in the afternoon.

Family Observance:

Preparing for the Passover Meal is usually a large event. On the tenth of the month, a drawing or painting of a lamb is made or brought out and placed on a wall to represent a chosen lamb. A type of 'spring cleaning' is done with an emphasis on the kitchen area to remove all the dust and dirt and possible leavened crumbs (a reminder that sin likes to hide in our lives). On Passover itself, we will remove the yeast (and baking soda and powder) and throw it away.

We will prepare a table with store bought lamb and roasted, bitter herbs (whatever is available fresh dill, oregano, or even dandelion one time. The third plate will have either store bought matzah or home made unleavened bread or crackers.

In the evening we will typically turn off the electricity and light lamps or candles for our lighting. We will gather around the table and have a service where we

What Is the Passover Sacrifice and Memorial?

actually stand, with the men holding a staff (can be a nicely made wood staff to use each year, a stick for that year, or in a pinch just a purchased wood broom handle).

There are a few hymns and songs, along with some talk about what each of the plates represent in our lives (taken from the themes above).

A brief review of the events of the Exodus is often done here, but a complete reading of the text has probably already been done in the days prior to the actual meal.

Readings

Ex 12-13 Passover
Crucifixion,
Joseph Symbolism
Parables of Lamb / Sheep
Ps 22 - Prophetic
Is 53 Prophetic
Mar 15:1-4 Crucifixion
Rev 5:5-14
1 Cor 5:7 - Old Leaven
Heb 11:28 - Moses Faith

Songs

Above All
Blessed Assurance
Bless Yahveh Oh My Soul

Crown Him with Many Crowns
Dance
El Shaddai
Give Thanks
He Will Come and Save You
How Deep the Father's Love
Just As I Am
Lamb of Yah
Love Lifted Me
Nothing but the Blood
There is Power in the Blood
To Yah be the Honor

Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? 7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 KJV

Chapter 14

What Is the Festival of Unleavened Bread?

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is the first of the three pilgrimage festivals. It historically looks at the leaving from Egypt while prophetically looking at the believer's being removed from sin. It is a time of purification when the Almighty's people are set-apart. It also includes an often overlooked picture of the resurrection of the Messiah.

Leaving Egypt

Unleavened bread is a time of purification and of Elohim setting His people apart for use. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is one of the three pilgrimage festivals, a time when the Israelites were to go to Jerusalem. This particular time is to remind the people of their departure from Egypt ... of a time that they left in such haste that they were unable to wait for their bread to be leavened.

In the Promised Land

Scriptural instructions for this time are relatively simple also. This is a seven day festival from the 15th through the 21st of the 1st month. The first and seventh days are days of assembly and no work is to be done on them. During this time, people are not to eat anything that is leavened. Also on each day they were to present as burnt offerings 2 bulls, 1 ram, 7 lambs, and 1 goat.

Salvation is not Enough

Immediately following Passover is the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It does not take long to see in Scripture that leavening is often used to represent sin and the ways of the world. In 1 Cor 5, Paul

writes of this when he speaks of getting rid of the leaven of malice and wickedness and becoming a new lump of sincerity and truth. What does this call us to do? It calls us to look at our lives, to search out the lusts of the flesh, the cares of the world, the pride and the vanity and to throw them out of our lives. Instead, we should take in the ways of the Almighty, following His statutes and looking for the blessing and the peace and the joy that come them. We should be looking at how much closer our relationship to Him can be as we spend time with Him and live life in His ways rather than the world's ways.

Baptism and New Life

When leaving Egypt, they also had a type of baptism in Crossing the Red Sea. The Israelites left behind Egyptian society and the false ways that existed there. When a person chooses to follow the Messiah, and are baptized, it is a mark that shows the decision is made to stop following the false and sinful ways of the world and to move on in truth. It is a sign of that new life and the death of the ways. It is a time of cleansing and of dying to self in this new life.

Righteousness in the Kingdom

Righteousness is the standard by which all things are measured in the Kingdom of Heaven. For people, righteousness can only be attained through the forgiveness of sin that is offered through Yahshuah, the Savior. After that, as believers, we have the choice towards righteous or unrighteous actions and to grow in our understanding of righteousness while living in a world full of wickedness.

Resisting Evil in the World

Our own battle for purity is hampered and difficult in the modern society we live in as well. There are so many things that try to distract us and assimilate us into a society where money, power, fame, greed, gluttony, laziness, and a long list of other things try to make us live and do things the way society does them. Is it not time for us to re-dedicate our lives to Him? Is it not time for us to get out of man's systems and into the Almighty's? Is it not time to seek the promised land where His blessing flows like milk and honey? We can have it in our lives if we try. He will help us fight those battles and rid the leaven

from our lives.

Freewill Offering

This commandment asks each house (male) to bring an offering in relation to how it has been blessed that year. This offering goes beyond the required sacrifices for sin and guilt. This is giving back to the Almighty in thanksgiving. We can still examine our lives and look for blessings in them and we can still look for ways to offer back to the Almighty for His favor. When we offer a part of our lives or our time and effort, it shows our desire for Him. He will respond to the offer and will train that part of our lives for His use.

Family Observation:

With a week long event many things are possible. It is time for a feast. In the days before, a special trip to the store was made and each person tries to find a food or meal that that will be a treat. There are also foods we would all enjoy.

Although we might use store bought matzah, it is preferred if we can bake our own unleavened bread, crackers, or other products to eat each day.

Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. 2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. 3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: 4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. 5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. 6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Matthew 28:1-6 KJV

Chapter 15

What Is the Day of Firstfruits?

The wave sheaf offering occurs a few days after the Passover sacrifice during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In the physical, an omer of Barley was lifted up to Elohim in the Tabernacle. Symbolically, this is a picture of the resurrection of the Messiah who shows that He is able to offer new life to people.

The Wave Sheaf offering

The wave sheaf offering is unusual in that it is not given a specific calendar date to be observed. Instead it is given in reference to being in the promised land, at the time of the spring harvest, on the day after the Sabbath, at the time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

When the Nation of Israel entered into the promised land and began to reap the harvest, they were to bring the first omer of the harvest to the priest to be used as a wave offering on the day after the Sabbath. After this, the Israelites would be able to eat of the harvest growing on the land.

This event also marks the beginning of the fifty day count to the Feast of Weeks and the further sanctification of His people through His commandments and His Spirit.

Yahshuah Rises from the Grave

In the Greek writings, Paul connects it with the resurrection of Messiah. The wave sheaf offering is a picture of the resurrection of the Messiah ... who shows that He is able to offer new life to people when He Himself

defeats death. Not only did He live a sinless life and teach people righteousness in both the physical and spiritual aspects of life, but through His death and resurrection He defeated death, the greatest enemy to life.

Other

The wave sheaf offering represents the resurrection of Messiah Yahshuah from death to life. Our authority in the spiritual comes from having a Master who has resurrection and new life. The counting of the omer starts after the weekly sabbath.

