

Forgiving Is Forgetting

Generally speaking, one thing that is very difficult for us to do is to completely forgive someone who has done us grievous wrong. Yet to enter the Kingdom of Yahweh, one of the qualifications a believer must possess is the virtue of forgiveness.

If we are truly worthy of our high calling as Yahweh's children, it is imperative that we forgive and forget, regardless of the pain inflicted by someone in our hearts and minds. Notice what our Master says, **For if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses (Matthew 6:15)**. It is clear then, that the unforgiving has no place in the Kingdom.

A Lesson from Little Children

Any observant individual will not fail to notice an admirable trait that is very common to little children. While at play, little children inevitably quarrel and, at times, inflict harm on each other. But wonder of wonders—soon the little rivals are together again, oblivious to what just happened. The brief adversaries are playmates once more, enjoying each other's company, giggling or laughing innocently. No sign of enmity, hatred or bitterness, just untainted innocence. Everything has been forgotten.

How perfectly fitting with **Ephesians 4:26, Be angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath**. What a beautiful lesson in forgiving and forgetting!

No wonder that in **Mark 10:14-15**, Yahshua the Messiah said, **Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of Yahweh. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of Yahweh as a little child, he shall not enter therein**.

To stress the importance of forgiveness, Yahshua used the parable of the unforgiving servant in **Matthew 18:23-24**. We are told the servant owed his king 10,000 talents and with nothing to pay, fell at his master's feet and asked for mercy. His king, moved with compassion, forgave him and set him free.

Let us continue from verse 28, **But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, "Pay me what you owe." His fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you all." And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told their master all that was done. Then his master, after he had called, said unto him, "O you wicked servant. I forgave you all that debt, because you desired me: should not you also have had compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had pity on you?" And his master was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him**.

The Messiah closed the story in verse 35, **So likewise shall My Heavenly Father do unto you, if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses**.

Unload Anger, Hatred, Misgivings

Hobbyists devote their spare time to collecting objects of their particular interest. While most hobbies are safe and beneficial, a few are dangerous. One such is mountaineering—in which many have lost their lives. There is, however, a more dangerous hobby which mankind has unknowingly practiced since the time of Cain—the hobby of harboring unpleasant memories in the heart and mind, producing feelings of anger, ill will and hatred. Certainly this is the most dangerous hobby, for it brings eternal death. Scriptures tell us that anyone who hates his brother is a murderer and has not eternal life (**1 John 3:15**).

A lot of people with great wealth, fame and worldly knowledge, live miserable lives. Seething with anger and misgivings, a few have become recluse. Though highly successful in worldly pursuits, they were a dismal failure in the quest for a happy life. They failed to find the secret of happy living. Why? It is because, instead of liv-

ing for today and the future, they live in the past. Their lives are laden with a cargo of unpleasant experiences that they refuse to unload, thereby continuously adding more and more as the years go by.

It is far more beneficial to think of what good we can do rather than to reminisce on the past heartaches and pains that burden the soul. Let us say with Paul, **This one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching unto those things which are before (Philippians 3:13).**

We must unload our heavy burdens at the Messiah's feet. When we do, we have found the secret of a happy and fuller life. Trust the reassuring words of Yahshua, **Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30).**

Yahshua Our Paramount Example

The Captain of our salvation, Yahshua the Messiah, leads the way. Even in agony, as His life was ebbing, ready to succumb to the heart-rending torture He had to endure, the compassionate Savior was devoid of any sort of ill feelings toward His tormentors. This is confirmed in His prayer to Yahweh: **Father, forgive them for they know not what they do (Luke 23:34).**

Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit and understanding, emulated our Savior. As he was dying, he cried with a loud voice, **"Master, lay not this sin to their charge," and when he said this, he fell asleep (Acts 7:60).**

As True Worshipers, let this be our attitude and philosophy in life. Let us forgive and forget the many hurts and slights at the hands of blundering mankind, keeping our hearts open to help those who use arrogance as a prop for their low self-esteem. Be the first to smile at those you meet. Your smile will come back to you a hundredfold. And remember, unless you have forgotten, you have not really forgiven. If we are truly able to do this, then Yahshua will not be ashamed to call us His brethren.



"Forgiveness is the fragrance of the flower left on the heel that crushed it."

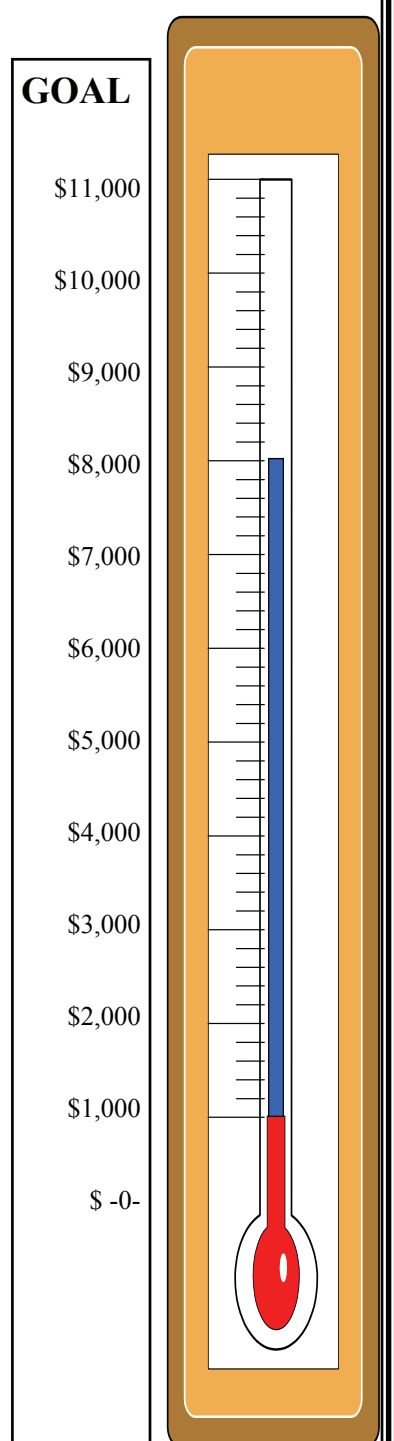
WE HAVE STARTED A NEW FUND FOR AN ASSEMBLY CAR!

Due to the increasing price of fuel, it is costing us approximately \$400 a month to go into the prisons and carry on assembly business. Purchasing a more fuel-efficient car would help us cut down on our fuel expense by increasing our fuel mileage.

The car will be used for a variety of needs, including ministerial trips, getting supplies for the office, taking the newsletter and magazine to be printed, going to the post office daily, making bank deposits weekly, etc.

We want to, once again, thank all those who helped us reach our goal for the purchase of our new video mixer and audio mixer. If you "see the need," we hope that you will send whatever donation you can toward the purchase of another vehicle for Y.A.I.M.

May Yahweh bless you abundantly for your generosity!



TAKING HIS NAME IN VAIN

Many take issue against the Sacred (Hallowed) name of the Creator. Yahweh, Himself, commanded, "Thou shalt not take the name of Yahweh thy Elohim in vain; for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain," Ex. 20:7.