Family Observation

We have a small service to remember this special elevation offering made in the Tabernacle. In some years, we have tried growing some barley in a flower pot so we could try harvesting some grain (more challenging to pull off successfully since we are not accustomed to growing grain). But a good reminder of how they depend on their crops for food.

Hymns

Because He Lives

Crown Him with Many Crowns

He Lives

What Is the Day of Firstfruits?

Jesus Christ is Risen Today

And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. 28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: Joel 2:27-28 KJV

Chapter 16

What Is the Feast of Weeks?

The Feast of Weeks, also known as Pentecost, is the second pilgrimage festival. It comes fifty days after the wave sheaf offering. After departing from Egypt, the Ten Commandments were given at Mt. Sinai at this time. This was later fulfilled in greater measure by the giving of the Spirit to the Almighty's people as an earnest, or down payment, of the new life that is to come to believers.

Observing the Feast of Weeks

The Feast of Weeks, Hag Shavuot, is the second of the three annual pilgrimage festivals. It follows fifty days after the Wave Sheaf offering that is made during the Feast of Unleavened Bread and, therefore, always falls on the first day of the week. It is celebrated with special sacrifices and offerings with a unique offering of two loaves of wheat bread given by the high priest.

The Ten Commandments

The Feast of Weeks represents the sanctification of the Almighty's people. Although only a foreshadowing of what was to come in the future, a type of fulfillment for this event can be seen shortly after the Exodus from Egypt. At this time, Israel had arrived at Mount Sinai and the time came to make the covenant that led to the making of the Ten Commandments. The laws and statutes contained within the Sinai Covenant were designed to sanctify His people and bring close relationship as He would dwell among His people through the Tabernacle.

The Giving of the Spirit

The fulfillment of the Feast of Weeks came fifty days after the resurrection of the Messiah. At this time He sent the Set-Apart Spirit to sanctify His people and to act as an earnest, or down payment, of the new life that is to come in the Heavenly Kingdom. The Spirit also helps in spreading the message of the Heavenly Kingdom throughout the world as well as teaching us truth and discerning falsehood.

Sanctifying His People

While we cannot earn our salvation, there is something we must do to have it ... humble ourselves and accept His offer. Similarly, He offers sanctification ... but we have to accept it. If the Messiah says to 'love one another', but we refuse to be loving and stay selfish, ... we will not become more sanctified in that area ... if we try to be loving, even if we do not do well at first, we grow and learn and become better at loving ... thus, we become sanctified, or more separate from the world, because the world is selfish. In both the Old and New Covenants, He gives us His commandments (first on

stone, then on our hearts) to show us how to be different from the world and how to live in His kingdom.

Beware of 'Spiritual Israel'

Many traditions have been made surrounding the Feast of Weeks. Christianity generally regards this day as the 'birth of the church' which usually leads into the concept of a 'spiritual Israel' replacing the Jewish people while the truth is that we are grafted into the believing descendants of Israel and not the unbelieving descendants of Jacob. This 'spiritual Israel' concept has also been used to try and support the concept of Dispensationalism where the observance of the covenant laws are no longer necessary. His people (believers) have always been His people and removing the commandments which are there to sanctify us can only make us more wretched, sinful, and full of darkness.

Striving for Purity

After receiving salvation, our lives should change according to our repentance from sin when we recognize it. When one seeks purity and righteousness, one will

increasingly see the corruption in this world, it does not matter the source. As we grow in sanctification, as we seek purity, and as we repent of past sinful ways, we should become shining examples of honesty, truth, and righteousness in a world filled with deception.

Cessationism and Continuationism Debate

This book is not the place for a detailed covering of the Cessationism vs. Continuationism debate [whether the gifts ceased after the first century or continue to this day]. I will acknowledge that there are people who fake the Gifts of the Spirit. I will also admit there are many who are using the False Gifts of the Spirit (using witchcraft, paganism, and demonic sources for spiritual effects). But I also know there are the true Gifts of the Spirit. The Special Spirit is there to sanctify the Eternal's people, to guide and teach them, and to be our comforter. This was not just for first century believers ... it is for all of Yahshuah's people as a gift to His betrothed while He is away. I have witnessed and experienced the true Gifts of the Spirit and

What Is the Feast of Weeks?

when this is encountered, it is amazing in both its simplicity and effectiveness.

Family Observance

Typically, we have had a build-up to this day by making a calendar at Firstfruits and counting the fifty days. This calendar has been a little different each time - sometimes recording what we did each day, or coloring in an image a little each day of wheat growing and ripening, or some other theme.

When we reach the day, we will have read from the book of Acts, possibly recounted the things He has done in our lives (miraculous care, etc.).

Hymns

Law Songs
O How Love I Thy Law
Psalm One
Thy Word
Trust and Obey
Wonderful Words of Life

Spirit Songs
Give Me Oil in My Lamp
Open My Eyes that I may See
Such Joy

Gospel Songs

Bringing in the Sheaves
I Love to Tell the Story
Instruments of Your Peace
It is Good
Seek Ye First
Shout to the North
We've a Story to Tell

Sanctification Songs
As the Mountains
Be Thou My Vision
Blessed Assurance
Better is One Day
Change My Heart O Yah
Cry of My Heart
Crown Him with Many Crowns
Ever Closer
Great is Thy Faithfulness
Have Thine Own Way
I Need Thee Every Hour
In Your Presence
Love Lifted Me
Shepherd of My Soul
Shout to Yahveh
Take My life and Let it Be
We Will Dance
Yah Speaks to Us

Spanish Songs
Envia La Paloma
Pon Aceite En Mi Lampara
Yahshuah Me Pastorea

Children Songs
Oh be Careful Little Eyes

Celebrating Salvation in the Covenant Festivals

Give Me Oil in My Lamp
This Little Light of Mine

Passages

Lev 23:15-22

Num 28:26-31

Deu 16:9-12

Joel 2:27-32

Jer 31:31

Luk 24:49

Acts 1-2

What Is the Feast of Weeks?

Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Matthew 26:64 KJV

Unit D

Autumn Festivals

Just as the spring festivals show the historical first coming of the Messiah as the the Suffering Servant and as the Lamb, the autumn festivals show His prophetic second coming as the Conquering King and as the Lion. These events include the Millennial Kingdom, final judgment, a wedding banquet, and eternity in the New Heavens and Earth.

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. 15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) 16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: ... 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. Matthew 24:14-16, 21 KJV

Chapter 17

What Is the End Time Tribulation?

Prophecy can be a challenging topic. For example, if you asked the general population of Judea at 10 BC when the Messiah would come, what He would do, and how He would die ... probably zero people would have been correct in predicting the events that would soon occur. We, as believers in Scripture, are also faced with numerous prophecies about events that will probably be unfolding in the not so distant future. There are a great many ideas about when it will happen, how it will happen, and the order of events mentioned in Prophetic Scripture. Our Messiah's second coming is expected because He has promised this event ... as well as a terrible time of tribulation approaching His return. Scripture gives us relatively few details of this time, but it is worth understanding.

Misunderstanding the Time(s)

The risks from misunderstanding these events is very real for believers. Perhaps the best example regarding the seriousness of this topic is to state that if the concept of the rapture is not true, then many believers will not be preparing for persecution and difficult times because they think they will be removed before it happens. If believers think it is still in the distant future, they will not be wary and watching world events and protecting themselves or their families. Throughout history, we see many examples of persecution by governments, other religions, and even by philosophies accepted by the majority. If we are ignorant of these things, history can easily repeat itself ... and with modern technology at their disposal, it can be worse.

What to Do If It Happens In Our Time

There can be little doubt that believers well have to go 'underground' as these events occur ... just as many modern groups have done in modern Communist and Islamic countries

where persecution and death are significant risks. Believers in the Western Nations, such as the United States, have not faced this type of persecution and are little prepared for it. Building a personal relationship with the Creator, memorizing Scripture for when it is illegal to own a Bible, and being prepared for simpler lifestyles with more physical labor are all needed before these events happen.

Jacob's Trouble

While there are many theories what the One World Government will look like, one of the more likely possibilities is that of an Islamic / Muslim world ... and certainly they are currently one of the major powers in the world. They will try to vanquish and conquer or destroy the Jewish and Christian peoples and rule the world. They are violent and can be deceitful. The Jewish People refer to such a problem as 'Jacob's Trouble', because the descendants of Esau are so cruel to them. The phrase comes from Jeremiah chapter 30 ... but like many prophecies, it comes with hope as well as warning.

Jeremiah 30:4-9

Other Troubles

There are certainly many other possibilities: Russia, China, the Middle East, the King of England, a merging or world religions, etc, etc, etc. I will not try to show the strength or weaknesses of these many possibilities. Instead let us focus on what Scripture does state.

7000 Year Calendar

Earlier in the book, there was a description of Creation Week acting as a prophetic picture of the history of this age. It shows a 7,000 year calendar where the last thousand years in the Millennial Kingdom of the Messiah. We currently live at approximately the year 5916. If correct, this implies, the end times and the Messiah's return could be within the next century and possibly even in our lifetime.

Anti-Messiah and Beast(s)

One of the more popular topics for theories is trying to figure out the symbolic figures known as the Anti-Christ, the Beast(s), and the Mark of the Beast. Many world leaders and International Organizations have been named as potential candidates. These

signal the beginning of the end.

Dan 2 - beast and current nations

Dan 9, 24-27 - statue and current nations

2 Thes. 2

Rev 13

The two Witnesses

One of the surest signs of End Time events is the appearance and work of the Two Witnesses who will perform great miracles and be hated by the world.

What Is the End Time Tribulation?

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.
Revelation 20:4-6 KJV

Chapter 18

What Is the Day of Shouting?

The Day of Shouting marks the end of the tribulation and the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom also known as the thousand year reign of the Messiah. This includes the binding of Satan for one thousand years and the first resurrection that includes those martyred during the tribulation.

Defining 'Yom Teruah'

The Hebrew phrase from which the Day of Shouting is translated is 'Yom Teruah'. This phrase is variously translated into English as the Day of Shouting, Day of Trumpets, and Day of Noise Making. These translations are each based on the various uses of the word 'teruah' within Scripture. These uses all surround the concept of making noise or sound in celebration or alarm through the use of the voice, the ram's horn, or even the silver trumpets used at the Temple.

Temple Offerings

In Scripture, Numbers chapter 29 contains a summary of the Temple offerings and sacrifices involved with the Day of Shouting. This day is to be considered a Sabbath day of rest in which people gather together and do not work. The offerings of this day include one young bull, one ram, and seven yearling lambs on top of the normal daily and monthly offerings. There is also an offering of 1 goat for atonement of sin. The many offerings suggest the importance of this special day.

End of the Tribulation

Shouting with joy comes on this day because it marks the end of the tribulation. The tribulation is a time of great persecution against the believers in the Messiah. It is a time during which there will be many that are martyred for their belief. The tribulation is a sign that the end of this age is coming soon.

Satan Cast into the Bottomless Pit

Shouting with triumph also comes because of another event. An angel will come, bind Satan, and throw him into the bottomless pit. This will remove his evil actions and influence from the world and it will last until near the end of the thousand years.

Rev. 20:1-3 Satan to Pit

Yahshuah's Reign

Shouting in celebration comes from believers because this day also marks the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom. The millennial kingdom is the one thousand year reign of the Messiah before He places everything back into His Father's hands. During this time, all nations will obey and know that He is the king. While the first coming showed the Messiah as a

suffering servant, the second coming will show Him as a conquering King who will place all things under His feet.

Messiah in the Heavenly Temple

The reign of the Messiah will take place from the Heavenly Temple. There, as pictured in Hebrews 8:1-5, He is the great high priest acting on behalf of mankind towards the Heavenly Father. Those who are raised in the first resurrection also receive the blessing of being able to act as priests under the Messiah for the thousand years of His reign.

Resurrection of the Martyrs

Shouting with gladness comes from those who were martyred during the tribulation because it is the time of the first resurrection. This event is mentioned in Revelation 20:4-6 in which new life is given to those who have stood strong in the Messiah and have received this special reward. They do not have to wait until the Great White Throne judgment to receive new life and the second death has no power over them.

Songs

Shout to the North

Passages

Heb. 8:1-2

Heb 8:1-5

Rev. 20:4

Rev 20:4-6

What Is the Day of Shouting?

*11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.
12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. ... 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:11-12,15 KJV*

Chapter 19

What Is the Day of Redemptions?

The Day of Redemptions comes after the Millennial Kingdom. It is the time of the second resurrection and also the Great White Throne judgment. The Messiah finishes the act of redeeming our lives as we are given the judgment of life and not the judgment of the second death.

Kippur Means Covering

Yom Kippur', translated as the Day of Redemptions, is the time of the Great White Throne judgment. The Hebrew root word 'kippur' means 'to cover'. The use of this root is widespread and includes examples of covering the ark in pitch, protecting a city with a wall, and of the lid on the ark of the covenant. It is also used as the root word from which are translated many words like atonement, redemption, reconciliation, and expiation because a covering is made for a person's sin. For believers, this represents the final act of the redemption of man kind as the bondage of death and Satan's influence are thrown into the lake of fire.

1 Chr. 28:9-11 Solomon Builds

Afflict Your Soul

The commandment given to the Nation of Israel is 'to afflict the soul'. Elsewhere in Scripture, affliction is connected with a few different types of actions which all revolve around the idea of being humbled. Most prominent of these actions is the act of fasting that can be found numerous times in Scripture. Most of the time,

fasting is a choice made by the person or the nation doing the fast. However, the Day of Redemptions is the one day each year where a fast is commanded to be performed.