What does this mean? Most people in the world today think that using the substitute word "God" along with another English word "damn" is taking His name in vain. Now, this author doesn't care to listen to the vile profanity that comes out of people's mouths, but truthfully, the Creator's name IS NOT "God." Never has been and never will be.

By Jerry Healan

What does it mean to take Yahweh's name in vain? Since the Hebrew language is the language of revelation, a look at the Hebrew words and their definitions will reveal much to us concerning this topic. "Vain" is translated from the Hebrew word *shav*. It is #7723 in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* and is defined as: from the same as #7722 in the sense of desolating; evil (as destructive), literally (ruin) or morally (especially guile); figuratively idolatry (as false, subjective), uselessness (as deceptive, objective; also adverbially, in vain).

Let's also go to the word from which *shav* is taken. It is #7722 *show*, which is defined as: from an unused root meaning to rush over; a tempest; by implication, devastation.

From this examination, we can begin to understand why a person will want to "damn" someone or something utilizing the Creator's name. To "damn" something or someone means to curse them to destruction. When someone utilizes what he thinks is the Creator's name to curse something or someone to destruction, it actually means that they are utilizing the power of the name of the Creator to destroy that thing or person. While a person may not be truly utilizing the Creator's name in their curse, they think that they are; thus, as a man thinks, so is he. There are grave consequences for doing such things.

But *shav* is utilized in other places in the Scriptures that is quite revealing, **I have hated them that regard lying: (shav) vanities (hebel) but I trust in Yahweh (Psalm 31:6). Neither shalt thou bear false (shav) witness against thy neighbour (Deuteronomy 5:20).**

In both of these instances, *shav* is translated as a lie or falsehood. Furthermore, the Prophet Isaiah is inspired to declare: **Behold, Yahweh's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your Elohim, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies (shav); they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity (Isaiah 59:1-4).**

Once again, the diversity of the word *shav* is revealed. The commandment forbids us to take His name in vain (*shav*). The use of this word in **Exodus 20:7** can also mean that we must not take His name and apply it to lying, falsehood, etc. But it can also be forbidding us from replacing it with another name or term, which would then be a false name, a lie.

TO TAKE

The Hebrew word for "take" is *nasa*. It is defined as: a primitive root; *to lift*, in a great variety of applications, literal and figurative, absolute and religious. When the Scriptures speak of someone **lifting up** their eyes to see something, the word *nasa* is utilized. They would also **lift up** the head, the hands (in worship), a sword (to wage war), etc. When the Levites would **carry** or **bear** the ark, the word *nasa* was utilized.

Those who have been called and chosen as the firstfruits, have been sealed in their forehead (**Revelation 7:3**). **Revelation 14:1** reveals that they have had the name of the Heavenly Father written in their foreheads. Therefore, they are lifting up (*nasa*), carrying (*nasa*) and bearing (*nasa*) His name. This was one of the main purposes of Israel. They were to bring respect, honor, glory and dignity to the Heavenly Father's name by obeying Him and His commandments.

It is decreed, **They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass. They forgot Elohim their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt; wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea (Psalm 106:19-22).**

Understand this, Yahweh was "their glory." They made the molten image in the wilderness and named it Yahweh. **And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, "Up, make us mighty ones, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him." And Aaron said unto them, "Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your**

sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me.” And all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, “These be thy mighty ones, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.” And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, “Tomorrow is a feast to Yahweh” (Exodus 32:1-5).

Yahweh is the One Who brought Israel out of Egypt. Aaron and the Israelites were making Yahweh into the image of an ox. This produces the effect of blaspheming Yahweh and His name, turning His glory into shame as the Psalmist decrees: **Hear me when I call, O Elohim of my righteousness: Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer. O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? How long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah. But know that Yahweh hath set apart him that is pious for Himself: Yahweh will hear when I call unto Him. Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in Yahweh. There be many that say, “Who will show us any good?” Yahweh, lift Thou up (*nasa*) the light of Thy countenance upon us** (Psalm 4:1-6).

Here is that word *nasa* again. The Psalmist is requesting Yahweh to lift up His countenance upon them (those who are righteous in Yahweh—vs. 1). Israel turned Yahweh’s glory into shame by turning to vain idolatry. They took His name in vain because they applied it to an idolatrous image.

TRACING MODERN IDOLATRY

The Prophet Jeremiah proclaimed: **Hear ye the word of Yahweh, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel. Thus saith Yahweh, “What iniquity have your fathers found in Me, that they are gone far from Me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?” Neither said they, “Where is Yawheh that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness ... and where no man dwelt?” And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled My land, and made Mine heritage an abomination. The priests said not, “Where is Yawheh?” And they that handle the law knew Me not: the pastors also transgressed against Me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit. “Wherefore I will yet plead with you,” saith Yahweh, “and with your children's children will I plead.” For pass over the isles of Chittim,**

and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing. Hath a nation changed their elohim, which are yet no elohim? But My people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. “Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate,” saith Yahweh. For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water (Jeremiah 2:4-13).

It is interesting that the *Oxford English Dictionary* reveals that the English word “God” comes from two Aryan root words, **both** being *gheu*. In “*The Roots of English*” Robert Claiborne reveals that *gheu-1* comes from the Latin word *fundere*, *fus-*, which is defined as: to pour, whence the FUNNEL through which you pour things, and the FOUNDRY in which FUSED (molten) metal is poured into molds. Figurative uses include CONFUSE (“pour together”), DIFFUSE (“pour apart”), PROFUSE (“pouring forth”), TRANSFUSE (“pour across”), and REFUND (“pour back”), To REFUSE is another kind of “pouring back”—though some derive the word from a different root. A more remote Latin relative is *futilis*, easily emptied, leaky; pouring water into a leaky vessel is FUTILE.

Do you begin to get the point? The English word “God” is associated with a FOUNDER! It has to do with a MOLTEN IMAGE! It is associated with a more remote Latin word *futilis*, from which we get another English word, FUTILE! Futile and vain are synonyms! It also has to do with pouring water into a LEAKY VESSEL, which is what Israel did when they rejected Yahweh and descended into the vanity (futility) of idolatry!

Jeremiah decrees: **Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, and the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish** (Jeremiah 10:14-15).

The English words “foundry/founder” and “confound/confounder” are derivatives of the root word *gheu-1*! To confound also means to confuse (also related to *gheu-1*). A molten image is falsehood and therefore a lie. Lies confuse and destroy.

The knowledge of man is absolutely brutish. In Old Testament times, men cut trees, shaped them into images, overlaid them with gold and silver and fell down and worshipped them. The Israelites made calves out of pure gold and fell down and worshipped them—the works of men’s hands. This is brutish. But Yahshua came to infuse His followers with the Holy Spirit, beginning a new era, a new age. This was called the New Testament age. Under the New Testament, certain things were changed. Animal sacrifices were changed to spiritual sacrifices, **Ye also, as**

lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to Elohim by Yahshua the Messiah (1 Peter 2:5).