Lev. 23:26-32 - humbling self

Num. 29:7-11 - offerings,

Mat. 18:1-4 - as a child,

Mat. 23:10-12 - not self master

Luk. 18:9-14 - prayer offered

Act 8:30-35 - silent lamb

s. 53:6-8 - silent lamb

Great White Throne Judgment

This is the time of the Great White Throne judgment which makes this a day of both great rejoicing and great sorrow because judgment has come upon the world. This judgment determines whether a person receives eternal life or death. Believers in the Messiah are companions in the book of life.

Mat. 10:32-33+ - Acknowledge

Mat. 12:33-37 - Careless Words

Rev. 20:7-10 End of satans rule

Rev. 20:11-15 Book of Life

High Priest Behind the Veil

For the earthly tabernacle, the redemptive work primarily involved the duties of the High Priest. On this one day each year, the High Priest enters the most set apart place in the Tabernacle, to sprinkle blood upon the lid of the

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ark of the covenant. This special, one time only sacrifice and blood upon the lid is fulfilled with the Messiah's work as High Priest in the Heavenly Tabernacle.

Ex. 30:6-10 Incense Altar

Heb. 9:1-15 Heavenly High Priest

Heb. 9:22-28 Blood Cleanses

The Scapegoat

The Day of Redemptions contains a unique ceremony with a pair of goats. One goat is released in the wilderness and is referred to as 'for azazel'. The other goat is a special sin offering whose blood is sprinkled on the lid of the ark of the covenant. These actions refer back to the original sin and curse from the garden of Eden. The fulfillment of this unique ceremony represents the sending of Satan and death to the lake of fire and the end of that curse.

Lev. 16:2-31 - two goats

Hos. 2:15-17 - Days of Youth

Mat. 6:24,-33 - Two Masters

Mat. 19:23-30 - Difficult for Rich

Israel's Sabbath

In almost every instance that the word 'Sabbath' is used in Scripture, it is referring to the seventh day Sabbath of rest which is itself always regarded as the Sabbath unto Yahveh. The single

exception to this is the Day of Redemptions which can be on any day of the week and is referred to as a Sabbath unto Israel.

Jubilee Year

The Day of Redemptions also marks the timing for the release of debts and a return of the land to the tribe it belongs to. These show the other types of freedom and restoration that occurs as sin and the punishment or chastisement for it is removed. Things return to the way they should be.

Lev. 25:8-13 Fifty Year Jubilee

Deu. 13:1-3 Seven Year Release

Deu. 31:10-13 Read Law

The New Covenant

When the Sinai covenant ends, the original sin from the garden of Eden, and the death caused by it, must still be dealt with. When this is complete, the Almighty's people will finally be in close relationship with Himself again. Those who have been judged as righteous will be given eternal life and the New Covenant mentioned in Jeremiah 31:31-34 will be able to take place in its fulfillment.

Jer. 30:30-33 - in our hearts

Mat. 13:44-50 - Finding Valuable

Rom. 5:10-21 - Second Adam

Family Observation

What Is the Day of Redemptions?

This is a day of mixed reactions. On one hand, it is a solemn day as we fast and think about eternal judgment. On the other hand, we know the end of the story, and His people will be redeemed and we will hear the verdict of acquitted or not guilty and so a celebration comes at the end.

Questions arise on what do to with younger children. Our response has been to give the child the option to fast or not with the family ... and for how much of the day their fast will last.

During the fast, effort is made to examine our lives. There are many ways to do this. We can compare our actions of the past year with the Ten Commandments. Have we broken these? We can generally compare our actions with the instructionns to love Elohim and love our neighbor as ourselves. Have we done that? We tend to know our own weaknesses and failings. How can we change our habits to avoid those more in the future?

So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim. 17 And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness. Neh. 8:16-17 KJV

Chapter 20

What Is the Feast of Booths?

The Feast of Booths is the third pilgrimage festival. It represents the marriage of the Lamb. This is when the Messiah takes His betrothed, the believers, to be with Him forever and ever. It is a time of great celebration.

Names for the Feast of Booths

The name Feast of Booths comes from the Hebrew phrase Hag Sukkot. Within the English language, this is variously translated as Feast of Booths or Feast of Sukkot. It is also sometimes translated as Feast of Tabernacles although this is not a proper translation since a tabernacle comes from the Hebrew word mishkan. In the Hebrew language this is known as Hag Awseef, or the Feast of Ingathering, and it refers to the autumn season of the year when all of the crops have matured and are harvested and brought in before winter.

Living in Booths

The primary instructions for this week long festival is for the Israelites to live in Booths. The booth is meant to be a temporary structure and is often demonstrated with the example of a shelter much like what shepherds would use while tending their flocks. Today, many people choose to stay in a tent during this time period. It was commanded to be a reminder of when the Almighty took the people

out of Egypt and they were made to live in temporary dwellings.

Marriage of the Lamb

Various themes of family life are used within Scripture to represent the many facets of our relationship with the Almighty. It is often seen where Yahveh is shown as our Heavenly Father while Yahshuah, the Messiah, is shown as our brother. The marriage covenant is another form used to represent our relationship with the Almighty. The prophets speak of Yahveh as having married the Nation of Israel. Scripture also speaks of another wedding which is known as the wedding of the Messiah or as the marriage of the Lamb.

Bride of Messiah

In Hebrew tradition, a wedding feast can last for seven days and is quite a celebration. The week long Feast of Booths represents the celebration of the Marriage of the Lamb that fulfills the many parables of the Messiah and His bride. At this time (before His return), the bride is to make herself ready while He is preparing a place for them to stay, in the New Jerusalem, after the

marriage.

New Heaven and Earth

During the actual fulfillment of the Feast of Booths many other things will also occur. It is during this week long event that the new Heavens and new Earth will be created. It is also at this time, through the new marriage, that the final fulfillment of the New Covenant will be made so that all people will know the Almighty and dwell with Him forever.

Family Observation

A week long celebration that involves camping allows many family oriented activities outside of normal daily life.

Preparing a place to camp, including the building of a temporary structure to sleep under can be a family activity. [Note: we often have a tent under our booth as it is more weatherproof]. Purchasing special foods that people enjoy whether it is cheeses and meats or more exotic fruits and vegetables can make for varied meals. Preparing these meals over a campfire or grill can add to the experience.

It also leads to much time for reading Scripture and studying a

topic. Topics can range from focusing on traditional Hebraic wedding customs, to focusing on the Messiah's attributes, or even broader topics like the Armor of Light.

What Is the Feast of Booths?

Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. Leviticus 23:36 KJV

Chapter 21

The Eighth Day

Very little is said about this day and this celebration. Perhaps little can be said as we are unable to fathom what the New Heavens and Earth will be like ... as we are unable to fathom what living with Elohim will be like ... as we are unable to fathom eternity. The readings of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Revelation will give us a tiny glimpse of what to expect. However, what it will be like to exist in our new bodies, with the law written on our hearts, and close to our Elohim as things were originally meant to be is just a bit too much for our current understanding.