The physical temple was destroyed because, as it says, Yahshua's disciples are built up a spiritual house. However, the history of those who follow Yahshua, the seven assemblies of **Revelation, chapters 1-3**, is revealed in those same chapters. They lose their first love, are persecuted and slain, begin to dwell where Satan's throne is, allow a Jezebel to enter into the body and cause His own servants to eat things sacrificed to idols. They have a name, as if they are alive, but are dead. They think that they are abounding because they are rich and increased with goods, but Yahshua says that they are blind, poor (spiritually) and naked! NAKED!!! That's exactly what happened with the Israelites when they danced around the golden calf, worshipping it as a god (**Exodus 32:8**). Nakedness has to do with idolatry! The final assembly addressed in **Revelation 3** is naked! They are practicing idolatry, dancing around a golden calf, not a physical golden image, but an image made to be spiritual through the very word—GOD! I know that this is very hard to believe, but it is the truth.

The second root word for God, *gheu (h)* is defined as: **to call, invoke**, whence the [Germanic] GOD one invokes, and GIDDY—a word much weakened from its original sense, “possessed by a god, insane.”

EYE-OPENING RESEARCH

Evangelist Garner Ted Armstrong wrote a booklet entitled “*What Is God's Name*” in 1992. On page 6 he wrote, “Take, for example, our English word “God.” Where did it come from? *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, eleventh edition, says: ‘God. The common Teutonic word for a personal object of worship ... The word “God” [German “Gott” from “Guth,” which was related to Taurus, the Bull] on the conversion of the Teutonic races to Christianity, was adopted as the name of the one Supreme Being, the Creator of the universe ... “God” is a word common to all Teutonic languages. In Gothic, it is *Guth*; Dutch has the same form as English; Danish and Swedish have *Gud*, German *Gott*. According to the *New English Dictionary*, the original may be found in two Aryan roots, both of the form *gheu*, one of which means “to invoke,” the other “to pour,” the last is used of sacrificial offerings. The word would thus mean the object either of religious invocation or of religious worship by sacrifice. It has also been suggested that the word might mean a “molten image” from the sense of pour” (Vol. 12: p. 169).

He added, “Sure, no modern American or Briton thinks he is using a word which connotes a molten image, or means “to pour,” no matter the ultimate Aryan roots of the English word.” (pp. 6-7) How true this is! No one thinks

that they are addressing a molten image made in the form of a calf or ox. But the Book of Revelation says that there is a great serpent called Satan and the devil who has deceived the whole world (**Revelation 12:9**).

Sin is the transgression of the law. The penalty of sin is death, but people who have never studied the Bible, who have never seen one, never read it, nor have been taught out of it, don't understand what sin is. They go about sinning in ignorance, yet they still suffer the consequences of breaking the law because of those sins. Yet many who are supposedly taught out of the Bible are also ignorant of what sin is.

Another attempt to justify the word “God” was presented by the Christian Churches of God in Australia, by one Wade Cox. In an article entitled, “The Etymology of the Name God,” more eye-opening information is found. They write: “Objections to the use of the word *God* stem from the understanding that the Babylonian deity of fortune was *Baal-Gad* (pronounced *gawd*). It is then assumed that the term is pagan if the word God is used.

The term God in the ancient Anglo-Saxon comes from the word *Goode*, or *Goot* as in the Dutch and German. The word is actually a Hebrew word from which *gad* itself in the sense of SHD 1410 is derived. The word is SHD 1464 *Guwd* (pronounced *goode*). **The tribes of Israel, when taken into captivity, took with them this name.** It was used also by the Assyrians who captured them. It is a prime root meaning *to crowd upon* or *attack* and this means *to invade* or *to overcome*. It is this sense of overcoming, as *God* is the centre of power, that the term is used. *Guwd* or *Goode* is not the same as *gad* or *Baal-Gad* worshipped by the Babylonians. One is a perversion of the concepts of the other. The word *God* is derived from the old Teutonic form *gudo* which meant *that which is invoked (or worshipped) by sacrifice*” (cf. *Oxford English Universal Dictionary*, art. *God*, p. 808). **This was adapted among the Teutonic tribes in the variant forms.**

The words are further misunderstood from a symbolism adopted in early Hebrew and among the Semites. This was instanced in the practice of referring to the deity by the symbolism of a bull. The clear indication comes from **Psalm 22:12**. The strong Bulls of Bashan, which is associated with Gilead, are of the word form SHD 47. This word and the word form SHD 6499 are combined in usage, and both are termed bulls.

The word rendered strong bulls is actually the word *abbiyr* derived from SHD 46 *'abiyir* meaning *mighty one* and spoken of God. SHD 47 *abbiyr* means *angel [heavenly messenger], bull or chiefest, mighty one, stout, strong or valiant*.

The terms occur in **Psalm 22:12** where the bulls are

reduced to lesser beings. They occur in **Psalm 50:13, 68:30; Isaiah 34:7; and Jeremiah 50:11.**

Jeremiah 52:20 refers to the twelve brazen bulls under the altar by the term SHD 1241 *baqar* in distinction to the term *abbiyr* which he uses elsewhere.

The representation of the loyal heavenly Host as bulls representing God is ancient, even being found in pre-Hebrew culture. The Babylonian system in its mystery cults adopted the bull-slaying typology which carried into Mithraism. The bull-slaying typology is a representation of the wars in the heavens (see David Ulansey *The Origins of the Mithraic Mysteries*, Oxford, 1989 for the cosmology; Perseus is the bull-slayer for the Mysteries). This symbolism is carried on in the association with the mighty one and the centrality of goodness or *Gott* or *Goode*.

The English word *God*, via the Teutonic *Gudo* and the earlier forms, is associated with the ancient Semitic and Hebrew, as we see above. Thus, the bull was both a symbol of reverence and the significant sacrifice. Hence, the name came to be associated with the bull. This pointed towards the sacrifice of Messiah as the Bull of Atonement. This understanding was long held among the Semites from Shem as high priest from the post-flood epoch. From recent finds, it seems this is further distorted in the system at Ur.

Yahovah is the Bull of Israel. He is Messiah as the Great Bull of Heaven acting for the Father, the centre of ultimate goodness.” (end of excerpt)

UNDERSTANDING

Sadly, neither Garner Ted Armstrong nor Wade Cox understand what is revealed here in their own writings and their attempts to justify the use of the word God to represent, not only the Creator, but His name. Wade Cox denies that the word God is associated with Baal-Gad, but reveals that God is a Hebrew word associated with a bull, which the Israelites, who went into Assyrian captivity, had been utilizing and had taken with them. It was even a word that was being utilized by the Assyrians themselves.

The history of the northern kingdom of Israel is that, once broken off from association with the kings of Judah, their own kings made golden calves, placing one in Dan and the other in Bethel, worshipping them as the gods that delivered them from Egypt (**1 Kings 12:28-30**). Notice that it says this thing became a sin in **verse 30!**

The northern kingdom of Israel was overthrown and destroyed because they refused to repent of Baal worship. Wade reveals that the word God is associated with a bull. Garner Ted reveals that the word God is associated with a bull, specifically a bull god. Wade reveals that the worship

of bulls as gods predates the Hebrew culture and such is truly the case. As a matter of fact, Pharaoh was worshipped as the son of god through the Apis bull. Even though Wade denies it, his own research reveals that Baal-Gad was most certainly associated with the bull-god. The Israelites were worshipping Baal. Baal was their god, their bull.

Yahweh delivered Israel from Egypt and the worship of Pharaoh, along with his bull-god. But Israel made an image of the calf in the wilderness and began to worship it instead of Yahweh. This displeased Yahweh so much that He was ready to destroy the whole house of Israel and make a great nation out of Moses alone (**Exodus 32:9-10**). But Moses interceded for the people and Yahweh repented (changed His mind) concerning the proposed destruction. Later, Israel’s kings committed the same sin by causing the people to worship the bull gods. Once again, Yahweh was highly displeased and sent EliYah the Prophet to reveal to the people the true Elohim. While he did expose Yahweh as the true Elohim to the people, EliYah feared for his life because of the threatenings of Jezebel, wife of King Ahab. EliYah fled for his life and the people failed to repent of their calf worship (**1 Kings, chapters 18 and 19**). Eventually, they were destroyed because they were unrepentant and taken into captivity by the Assyrians.

Garner Ted wrote in his booklet, “It is also important to understand that God does not frown upon everything created by pagan (or non-Hebrew) cultures. *He forbids only those things that are contrary to His laws and things that misrepresent Who and What He is!*” (*IBID*, p. 7)

YES!!! ABSOLUTELY!!! Their research and our research reveals that the word God makes Him into the image of a bull, which the Scriptures reveal is very displeasing to Him!

BLASPHEMING YAHWEH’S NAME

The Psalmist laments: **O Elohim, how long shall the adversary reproach? Shall the enemy blaspheme Thy name forever? ... Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Yahweh, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name (Psalm 74:10, 18).**

Once again, we can make extremely important discoveries by looking into the Hebrew language. It asks the question, “Shall the **enemy** blaspheme Thy name forever?” The Hebrew word for “enemy” is *tsar*. The Hebrew language identifies the enemy! The enemy is the Tsar! The Tsar was the head of the newly-reformed Roman Empire. The head of *Roma Nova* (New Rome) was none other than the one called Constantine the Great! Constantine forbade any Hebrew writings. He decreed torture and death to any who were found with Hebrew writings in their possession, especially the New Covenant. He had the Scriptures converted to the Greek language and the names of the Father Yahweh and Yahshua changed to *Theos* and *Iesous*.

Consider this, Rome was the fourth kingdom of Daniel chapter two, and the fourth **BEAST** of Daniel chapter seven! Constantine feigned repentance, entered into the New Covenant Assembly and then, as the emperor, the Augustus, the Czar, the head of the Roman Empire, began to dictate how the corrupted remnants of the disciples were to worship.

The same **Psalm** says: **Thine enemies roar in the midst of Thy congregations; they set up their ensigns for signs,** v. 4. The Hebrew for both “ensigns” and “signs” is *owth*. The primary sign (*owth*) that Yahweh gave to Israel was the seventh-day Sabbath (**Exodus 20:8-11**), which was to be observed every week, of course. Constantine decreed that Sunday, the first day of the week, would replace the Sabbath.

Yahweh gave Israel the annual feast days (**Leviticus 23**) as other signs (*owth*), but Constantine changed them to the observance of December 25th, Easter, etc. Because of this, the prophet Isaiah declares: **For thus saith Yahweh, “Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.” For thus saith Sovereign Yahweh, “My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now therefore, what have I here,” saith Yahweh, “that My people is taken away for nought? They that rule over them make them to howl,” saith Yahweh; “and My name continually every day is blasphemed” (Isaiah 52:3-5)!**

Jeremiah warns: **Thus saith Yahweh of hosts, “Hearken not unto the words of the prophets (or preachers) that prophesy (or preach) unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of Yahweh.” They say still unto them that despise Me, Yahweh hath said, “Ye shall have peace;” and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, “No evil shall come upon you” (Jeremiah 23:16-17).**

The word “despise” is translated from the Hebrew word *na’ats*. It is the exact same word that is translated as “blaspheme” and “blasphemed” in **Psalm 74:10, 18**. It is the very same word that is translated as “blasphemed” in **Isaiah 52:5**. Thus, this could be translated here in Jeremiah as “... them that blaspheme Me!” After all, something that is blasphemous is also something that is despised.

How have they blasphemed Yahweh and His Son? They have done so by replacing their names for the names of the pagan Baal gods. This same chapter, **Jeremiah 23**, goes on to declare: **I have heard what the prophets (or preachers) said, that prophesy (or preach) lies in My name, saying, “I have dreamed, I have dreamed.” How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? Yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart; which think to cause My people to forget My name by**

their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, as their fathers have forgotten My name for Baal (vv. 25-27).

TREACHERY

The Prophet Isaiah is inspired to declare: **But ye are they that forsake Yahweh, that forget My holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop (Gad/God), and that furnish the drink offering unto that number (Meniy) (Isaiah 65:11).** “That troop” is translated from a Hebrew PROPER NOUN, which is the word *Gad* (pronounced God)! “That number” is translated from a Hebrew PROPER NOUN, which is the word *Meniy*! *Gad/God* was also the Babylonian deity of fortune. *Meniy* was the Babylonian deity for apportioning or numbering. As in many, many things, these names and meanings have been carried over to our day!

Notice that they “prepare a table.” A table is where we eat our food, which anciently was called meat or bread. What is one of the key things that we apportion or number in today’s world? Isn’t it our MONEY? Don’t we number, or apportion, or count our MONEY? Isn’t our FORTUNE appraised or estimated in dollars? Isn’t a slang term for our money, our dollars, “BREAD?” What do we put on our money/Meniy? Don’t we put, “In God we trust?” Do you get it? We put the name of the Babylonian deity of fortune, “GOD,” on our money/MENIY!

Our politicians, our government loves this God, this FORTUNE, this apportionment, this MONEY/MENIY! Our merchants love it. Our churches love it. They love to pass the plate every time they meet to worship God, the deity of fortune! The criminals love it. They will commit crime, steal, and even kill for it! Furthermore, “In God” can be translated into a Hebrew word BaGad (בגד/dgb). Let’s take a look at how this word is utilized in the Scriptures: **A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous (בגד/dgb) dealer dealeth treacherously (בגד/dgb), and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease (Isaiah 21:2).**

From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! The treacherous (בגד/dgb) dealers have dealt treacherously (בגד/dgb); yea, the treacherous (בגד/dgb) dealers have dealt very treacherously (Isaiah 24:16).

Yahweh said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, “Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? She is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot. And I said, after she had done all these things, “Turn thou unto me.” But she returned not. And her treacherous (בגד/dgb) sister Judah saw it. And I saw,

when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery, I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous (בגד/dgb) sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks. And yet for all this her treacherous (בגד/dgb) sister Judah hath not turned unto Me with her whole heart, but feignedly," saith Yahweh. And Yahweh said unto me, "Backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous (בגד/dgb) Judah" (Jeremiah 3:6-11).

"Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! They be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous (בגד/dgb) men. And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not Me," saith Yahweh (Jeremiah 9:1-3).

Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city! She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in Yahweh; she drew not near to her Elohim. Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow. Her prophets are light and treacherous (בגד/dgb) persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law (Zephaniah 3:1-4).