Eighth Day

Unit E

Other Celebrations

I am hesitant to mention other celebrations ... largely because the Eternal does not command nor instruct us to observe them. Perhaps I add these to help distinguish just how different man kind's celebrations are from the Scriptural celebrations. However, certain historical events do tie in with our salvation and help paint a picture of our relationship with the Eternal. In adding these chapters, I will try to avoid spending time on the many man made traditions surrounding these celebrations, and focus on the factual and historical events and how they remind us of our Savior.

And when as they consulted what to do with the altar of burnt offerings, which was profaned; 45 They thought it best to pull it down, lest it should be a reproach to them, because the heathen had defiled it: wherefore they pulled it down, 46 And laid up the stones in the mountain of the temple in a convenient place, until there should come a prophet to shew what should be done with them. 47 Then they took whole stones according to the law, and built a new altar according to the former; 48 And made up the sanctuary, and the things that were within the temple, and hallowed the courts. 1 Maccabess 4:44-48 KJV

Chapter 22

What Is Chanukah?

Chanukah is the celebration of winning an important battle in a much larger war that was being lost. Would the remnant of Israel, mostly made of Jewish people, keep the covenant with Elohim? A few chose to fight for that covenant and were blessed. Yet, as a whole, assimilation into an unbelieving world was happening faster than anyone recognized. Much the same is happening to the Christian church today. It is rapidly changing to fit an unbelieving world rather than sticking to the covenant(s) offered by the Eternal.

Dedication To Purity

The name Chanukah is derived from the root word 'Chanak' which means to 'train up' or 'dedicate' something to a particular use. Within the Apocryphal book of 1 Maccabees, one reads that while under the rule of the Greek Empire, the children of Israel forsake their Elohim, therefore the Temple was taken from them and the altar was defiled by Antiochus Epiphanes. Soon after Mattathias and his sons led a rebellion and fought to regain the Temple wherein they won many battles against great odds. After doing so, they built a new altar and dedicated it for use in the Temple.

Dwelling With Elohim

The Temple in Jerusalem is a special place where Elohim has chosen to live among His people. The Altar of Burnt offering is an important piece of Temple equipment because offerings for sin and other uses are made so that the people can draw close to their Mighty One. The dedication of the Temple is always something to celebrate and the loss of the Temple is always something to mourn because it is symbolic of

the closeness of Elohim and His people.

Tabernacle Useless Without Altar

It is at the altar of burnt offering that sin is removed and things are purified. The altar represents the Lake of Fire and the destruction of evil. It produces a 'sweet aroma' which is not physical, but instead shows a soul has been saved from destruction and death. The tabernacle, the area, and the people must all be purified for Elohim to dwell there. Without the altar and sacrifice, none of this happens.

Lev 9:22-24 presence appeared and fire consumed sacrifices

Lev 6:12-13 - fire not quenched

History Between the Testaments

In Malachi, Judea is a vassal of the Babylonian Empire. Soon after, Alexander the Great conquers the area and begins the Greek empire and establishes Alexandria as his capital.

When he dies, the Egyptian section of the empire went to the Ptolemies and much of the western region went to the Seleucids who found Antioch. For a time, Judea is under the Ptolemies and many Jews lived in Alexandria and later produce the

Septuagint translation of the Old Testament.

Later, the Seleucids conquer Judea and it is Antiochus IV who desecrates the Temple which results in the Maccabean Revolt and the Hasmonean (Levitical) sub-kingdom is established.

Still later, the Roman Empire conquers Judea and Herod the Great rules as the Roman Vassal King. He expands the Second Temple into what Yahshuah would know.

Illegitimate Priesthood

The High Priest is supposed to be a son of Aaron. After the Maccabean Revolt this never happens. For over 200 years, the High Priests were other Levites (and maybe one Benjamite) and the position became politicized. Caiaphas, who Yahshuah faced at trial, was not a legitimate High Priest. Interestingly, John the Baptist, who baptized Yahshuah was qualified to be a genuine High Priest.

History After Yahshuah

Within the Roman Empire the four largest cities were Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople. Along with

Jerusalem, these large metropolitan cities are where Christianity was developed into what we know today in terms of liturgy, faith, and morality. This had the effect of further enhancing the assimilation of believers into the cultures and philosophies around them.

Fighting Assimilation Today

Today, we do not have the Temple in Jerusalem. However, we ourselves are Temples for His Spirit. Now it is time for us to dedicate our hearts, minds, souls, and strength ... our lives ... to Him. We must set ourselves apart so He can dwell with us. It is time to focus on Elohim. It is time to be disciples. It is time to let Him train us up in His ways. It is time to be shining examples of His kingdom so other people will see the beauty of being part of His people and desire to move in that direction as well.

Truly, if we dedicate our lives to His ways we will stand out in this world. We can have it in our lives if we try. He will help us fight those battles. It takes belief in His care and Faith in His ability to care for us ... two things that are at the core of the attacks against a

What Is Chanukah?

believer by the majority of society. If these qualities can be knocked out of a person, then assimilation is easy. Then we will follow the programs and methods of success that society chooses to use because we are left feeling we must fend for ourselves rather than letting Him take care of such matters.

End Time Foreshadowing

Although Chanukah is not one of the commanded Festivals or High Days described in Scripture, the event still holds meaning for the Believer. Our Messiah appeared at the Temple before the people during this time and used it to tell the people that his actions speak of who He is in reference to being the Messiah. Furthermore, He also states that the actions done during the Maccabean times will be repeated again at the End Times. This is a reference to the prophecies from the Book of Daniel. Therefore, we must live our lives showing who we are and we must be ready should the End Times come during our lifetime and we witness such assimilation and destruction.

Family Observation

We will typically take one day (not a week as the Rabbis instruct) to remember the importance of the Tabernacle and of the Eternal being able to dwell with man. It also acts as a reminder of our own struggle not to be assimilated into a society that focuses on pride, greed, fame, addictive habits, and anything else that can be idolatrous.

And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath. 6 And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai. Esther 3:5-6 KJV

Chapter 23

What Is Purim?

Unlike many of the festivals and assemblies that believers in the Messiah hear about, Purim is not a festival commanded by Elohim. The celebration of Purim comes from the Jewish people and the modern customs associated with it are largely either from Rabbinical sources or assimilated secular festivals. The recorded events forming the basis of Purim are found in the book of Esther. This book is unusual in that it is the only book in Scripture that does not directly mention the Almighty. Perhaps this is not so unusual since these events occurred in the Babylonian Empire after the time of the Captivity of Judah. However, it does contain a prophetic picture of the work of the Messiah as the Savior hidden within the events.