The prophets now, as then, deal "in God," "in treachery" (בגד/dgb). Our political and governmental system is treacherous! Our merchandising system is treacherous! Our religious systems (Christian, Jewish, Moslem, pagan) are treacherous! Our financial, our monetary system is treacherous! All deal "IN GOD"! All deal in the Babylonian deity of FORTUNE (GAD/GOD)! None truly trust in, nor know, nor care to know YAHWEH!

John is inspired to write: **And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, "Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication (the drink offering of Meniy/money)." So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and**

I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy (one of those names is God), having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Yahshua: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration (Revelation 17:1-6).

For those who can't seem to make the connection, here is Babylon, even in the end-time. If Babylon and her mystery religion is still prevalent, so are the names of her deities, which are names of blasphemy. The kings, the merchants, the prophets (preachers/religions) and the people love Babylon, her ways, her deception, her treachery.

Yahweh says: **Come out of her, My People, so that you be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues that are soon to be poured out (Revelation 18:1-8).**

DESTRUCTION FORETOLD

Today's preachers and prophets are committing a very grievous error. They proclaim that the name of our Creator Yahweh isn't important. They cause the people to hate and despise (blaspheme) the true names of the Father and Son because their kings, rulers and leaders deem it more important to love the names of Baal rather

than the truth.

Jeremiah is inspired to declare: **Behold, a whirlwind of Yahweh is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. The anger of Yahweh shall not return, until He has executed, and till He has performed the thoughts of His heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly (Jeremiah 23:19-20).**

The Hebrew for "whirlwind" is *ca'ar*. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* defines this word as a HURRICANE! It is generally translated in the Scriptures as storm, tempest, whirlwind. In these last days, we have suffered much destruction from hurricanes and tornados. But more devastation is yet to come. You see, Yahweh has allowed man, in these last days, to be able to develop weapons of mass destruction. Atomic and hydrogen bombs create a great whirlwind of destruction. But this is only part of the story. Some of the most deadly and dangerous chemicals

This is a warning for kings, rulers, leaders, preachers, ministers, churches, assemblies and people ... who are blaspheming Yahweh's and Yahshua's names by continually refusing to repent and turn to the truth.


and biological weapons have also been created. Minute traces of some of the most deadly chemicals can be put into the water supply of cities that can destroy all who drink thereof. Great plagues can ravage unchecked if certain biological agents are released.

These are the latter days when Yahweh is going to make an end of iniquity. This article is being written as a warning for those kings, rulers, leaders, preachers, ministers, churches, assemblies and people (both Gentile and Israelite) who are blaspheming the names of Yahweh and Yahshua by continually refusing to repent and turn to the truth.

When Moses returned from the mount, he beheld what the Israelites were doing. He angrily burnt the idol, crushed it to powder and made the Israelites drink of it. He then, ...**stood in the gate of the camp, and said, "Who is on Yahweh's side? Let him come unto me." And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him ... Thus saith Yahweh Elohim of Israel, "Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour." And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. For Moses had said, "Consecrate yourselves today to Yahweh, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that He may bestow upon you a blessing this day" (Exodus 32:26-29).**

In these last days, another evil system has reared up its ugly head and mightily deceived the people into Baal/bull/God worship. While the people may be ignorant and deceived concerning this, the fact of the matter is that when Yahshua (Moses was a type of Yahshua) returns from the mount, from the Father's throne to this earth, He is going to make war against the kingdoms of this world and destroy them. He will also decree, **But those Mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before Me (Luke 19:27).**

Therefore, we must presently take up the double-edged sword of Yahweh's Word in today's world. With that sword, we must cut asunder all the opposers who revel in idols, images, bulls, Gods, falsehood, lies, deceit, guile, etc. We must lift up the truth concerning Yahweh, Yahshua, Their word and Their ways, so that "whosoever will" may be drawn unto Them. We must lift up our voices and the points of our pens declaring, writing, and encouraging repentance before the dreadful day of Yahweh comes.

Repent of taking Yahweh's name in vain (*shav*) all peoples of the earth! Give the honor, esteem, glory, etc. to Whom it is due. Lift (*nasa*) His true name 

FERVENT LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER

By D.U. Intong

Yahweh is love and we are to love one another as He has loved us, with genuine, sincere love from the heart for all brethren.

"But the end of all things is at hand; and above all things, have fervent love one for another" (1 Peter 4:7-8).

Love must begin at home. Yahshua said that His true followers would be identified by the love they have for one another (**John 13:34-35**). Love must be easy to see, not just in the assembly, but also in the family, between husbands and wives, parents and children.

It is not enough to feel love for family members. We need to express it in positive ways. How can husbands and wives show love for each other? A husband who truly loves his wife lets her know by his words and deeds—in public and private—that he cherishes her. He respects her personal, moral worth and considers her thoughts, attitude of mind and feelings (**1 Peter 3:7**). He puts her welfare ahead of his own and he does all that he can to care for her material, spiritual and emotional needs (**Ephesians 5:25, 28**). A wife who truly loves her husband respects him, even if he, at times, does not meet her expectations (**Ephesians 5:22-23**). She is supportive of her mate and submissive to him, not making unreasonable demands, but cooperating with him in keeping the focus on spiritual matters (**Genesis 2:18; Matthew 6:33**).

Parents, how can you show love for your children? Your good disposition to work hard and to provide essentials for them is the evidence of love (**1 Timothy 5:8**). But children need more than food, clothing and shelter. If they are to grow up to love and serve the true Elohim, they need spiritual training (**Proverbs 22:6**). That means that we should all make time to study the Scriptures with our families, sharing in the ministry and attending Yahweh's Sabbath services (**Deuteronomy 6:4-7**). Being consistent in such activities requires important sacrifice, especially in these critical times. Your interest and efforts to care for your children's spiritual needs are an expression of love for them, thereby showing you have their spiritual welfare at heart (**John 17:3**).

It is very important that parents also show love by

caring for their children's emotional needs. Children are easily hurt physically and their tender hearts need to be restored with our love. Show and tell them that you love them, for such expressions assure them that they are worthy of love and have worth. Give them warm and genuine praise. It lets them know that you see and value their efforts. Correct them with love for such correction tells them that you care about the kind of person they are becoming (**Ephesians 6:4**). All such wholesome expressions of love help to build a close knit family that is better prepared to resist the problems of today.

Love will also move us to overlook the shortcomings of others. Recall that when admonishing his readers to have fervent love for one another, Peter gave the reason why this is so important: ... **love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8)**. Peter is not teaching that we should overlook serious sins. Such matters should be reported to and handled by answerable ones in the assembly (**Leviticus 5:1, Proverbs 29:24**). It would be most unloving and unscriptural to allow gross sinners to continue hurting or making victims of innocent ones (**1 Corinthians 5:9-13**).

In most cases, the mistakes and faults of fellow believers are minor in nature. We all stumble in word or deed at times, disappointing or even causing suffering to one another (**James 3:2**). Should we be quick to publicize the defects of others? Such a course would only serve to create problems in the assembly (**Ephesians 4:1-3**). But if there are serious, sinful faults, then we are taught scripturally that we must go to the person with our concerns, then with witnesses if we are not heard, then to the assembly as a final step towards reconciliation. This is the way we are taught to handle difficult problems with a fellow worshipper.

Love will also cause us to come the aid of those who are in real need. As conditions in the last days continue to deteriorate, there may be times when our fellow believers need material or physical help (**1 John 3:17-18**). For example, has a member of our assembly suffered a severe financial set back or loss of a job? Then perhaps we can offer some material assistance (**Proverbs 3:27-28; James 2:14-17**). Is the home of an elderly widow in need of repair? Then we should try to initiate help with some of the work.

Many think of love as an affection that springs forth naturally. But Peter was not talking about just any kind of love. He was speaking about love in its noblest form. The word "love" in **1 Peter 4:8** is a translation of the Greek word "agape." That term denotes unselfish love that is guided or governed by principle. One commentary says that "agape" love is capable of being commanded because it is not primarily emotion; rather it is a decision of the will, leading to action. We need remind-

ers to show love to one another, doing so in ways that Scripture directs (**Genesis 8:21; Romans 5:8**).

We are not to love one another merely out of duty. Peter said we must have fervent love for one another (**1 Peter 1:22**). Still, such love requires much effort. Our love must not be restricted to doing only what comes easily or be limited to a select few. We must extend love even when it may be challenging to do so. Clearly this kind of love, while very important to have, still takes much effort.

Almighty Yahweh loved us first. The apostle John says: **By this the love of Yahweh Elohim was made obvious in our case, because Yahweh sent forth His only begotten Son into the world that we might gain life through Him (John 4:9)**. Yahweh's Son was sent forth by becoming a human being, carrying out His ministry and dying on a torture stake so that we might gain life. How should we respond to His expression of love? John said that if this is how Yahweh loved us, then we are ourselves under duty to love one another. Note that John writes, ... **if this is how Yahweh loved us...** The point is clear. As Yahweh loves us, we should love one another.

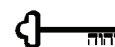
It is particularly important in these days that we love one another because ... **the end of all things is at hand (1 Peter 4:7). We are living in critical times, often hard to deal with (2 Timothy 3:1)**.

In difficult and trying circumstances, we need, more than ever, to draw close to one another. Fervent love will bind us together and motivate us to care for one another. **And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Messiah, and members in particular (1 Corinthians 12:26-27)**.

We need to be filled with sincere love for one another because we do not want to allow Satan to take advantage of us. Satan is quick to use the imperfections of fellow believers—their weaknesses, faults, and mistakes—as stumbling blocks. Will a thoughtless remark or an unkind act cause us to withdraw from the assembly? **There are those whose thoughtless speech cuts like a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health (Proverbs 12:18)**.

If we have fervent love for one another, such love helps us to maintain peace at home. Yahshua the Messiah said, **Then I will purify the lips of the people that all of them may call on the name of Yahweh and serve Him shoulder to shoulder (Zephaniah 3:9)**.

As His children, we are to walk in love, according to His commandments.



Are You Living Up To Your Dedication?

How do athletes reach their peak performance? In tennis, basketball, soccer, baseball, track, golf, or any other sport, the best reach the top only by unwavering dedication. Physical and mental conditioning are priorities. This fits well with one of the definitions of the word, *dedicated*, which is wholly committed to a particular course of thought or action.

However, what does dedication mean in the Biblical sense? *Dedication*, in Hebrew, means: to keep separate, be separated, withdraw. In ancient Israel, Aaron, the High Priest, wore the “holy sign of dedication” on his turban, which was a shining plate of pure gold engraved with the Hebrew words “Holiness belongs to Yahweh.” That served as a reminder to the High Priest that he must avoid doing anything that would profane the sanctuary ... **because the sign of dedication, the anointing oil of his Elohim was upon him (Exodus 29:5; 39:30; Leviticus 21:12).**

We can see in this context that dedication is a serious matter. It implies voluntary identification as a servant of Elohim and it requires clean conduct. Therefore, we can appreciate why the Apostle Peter quoted Yahweh as saying, **You must be holy, because I am holy (1 Peter 1:15-16).** As dedicated believers, we bear a heavy responsibility to live up to our dedication, being faithful to the end. But what is involved in a believer’s dedication?

After we gained accurate knowledge of Yahweh Elohim and His purposes and of Yahshua Messiah and His role in those purposes, we made the personal decision to serve Yahweh with our whole heart, mind, soul and strength (**Mark 8:34; 12:30; John 17:3**). That might even be viewed as a personal vow, an unreserved dedication to Yahweh. Our dedication was not made as the result of an emotional caprice. It was carefully and prayerfully thought through, using the power of reason. Thus, it was not a temporary decision. We cannot be like someone who starts to plow a field and then gives up partway through because it is too much hard work, or because the harvest seems to be too far off or by no means certain. Consider the examples of some who have **put their hands to the plow** of theocratic responsibility through thick and thin in **Luke 9:62 and Romans 12:1-2**.

Jeremiah’s prophetic ministry in Jerusalem spanned more

than 40 years, and it was no easy assignment. He was very aware of his limitations (**Jeremiah 1:2-6**). He needed courage and endurance to face the hardheaded people of Judah on a daily basis (**Jeremiah 18:18, 38:4-6**). However, Jeremiah trusted in Yahweh, who strengthened him so that he proved to be a truly dedicated servant of Yahweh (**Jeremiah 1:18-19**).

What about the faithful Apostle John, who was exiled to the inhospitable island of Patmos in his old age for teaching about Yahweh and bearing witness to Yahshua? **Revelation 1:9** says that he endured and kept true to his dedicated status as a believer. He lived beyond the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Roman armies. He was privileged to write an evangel, three inspired letters and the Book of Revelation, in which he foresaw the war of Armageddon. Did he quit when he learned that Armageddon would not come in his lifetime? Did he slump into apathy? No, John remained faithful to his death, knowing that although **the appointed time was near**, the fulfillment of his visions was for a later date (**Daniel 12:4; Revelation 1:3**).

How do we view our dedication to Yahweh to do His will? Is it the first thing in our life? Regardless of our circumstances, whether young or old, married or single, healthy or sick, we should strive to live up to our dedication, in accordance with our circumstances. One person’s situation may allow him to serve in the full-time ministry as a pioneer, as a missionary, or in the traveling ministry. Some parents, on the other hand, may have their hands full, caring for the physical and spiritual needs of the family. Are their relatively few hours spent in the ministry each month worth any less in Yahweh’s eyes than the many hours spent by a full-time servant? No, Yahweh never expects from us what we do not have. The Apostle Paul stated this principle: **If the readiness is there first, it is especially acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what a person does not have (2 Corinthians 8:12).**

Our salvation depends, not on anything we might do, but on Yahweh’s undeserved kindness through Messiah Yahshua, our Savior. Paul clearly explained: **All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of Yahweh, and it is as a free gift that they are being declared righteous by**

His undeserved kindness through the release by the ransom paid by Messiah (Romans 3:23-24; James 2:17, 18, 24).

There is no need for us to make comparisons with others in regard to our time in Yahweh's service, our placements of Bible literature, or the number of Bible studies we conduct. Regardless of what we accomplish in the ministry, all of us have to remember Yahweh's humbling words: **So you, also, when you have done all the things assigned to you, say, "We are good-for-nothing slaves. What we have done is what we ought to have done" (Luke 17:10).** How often can we really say that we have done all the things assigned to us? So the question is, what should be the quality of our service to Yahweh (2 Corinthians 10:17-18)?