Elohim's Hidden Intervention

Elohim has made a covenant relationship with His people. It includes the promise of close relationship in the land of Israel when His people seek Him and of distant relationship in captivity when His people turn away from Him. We see these events play out in dramatic form in the Babylonian captivity of Judah and the following events of Purim. The survival of the Jewish people comes on multiple levels during Purim. On the stage one watches the actions of Mordecai and Esther who are both noticed by the King and then play the pivotal roles of stopping the destruction of the people. More importantly, one can notice that behind the scenes the Almighty is working for His people. The many important timings that occur for Mordecai and Esther to be noticed, chosen, and favored all have the appearance of His intervention in events to cause a type of salvation to happen.

Elohim Cares for His People

The major theme within the story of Hadassah / Esther is that the Eternal still cares for His

people. Human history is messy. The people of Israel have wandered and are not keeping the covenant. Yet, like a good shepherd, Elohim remembers and keeps His promise to care for His sheep. The surprising twist is always how and when He chooses to make that care known. A sub-theme within the story is a prophetic picture of the crucifixion of the Messiah that defeats sin and death.

Casting Lots

The name of Purim came because Hamaan chose to cast lots, called 'Pur' in the Persian language, to determine the day to kill the Jewish People. It is from this term that Purim receives a name. That date fell on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month. Before that time, the Jewish people are given permission to defend themselves and destroy their enemies. Subsequently, the following day was chosen as a day of celebration.

Avoiding this Tragedy

One of the sad things about this event is it could have been avoided at multiple times in

history. Mistakes can carry on for centuries and millennia - both physically and spiritually.

Saul Saves King Agag

One step in this long series goes back to the events of King Saul and King Agag. The Agagites were enemies to Israel and Saul was ordered to kill them all. However Saul spared King Agag. One of Agag's descendants was the wicked Haman. Interestingly, Mordecai was also a descendant of Saul which put the two on an ancient level of animosity from the beginning.

The Descendants of Esau

However, the story goes further back. The Agagites are descendants of Esau. So the rivalry between Jacob (represented by Mordecai and the Jews) and Esau (represented by Haman) was yet another layer to the conflict. This is another point where obedience and patience would have prevented much trouble through history.

Purim is an overt action of the descendants of Esau in wanting to destroy Jacob. [which is very different than the assimilation caused by the Greeks at

Chanukah.]

Crucifixion Chiasm

At the center of the story of Purim is a central event where the plot suddenly reverses and the bad guy is defeated instead of the hero. It is a crucifixion like event that occurs a few hundred years before the Messiah would even be born.

Hebraic Literary Chiasms

One of the Hebraic writing techniques is called a chiasm. In this style of writing, a mirror image is made where topic 'A' is discussed at the beginning and end of the book. Inside of that, topic 'B' is discussed and later discussed again. Inside of that, topic 'C' will be discussed two times. This continues until the very center topic is reached ... and it is this topic on which the entire writing focuses.

The Chiasm in Esther

The chiasm in Esther follows this pattern: Topic A (chapters 1-2,9-10) involves the greatness and decrees of Haman, then Mordecai's greatness and decrees. [also saves the king and then saving the Jews]. Topic B

(chapters 3,8) shows the elevation of Haman, then Mordecai. Topic C (chapters 4,8) Show Mordecai and Esther planning things behind the scenes. Topic D (chapters 5,7) has the two banquets. Finally, Topic E (chapter 6), has the moment of reversal where Haman is humiliated and Mordecai is honored.

The Stake and the Cross

It should be noted that being hung is not the western idea of a gallows with a rope and a noose. Instead, in the cultures of the Medes and Persians, this would mean being attached to a tree or pierced on a stake. In fact, the Hebrew language uses 'ha-etz' which signifies a tree. According to the Bible, being hung on a tree would mark Mordecai as a cursed man [see Deu. 21:22].

The amazing thing with this picture is that the very instrument that the enemy wanted to use to destroy Israel, the stake, became the triumphant moment when the enemy was destroyed. Unlike Mordecai, when Yahshuah went to the stake, He was actually hung there to die. But this was a sacrificial death on our behalf and when He rose from the grave, this

event marked the defeat of Satan's plans.

Modern Day Attacks

Throughout history, nations and governments have either tried to assimilate believers or destroy them. Currently, it seems the effort is focused on making the Bible illegal and destroying the people. This is especially true in Communist and Islamic nations. To be Christian (or Jewish) can be highly risky in some areas. While human history is complex, the Arab / Muslim world is largely the descendants of Ishmael and Esau. Therefore, the ancient rivalry between Israel and Edom continues to this day.

Family Observation

Although this is a Jewish celebration rather than a covenant commandment, taking a moment to remember His Providential care in our lives seems appropriate. As part of His special people Israel, this event becomes part of our history as well. It also acts as a reminder that persecution can come at any time and we should both be prepared to go through it by sticking to righteousness and

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to expectantly see His rescue.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. Ecclesiastes 12:13 KJV

Conclusion

Reaching for the Kingdom of Heaven

When we realize that the best thing we can reach for is living in the Kingdom of Heaven, then suddenly anything less seems insignificant in comparison. What we find in the Kingdom of Heaven is restoration! It is a restoration from all the dirt, filth, selfishness, and the things that drag us down and make life seem bleak and unappealing. It is restoration from the trivial and unimportant busywork that this world holds so dear. It is the restoration of the value of life, not only our own, but of each person around us and in the world. It is the restoration of love over hate, pride, and selfishness

There are so many things to celebrate about the Kingdom of Heaven. There are so many rich themes to study along the Narrow Path. What ties them all together is Yahshuah. He is what is worth truly celebrating and this is the reason the Father makes the Son the center of the festivals and assemblies.

Glossary

A

Absolute Truth: something that is always true and valid, in all times, in all places. a fact. [opposed to relativism].

Agnosticism: The belief that you cannot know if there is a god(s). Another minority of about 5% of the world.

Almighty: A title for Elohim describing the attribute of unlimited power and omnipotence.

Angel: A spiritual being doing the work of the Kingdom of Heaven

Atheism: The belief that there is no spiritual aspect of life and, therefore, no god(s). An extremely vocal minority of about 5% of the world's population that tries to control / manipulate public sentiment through deception / consensus.

B

Believer: A person who has faith in the Messiah and accepts Him as Savior.

Bible: A collection of books and writings considered to be authoritative for religious belief. The Catholic Bible typically has 72 books and the Protestant Bible typically has 66 books.

Bishop: Christian clergy or overseer with a position of authority and who are often the source of traditions and ceremonies. Bishops in non-Protestant groups often are assumed to carry the authority of apostolic succession.

Blessing: The act of speaking good things which is a spiritual benefit or favor upon another.

Body of Messiah: All of the believers in the Messiah as Savior whether Christian, Messianic Jew, or other group from around the world.

Buddhism: A mystical and pseudo-religious system of enlightenment that is akin to witchcraft and working with the demonic. Often leading to an aesthetic lifestyle and searching for 'not wanting' things. Techniques are often incorporated into other pagan forms of worship.

Brethren: Derived from the Greek word 'adelphoi' and refers to a community of believers without regard to blood relation.