After giving counsel to wives, husbands, children, parents, and slaves, Paul writes, **Whatever you are doing, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for Yahweh, and not for men, for you know that it is from Yahweh you will receive the due reward of the inheritance. Slave for the Master, Messiah (Colossians 3:23-24).** We are not serving to impress men by what we accomplish in Yahweh's service. We are trying to serve Yahweh by following the example of Yahshua Messiah. He carried out His relatively short ministry with a sense of urgency (1 Peter 2:21).

The Apostle Peter, too, demonstrated a sense of urgency. In his second letter, he warned that in the last days, there would be ridiculers who, according to their own wishes, would raise questions about Messiah's presence. However, Peter said, **Yahweh is not slow respecting His promise, as some people consider slowness, but He is patient with you because He does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance. Yet Yahweh's day will come as a thief (2 Peter 3:3-4, 9-10).** Yes, Yahweh's day is certain to come. Therefore, we should make it our daily concern as to how certain and solid our faith really is.

To live up to our dedication in a conscientious manner, we should live each day to Yahweh's praise. At the end of each day, can we look back on it and see how we contributed in some way to the sanctification of Yahweh's name and the proclamation of the Kingdom's good news? Are we exhibiting clean conduct, with edifying conversation, and loving concern for family and friends? Did we use available opportunities to share our hope with others? Have we helped someone to think seriously about Yahweh's promises? Let us accrue a positive, healthy, spiritual bank account, building it up spiritually each day (Matthew 6:20; 1 Peter 2:12, 3:15; James 3:13).

We are living in times that are becoming more difficult for believers. Satan and his agents try to blur the distinction between good and bad, clean and unclean, moral and im-

moral, ethical and unethical (Romans 1:24-28; 16:17-19). He has made it easy for us to pollute our hearts and minds by means of a TV remote control or a computer keyboard, if we so choose. Our spiritual vision can become blurred, or out of focus, so that we fail to discern his crafty acts. Our resolve to live up to our dedication can be weakened, and our grip on the plow loosened, if we compromise our spiritual values (Luke 9:62; Philippians 4:8).

Paul's words to the congregation in Thessalonica are therefore most timely: **This is the will of Yahweh, your sanctification; that you abstain from unchastity; that each one of you know how to take a wife for himself in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like heathen who do not know Yahweh (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5).** Immorality has led to some being disfellowshipped from the congregation—those who neglected their dedication to Yahweh. They allowed their relationship with Yahweh to weaken, so that He no longer counted in their lives. Yet, Paul said: **Yahweh called us, not with allowance for uncleanness, but in connection with sanctification. So, then, the man that shows disregard is disregarding, not man, but Yahweh, who puts His Holy Spirit in you (1 Thessalonians 4:7-8).**

If we appreciate the seriousness of our dedication to Yahweh Elohim, what should we be determined to do? Our firm determination should be to hold a good conscience with regard to both our conduct and our ministry. Peter exhorted: **Hold a good conscience, so that in the particular manner in which you are spoken against, they may be ashamed who are speaking slightly of your good conduct in connection with Messiah (1 Peter 3:16).** We may have to suffer and face abuse because of our spiritual conduct, but so did Messiah because of His faith and loyalty to Yahweh. Peter said: **Since Messiah suffered in the flesh, you, too, arm yourselves with the same mental disposition; because the person that has suffered in the flesh has desisted from sins (1 Peter 4:1).**

Indeed, our firm determination to live up to our dedication will protect us from the trappings of Satan's world which is sick spiritually, morally, and physically. But more than that, we will gain confidence that we will have Yahweh's approval, which is far better than anything Satan and his agents can offer. Thus, never let it be said that we have left the love that we had when we first knew the truth. Rather, let it be said of us, as it was of those in the first century congregation in Thyatira: **I know your deeds, and your love and faith and ministry and endurance, and that your deeds of late are more than those formerly (Revelation 2:4, 18-19).** Yes, let us not be lukewarm regarding our dedication, but let us be **aglow with the spirit, zealous to the end—and the end is very near (Romans 12:11; Revelation 3:15-16).**



RUTH: A Story of Commitment

By Eric Gentile

In the 12th century BCE, a young Moabi (Moabite), recently widowed, traveled with her mother-in-law from Moab back to Yahudah (Judah) to live among the Yisrayli (Israelites). Her compelling and courageous commitment is an enduring example for people everywhere today.

When a famine fell over the kingdom of Yahudah in the 12th century BCE, people were desperate for food and were forced to move beyond the area of the famine. A Bethlehemite named Elimelech, with his wife, Naomi, and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, traveled to the eastern borders of the Dead Sea to the kingdom of Moab in search of arable land. The Book of Ruth records an edifying result.

Moab was only 30 to 40 miles from Bethlehem, but travel was difficult. Not only did travelers have to deal with the rough terrain, but bandits often plagued the roads. Also, the move to pagan Moab was trying for the children of Yah.

In Bethlehem, nearly everyone worshiped the Creator, יהוה (IAUE=Yahweh). But in Moab the people worshiped the “god” Chemosh. Yahweh had warned the Yisrayli not to get involved with the rituals of the Moabites.

Moabite women had seduced Yisrayli warriors and led them to make offerings to Chemosh. This angered Yahweh, who killed the idolaters with a plague and reminded the Yisrayli not to get involved with Moabite religious practices.

However, years later, despite the tense relationship between Yisrayl and Moab, Chilion and Mahlon married Moabi women. Within ten years, Elimelech and his sons died, leaving behind three widows with no means of support.

Elimelech’s widow, Naomi, now an older woman, longed for her native Judah. As a woman, she could not directly inherit property, but could hold property in a

type of trust for a future husband or another male relative. A woman with such an arrangement was supported by cheerful givers.

Uncertain Future

Naomi expressed her desire to return to Judah. Both her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, began the trip with her. Perhaps as they traveled across the rugged terrain, the women discussed what lay ahead for them.

One fact could not be ignored: The young Moabite women would almost certainly meet an unfavorable reception from those living in Bethlehem.

Naomi strongly recommended that her daughters-in-law return to their people and their “gods.”

Based on these facts, Orpah tearfully kissed her mother-in-law and returned to Moab. But Ruth clung to her mother-in-law and uttered words that serve as a timeless memorial,

“Where you go I will go, and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your Father my Father” (Ruth 1:16).

Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your Father my Father (Ruth 1:16).

A Way of Life

The depth of commitment Ruth made deserves close examination. Honoring and providing for her mother-in-law was only part of what Ruth set herself to do.

Ruth’s primary commitment was to a way of life—the way of life of the Father of Israel. Ruth had lived with

the Yisrayli family for about a decade before her husband's death. As she practiced Yahweh's way of life, she realized that it worked and produced happiness and peace of mind.

Ruth realized her responsibility to live Yahweh's way of life no matter what the circumstances—even if it included relocating to a hostile foreign land. Her understanding of Yahweh's way of life gave her the strength to accompany her mother-in-law to Judah.

With All Her Might

Ruth and Naomi's arrival in Bethlehem coincided with the spring grain harvest, a seven-week period lasting from about mid-April to early June. Ruth followed the reapers and gathered grain to provide food for herself and Naomi.



Gathering grain required much courage on Ruth's part. Early summer temperatures not only made the hard work uncomfortable, but Ruth also had to contend with ridicule from the workmen due to her nationality.

But Ruth's reputation preceded her. Boaz, a wealthy farmer and kinsman, knew about her kindness to her mother-in-law and about her willingness to come to a foreign land.

Boaz noticed Ruth gleaning in his field one day and inquired about her. The workmen explained who she was and added that she had worked with little rest since early morning. Her work ethic gave her favor in Boaz's sight, and he asked her to glean only in his field, staying close to the other women. He made sure she went home with ample grain.

Yahweh blessed Ruth for her willingness to accept and live His way of life. Boaz said to Ruth, **Yahweh repays your work, and a full reward be given you by Yahweh the Elohim of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge (Ruth 2:12).**

Even though Ruth was not an Israelite, Yahweh accepted her because she embraced His calling and way of life. The people in Bethlehem noticed and acknowl-

edged her commitment to Yahweh's way of life. No one in the community doubted her sincerity. Boaz did not hesitate to link his name with Ruth's when she approached him concerning a Hebrew custom known as "levirate." The custom was instituted to insure the security of a widow who might be left destitute and friendless. According to the custom, when a man died, his brother was to marry his widow. If there was no brother, it was up to the next closest kinsman to honor the custom. The person who married the widow became her protector. The firstborn son in the marriage was counted as a child of the dead husband and inherited his property.

Boaz knew Ruth would make an outstanding wife and mother. Boaz didn't waste any time settling the matter with a kinsman who was closer to the family than he. He knew Ruth would bring honor to his household.

Indeed, Ruth became a leading lady of the family. Many generations later, Yahshua the Messiah was born into the family line!

Commitment Brought Blessings

Ruth set an outstanding example for each of us. She willingly left a familiar homeland and journeyed to a potentially unfriendly land so that she could embrace Yahweh's way of life.

Because Ruth understood Yahweh's commandments, she respected and loved her mother-in-law. Ruth, the Book of the Bible that bears her name, conveys much more than a romantic story or an example of outstanding family relations.

The Book of Ruth serves to remind us of Yahweh's deep desire for all humanity to reap the benefits of living His way of life. Yahweh calls on us to leave our familiar way of life—sometimes leaving behind everything and everyone we've known—to embrace His way. If we fully commit ourselves to Yahweh, we, too, will be fully blessed.



The 4th Commandment: The 4th Commandment: Is It Changeable?

By Eric Gentile

Q mainstay of the vast majority of Christian denominations is the assertion that the weekly Sabbath was changed from the last day of the week to the first by the Apostles and early assembly. It is also alleged that the Anointed One was resurrected at sunrise on the first day of the week.

Now, the exact day or time of day of the resurrection has been greatly debated. Volumes have been written on the matter, some stridently defending the first day sunrise tradition of Rome and her Protestant daughters, others ardently advocating a Sabbath eve or some other time. Yet, in virtually all these oft-heated works, completely overlooked has been the three basic assertions upon which the claim of Sabbath changing rests. First, that the Commandments of the Almighty, Eternal, Unchanging, Creator, Legislator, Judge and Ruler of the Universe are changeable. Second, that the Author of the Commandments, the Source of all authority granted to His Anointed One, has given to man the authority to make such change. And, third, that a change was, in fact, properly made.

ARE THE COMMANDMENTS CHANGEABLE?

Even a superficial look at the first of these assertions shows, to any candid mind, the absurdity thereof. What is being asserted is that the Perfect/Pure One, who said I change not (**Malachi 3:6; Numbers 23:19**) and of Whom the apostle testifies there is no **variableness, neither shadow of turning (James 1:17; Hebrews 7:21)**, is a liar and that the immutable Law and Morality that expresses His unchanging, eternal character is, in fact, not immutable but changeable. Shades of Eden!! Surely such a teaching must be of serpents, not saints. Does not David also testify to the immutability of the Perfect/Pure One's Word? **For ever, O Yahweh, Thy word is settled in heaven. Concerning Thy**

testimonies, I have known of old that Thou hast founded them for ever. Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of Thy righteous judgments endureth for ever (Psalm 119:89, 152, 160). What of the apostle who wrote of the Anointed One, the same yesterday, and today, and forever (**Hebrews 13:8**)? From the plentitude and consistency of scriptural testimony to the unchangeableness of both the Commander and His Commandments, no candid mind could accept any possibility for change.

Ah, but some say the Commandment wasn't changed. It is just that the celebration of the Sabbath was transferred to the first day of the week in honor of our Saviour's resurrection at sunrise on that day. First, this attempt at subtlety is clearly a fraud and self-contradiction. To say that the day of celebration was changed, but not the Commandment itself, is an absurdity that no right thinking person would accept. Indeed, the 4th Commandment is not generic but specific. In the Hebrew, the Commandment is in the definitive and enjoins the faithful to remember (keep) *ha*-Shabbat, that is, *the* Sabbath, not *a* sabbath, and, by Commandment, the seventh day is the Sabbath (**Exodus 20:10; Deuteronomy 5:12**).

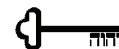
AUTHORITY GRANTED FOR CHANGE?

Now, to the second assertion, this can be readily seen as equally absurd, for it proposes that the Source of all authority—the unchangeable Author of the Commandments—changed the Sabbath or granted to His Anointed One, or to man, the authority to make a change He Himself could or would not make. Here, let us recall the revelation through the Prophet Amos: **Surely the Sovereign Yahweh will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets (Amos 3:7)**. So, then, it is clear there must be a prophet-recorded revelation of Yahweh's intent to change the Sabbath. Yet, as noted above, there is none such anywhere in Scripture.

Now, it is true the Anointed One said: **All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18). For the Son of Man is Master even of the Sabbath day (Matthew 12:8).** Yet, how can one take these as conveying Sabbath-changing authority? For the Son also said: **The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things He doeth the Son doeth likewise (John 5:19).** And given Yahweh's command to rest and worship on THE Sabbath, and the fact that He never revealed through His prophets any intent to change the Sabbath, how then would the Son, who was obedient even unto death, have even a single thought of Sabbath changing? On the contrary, His clearly recorded example is that He did just as Yahweh commanded, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. And as the obedient-unto-death Son had no Sabbath-changing authority, how could He give such to any man? Or how could any man claim to have greater authority than the Anointed Son Himself?

Dear ones, simply stated, as no Sabbath-changing authority was ever given to anyone, how can any such change claim any authority? Indeed, with all the voluminous and emphatic commands to keep THE Sabbath, and the clear example of the Anointed One Himself keeping THE Sabbath, where is the equally voluminous, emphatic and clear commands and Anointed example of Sabbath changing? Where? Nowhere!

Clearly, if one believes and seeks to obey the Sovereign Creator, the One commonly, but mistakenly called god or lord, who has revealed Himself as Yahweh the Self-Existent, Almighty, Creator/Father, the Inspirer of the Scriptures of the Prophets and Apostles, then one must be eager to conform himself to the Will and Word of his Maker and Master, even and especially wherever one's beliefs or traditions stray from or oppose that Will or Word.



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