C

Catholicism: The beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church centered on the Pope and apostolic tradition.

Catholic Priesthood: A false priesthood usurping the concept of a New Testament priesthood after the destruction of the physical temple in AD 70. It replaces the true Melchizedek Priesthood of Heaven and the proper New Covenant.

Children of Jacob: The physical descendants of Jacob who may or may not be believers in the Messiah.

Children of Israel: The spiritual descendants of Israel (Jacob's new name) who are believers in the Messiah which can include both literal descendants and those grafted or adopted into the Nation of Israel.

Christ: Originally a Greek term used of many gods to signify an anointed one. Currently, it is mostly used in Bible translations in place of the Hebrew word for Messiah.

Christian: Believers in the Messiah as Savior who follow the traditions and teachings of the Christian church including the interpretations and traditions of the Bishops.

Clergy: The elect people who act as priests in the Catholic and Protestant priesthoods ... often seminary trained and in charge of large numbers of people in a congregation. System prohibits / inhibits everyone from growing and becoming a mature believer.

Communion Meal: A fellowship meal and observance of the Last Supper, sometimes called the sacrament of the Eucharist. Sometimes, but incorrectly, considered to be the Passover Meal. It signifies the betrothal of believers with the Messiah and a reminder of His future return for His bride.

Companions in the Book of Life: A descriptive phrase referring to believers in the Messiah. Their salvation is shown by having their names written in the Book of Life.

Covenant: A binding agreement between Elohim and mankind containing commandments and regulations which carry both a physical and spiritual significance.

Creation: That which was made to exist, both physically and spiritually, by the Creator.

Creator: A descriptive title of the One Most High which describes His position as maker of the universe.

Cursing: The act of speaking bad things which is a spiritual hurt upon another.

D

Death: The ceasing of life in a person (or animal). Physically the end of metabolic functions. Spiritually removal from Elohim.

Deism: belief in a creator God that denies His intervention in the history of the universe since its creation

Demon: a malevolent spirit or devil, generally thought to influence or possess a person toward evil.

Denomination: A branch of Christianity with common doctrines and traditions but separated from other branches on differing doctrine and traditions.

Dispensation: A concept suggesting that the Almighty has temporarily released or given exemption to His people from some of the covenant laws. Typically, a release from the ceremonial and civil laws but not the moral laws. This concept sometimes includes different forms of salvation during different time periods.

E

Easter Holiday: Originally a pagan festival in honor of the Goddess of Spring held in April. Currently, an annual Christian holiday focusing on the resurrection of the Messiah. Dates vary, but the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox is common.

Elohim: A descriptive title from Hebrew meaning our Mighty One or Powerful Leader. Often translated into 'God' in English Bibles.

Ephraimite Identity: A concept that some or all believers of the Messiah from around the world are the literal descendants of the Northern tribes of Israel. Sometimes this is used to suggest a right to live in the land of Israel.

Evil: immorality and wickedness and cruelty and sinful, especially when regarded as a supernatural force, causing (unnecessary pain and suffering)

F

False gods: Objects, entities, or concepts (money, power, pleasure) worshiped in place of the One True God.

False Prophet: Intentional or erroneously claims divine inspiration but gives deceptive or false information.

Fellowship: A group of believers gathering together for worship and helping each other.

Festivals: The three assemblies of Israel to take place in Jerusalem and which focus on the prophetic work of the Messiah.

G

God: An English term commonly used in place of the Hebrew title Elohim when translating Scripture.

Good: Righteousness, virtue, and morality causing life to improve.

H

Heathen: a non-Abrahamic religion [Germanic version of Latin pagan].

Heavenly Father: A descriptive title for Yahveh which describes one aspect of His relationship with mankind.

Holidays: A religious holy day of the church. It often includes special ceremonies or celebrations with religious tones often made by man made tradition.

House Fellowship: A small regular gathering in a home for worship, Bible study, and prayer.

Humility: a perspective rooted in recognizing one's dependence on Elohim and the need to be considerate of others

I

Interpretation: In regard to the translation of Scripture, the addition of concepts or beliefs to the text that are believed by the translator but which do not appear in the original text. Often done by word choice or inserting extra words into the translation.

Islam: A monotheistic religion based on the teachings of Abraham, Ishmael, and Mohamed.

Israel: [Has many meanings in modern usage.] In this book, the chosen people of the Almighty whether direct descendants of Jacob or people from other nations who have joined with them.

J

Judaism: The Jewish religion following the rules, rites, and traditions of the Rabbi's as found in the Talmud.

K

Kabbalah: A Jewish mystical framework seeking the esoteric wisdom of Torah to help the soul's journey

Karaite Judaism: A Jewish denomination rejecting the Oral Torah and instead emphasizing a personal interpretation of the Tanakh.

Kingdom of Darkness: A reference to the Kingdom and followers of Satan

Kingdom of Light: A reference to the Kingdom of Heaven and those who follow Elohim

L

Laity: The common, or non-ordained, believers. People who are not in the clergy.

Last Supper: The final meal of the Messiah with His disciples in which he made a wedding betrothal with believers and promised His future return.

Legalism: Attempting to earn salvation or maintain Elohim's favor by keeping laws, rules, or moral behavior.

Life: Not the same as able to take in food, get energy from it, grow, adapt to surrounding, and reproduce their kind.

Life biblical: nephesh chayyah - organism with a life spirit

Life biological: contains genetic information, can reproduce, grow, metabolism and homeostasis, respond to environment

LORD: An English term commonly used in place of the Hebrew name Yahveh when translating Scripture.

Lucifer: The name of Satan, especially before the angelic rebellion.

M

Magic: The spiritual workings done by the Kingdom of Darkness and accomplished by demons; often considered by witches to be their own psychic energy.

Master: A descriptive title of the Messiah regarding His position above all believers.

Melchizedek Priesthood: A superior and non-hereditary priesthood exemplified by Melchizedek and fulfilled by Yahshuah.

Messiah: Literally the Anointed One from the Hebrew word Mashiach. The Savior and Deliverer who returns mankind from sin back to righteousness and close relationship with the Almighty.

Messianic Judaism: Believers in the Messiah who follow the traditions and teachings of the Jewish Rabbis in their interpretation of Scripture as found in the Talmud.

Mighty One: A title for the One Most High which signifies His strength and ability.

Miracle: The spiritual workings done by the Kingdom of Light.

Mormonism: The Latter Day Saint movement based on the teachings of Joseph Smith and centered on the Book of Mormon. Considered heretical by mainstream Christianity.

N

New Apostolic Reformation: An extreme form of Pentecostalism that seeks to restore control over society's 'seven mountains' by modern apostles and prophets..

New Covenant Theology: As applied to the Christian church, a dispensational view of the Almighty's people requiring the observance of the moral laws but not requiring the ceremonial or civic laws included within the Sinai Covenant.

Nicene Christianity: The shared confession of the majority of Christianity is based on the doctrines and formulas developed at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD.

O

Old Earth Creationism: A concept suggesting that the Almighty created the Earth, but did so over a long period of time. Often used to mix Creationism with Evolution and allow the Earth to be billions of years old.

One Most High: A descriptive title of Elohim describing His place above all else.

Oral Torah: The traditional rules and regulations that Rabbinical Judaism considers to have been handed down orally from the time of Moses until it was written in the early centuries AD. Considered to be equal with Old Testament Scripture.

P

Pagan: a non-Abrahamic religion [based on Latin, similar to Germanic heathen]

Paganism: worship of nature often involving polytheism.

Pantheism: The belief that the universe and everything it contains form an all encompassing deity.

Persecution: The small or large scale systematic oppression, mistreatment, or harassment of groups based on religious beliefs.

Philosophy: an ideology based on false presuppositions (lies) - can be any topic - but influences worldviews and actions

Polytheism: the belief and worship of multiple gods and deities often in a collection of gods and goddesses

Pre-Adamite Civilization: The concept suggesting that mankind existed before Genesis 1:2 and

that this civilization was wiped out.

Pride: Thinking highly of and lifting oneself up due to identity, performance, knowledge, or accomplishments.

Provider: A descriptive title of Elohim regarding His care of His people by meeting their needs.

Q

R

Rabbi: An ordained teacher or congregational leader in Judaism.

Rabbinic Judaism: A strict adherence to Torah study, ritual prayers, and Halakha (Jewish Law) as interpreted by the Rabbis after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD

Rebellion: The willful disobedience and rejection of Elohim's authority and commandments. Often due to pride.

Righteousness: Being in a right standing with Elohim. Attained by faith in Yahshuah as Savior and not by personal merit.

S

Sabbath: The rest that was given by the Almighty on the seventh day of creation and used as a mark of His people within the covenant relationship.

Sacrifices: Often, an animal offering made to Elohim which is killed in place of the person who has committed a sin. Typically symbolic of the work of the Messiah.

Salvation: The atonement and redemption of mankind from the bondage of sin and death. A return to eternal life.

Sanctification: To make set apart or special. The process of becoming pure and free of sin.

Satan: A descriptive title for Lucifer regarding his position as adversary to mankind.

Savior: A descriptive title of Yahshuah the Messiah regarding His work to save people from sin and death.

Scripture: The writings that record the relationship of Elohim with mankind. In Judaism, it is considered to be only the Old Testament books. In Christianity, it is often considered the Old and New Testament books and sometimes also the Apocryphal / Deutero-canonical books.

Secular: A belief that anything spiritual, religious, or supernatural does not exist.

Seder: The meal used by Rabbinical and Messianic Judaism, in place of the Passover meal, which emphasizes freedom from slavery.

Sin: a transgression against Elohim's commandments, rules, and expressed will.

Sinai Covenant: The covenant made at Mt. Sinai with the Nation of Israel and often, but incorrectly, referred to as the Old Covenant.

Son: A descriptive title of Yahshuah the Messiah regarding His place below His Father Yahveh.

Special Spirit: The Spirit of Elohim which acts as guide, counselor, seal for salvation, and distributing spiritual gifts.

Spiritual Israel: The concept suggesting that the Almighty's people were originally the physical descendants of Jacob but which are now replaced by the believers in the Messiah.

T

Talmud: The written rules and regulations of Judaism written by the Rabbis in the early centuries AD.

Thief: someone who takes the property of another either unlawfully, secretly, or violently

Torah: The first five books of Scripture (also known as the Pentateuch, or books of Moses) as named in Rabbinical Judaism.

Tradition: A set of customs, rites, and practices passed down from one generation to another.

Translation: The changing of a written text from one language into another.

Truth: that which corresponds to reality, actuality, real events, facts,

Two Houses of Israel: Generally based on the Scriptural prophecies of the two houses of Israel coming together again in the future. As a theory, it specifically refers to groups that try to figure out who is who in today's world and add specific details or timings as to how and when this reunification will happen that are not found in Scripture.

U

V

W

Witchcraft: occult paganism attempting to achieve personal intents through demonic methods.

X

Y

Yahshuah: The Hebrew name of the Heavenly Son and the Messiah. Often translated into English as Jesus.

Yahveh: The Hebrew name of the Heavenly Father. Often translated in English as LORD.

Young Earth Creationism: The literal understanding of the Scriptural account of Creation dating the age of the Earth to be approaching 6,000 years.

Z

Zohar: the foundational text for Jewish mysticism known as Kabbalah which deals with unveiling the hidden parts of the universe, psychology, and the soul.

Statements

Scripture Advocate Publishing Statement

Scripture Advocate Publishing seeks to produce materials that:) share the Savior and the promise of eternal life) build relationships that bring both the fruits and the gifts of the Spirit) bring cleansing, healing, and peace that come from the Kingdom of Heaven) ease the needless suffering in this corrupted world) teach the truth and point to the reality of Creation while removing what is false, artificial, and virtual) encourage the covenant relationship to bring His expected promises of blessings and miracles) help people avoid false worship, pride, and the lustful works of the flesh that the enemy will tempt us with) and to show that life is precious.

Celebrating Salvation Statement

Celebrating Salvation seeks to restore true Biblical worship according to the Covenant. It looks to the heritage and community of His people known as the Children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob also known as Israel. It seeks to do so without the traditions of the Rabbis and the Bishops. Emphasis is given to the Scriptural Appointed Days and Festivals that Elohim has given to His people as annual reminders of their continuing and growing relationship leading back to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Author Statement

Todd Elder is exploring life in Scripture, science, and society. Equipped with a Bachelor of Science degree from Kent State University for a Conservation Biology major and a Geography minor, he is developing a Model of Created Kinds (with an emphasis on plant kinds) to support belief in the Genesis account of Creation and to defend believers from the attacks of Evolutionism. His other interests include the Priesthood and Tabernacle, the history of the Covenant(s), and building a closer relationship with the Creator.

The festivals and appointed times given in Scripture are not a set of abstract commandments and instructions to just dutifully keep. Instead, they are a rich part of our covenant relationship with the Eternal. They are a special way to honor our Savior and the work He does for our salvation, sanctification, and redemption. The Spring festivals represent the Messiah's first coming that occurred two thousand years ago and the Autumn festivals represent the Messiah's second coming that has yet to occur. They are filled with deep reminders that Yahshuah is both the sacrifice and High Priest who defeats death, the Good Shepherd caring for His sheep, and the Groom awaiting His bride. They are truly a time for celebration!

The Narrow Path book series is written to assist parents in shepherding their flock. This series focuses on how Scripture describes and leads to the physical green pastures and the spiritual still waters of life. It feeds and nurtures the flock with the Covenants between man kind and the Eternal without the added Jewish or Christian traditions that have developed through the centuries. It seeks to bring them to maturity with faith and obedience along with the reward of a close relationship with our Creator.



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