

Sabbath

Moving past the shadow of the Sabbath to enter into
the substance of God's appointed rest.



Joseph Herrin

SABBATH

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Foreword

A word of explanation is necessary at the start of this book. In this work you will find the writer using names in reference to God the Father and God the Son that are more faithful to their Hebrew original than the names and titles generally in use by the church today. The name Yah, or Yahweh, will be found in reference to God the Father, and the name Yahshua will be utilized when speaking of the Son.

This usage is not intended to be divisive, nor does it serve as a renunciation of the usage of titles such as Lord or God. Neither is it a condemnation of those who choose to call the Son of God Jesus. My intent as a teacher of the Bible is simply to illumine and instruct. There is great meaning in the Hebrew names of the Father and the Son, and these names are directly related to one another. Many of the people whose lives are portrayed in Scripture also serve as types and shadows of God, bringing to light truths that might otherwise be hidden.

For example, Joshua, the Israelite leader who led the people of God across the Jordan and into battle to take possession of the land of Canaan, bears the same name as the Messiah. They both were called Yahshua. Like Joshua in the Old Testament, the Son of God began His ministry at the Jordan River as He was baptized by John. Both men labored to establish a kingdom dedicated to Yahweh, the first external and natural, the latter internal and spiritual.

Yah is the name used in reference to the Father on forty-nine separate occasions in the Old Testament. Most Christians have utilized this name of God without knowing that they were doing so. Whenever the word *hallelujah* is uttered, the speaker is literally exclaiming “Praise Yah,” for this is the meaning of the Hebrew word from which it is derived. The longer name *Yahweh* is found an additional 6,828 times.

The name of the Son is likewise significant, for Yahshua is understood to mean “Yah’s Salvation.” The Gospel writer indicates that this is the meaning of the name given to the Savior at His birth.

Matthew 1:21

“And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Yahshua, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.”

It has been the practice of this writer for many years to use these names, which more clearly represent their Hebrew originals. It is my hope that their employment in this book might aid the reader by bringing forth light on relationships that are obscured, as well as promoting an increased intimacy with God the Father by calling Him by His memorial name, instead of a title which men have substituted.



Introduction

It has been nearly 6,000 years since Adam was created by Elohim. It has also been 2,000 years since Yahshua (Jesus) walked this Earth in fulfilling the ministry that His Father entrusted to Him. It is recorded for us in scripture, that in the mystery of Yahweh's plan of the ages, a thousand years correlates to one day, and one day to a thousand years. We find this truth revealed in II Peter 3:8, Psalms 90:4, as well as in other passages.

II Peter 3:8

But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

When Yahshua walked among the Jews He chided them because they could forecast the weather, but they could not discern the day in which they lived.

Matthew 16:2-3

He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times."

In contrast, when David went to Hebron to establish the kingdom we are told, in a very favorable mention, that among those who joined themselves to him were 200 chief men from among the sons of Issachar, "*who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do*" (I Chronicles 12:32). It is an important matter with Yahweh that His children have an understanding of the days in which they live.

As we examine Peter's words we can discern that not only have 6,000 years elapsed since Adam's creation, with man poised to enter the 7th millennium, but man equally stands ready to enter the 7th day of Yahweh's divine timetable. We can understand much of what this 7th day will hold as we look at what occurred on the 7th day of creation, and what the 7th day represents throughout scriptures.

The 7th day is a day of rest. The 7th day is the Sabbath. In the epistle to the Hebrews, Paul wrote that there yet remained a Sabbath rest for the children of God to enter into (Hebrews 3, 4). He gave great cautions lest any of the saints of God should fall short of entering into this rest. Entering into this rest holds far more significance than most saints have considered, and many are oblivious to the peril of failing to enter in.

The Sabbath is much more than just a day that occurs once a week in which physical labor is to be avoided. It was given to be a symbol of something much greater. In understanding the symbol we can see that its significance has such importance as to touch on Satan's original sin, as well as mankind's transgression in the Garden of Eden. By violating the principles that the Sabbath represents all the sins listed in the ten commandments of Yahweh ensued, including lying, covetousness, envy, and murder. It is in returning and entering into the true fulfillment of the Sabbath rest of God that these transgressions will be overturned.

We live in that very transitional period of the ages when man will enter into the 7th millennium, the Sabbath rest of Yahweh. However, not all will enter in at the appointed

time. Some will be prevented due to disobedience and unbelief. This book will address this peril in the hope that some will awaken from their slumber and apply all diligence to the pursuit of entering into the Sabbath rest of God.

There are other significant scriptures that speak of the awesome day in which we live. It has been nearly 2,000 years since Yahshua walked this Earth and completed His ministry. It has been nearly 2,000 years since that great Pentecost when the Spirit was given to indwell mankind. In the ensuing years man has known what it is to be divided as his flesh has warred against the Spirit, and the Spirit has warred against the flesh (Galatians 5:17).

This torn and fractured state of mankind has been appointed to last for a specified period of time appointed by the Father. The Scriptures declare that our healing is fast approaching when no longer will man be torn asunder, but he will be made wholly into a creature that fully agrees with Yahweh in spirit, soul, and body. We find this prophecy in Hosea.

Hosea 6:1-2

“Come, let us return to Yahweh. For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us. He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day that we may live before Him.”

For 2,000 years, two days in Yahweh’s timetable, man has been torn as he has known the agony of the war of flesh and Spirit raging inside his members. The victory has been assured. The life of Christ overcomes the death of sin. It is appointed unto men to experience this warfare in their members, but a glorious day is quickly coming when the warfare will end and life will fully overcome death.

For 2,000 years, from that awesome Pentecost when man received the promised indwelling Spirit of Yahweh, man has known the agony of being a divided house. The flesh has tried to resist and wage war against the life of the Spirit, and the Spirit has been seeking to put the flesh to death. We stand at a juncture in time that is doubly important. We can look forward with anticipation to entering into the Sabbath rest of Yahweh and also being freed from the torn and embattled state that man has known for 2,000 years.

There has been very little rest in the first six days of mankind. Man has known misery and suffering. For six days the whole creation has been subjected to the futility of the curse, and with groaning and travail it has been longing for its deliverance when the sons of God are finally manifest in their restored state (Romans 8:19-23). Full deliverance will come when we lay aside these mortal bodies that are subject to the curse of sin, and we are clothed with immortality; when we will lay aside this corruption and put on incorruptible bodies (I Corinthians 15:53).

We live at the transitory date when man will enter the 7th millennium, the Sabbath day of creation. Our healing awaits us. A true Sabbath rest awaits us. May your soul and spirit be stirred as you anticipate the awesome things which will soon appear.

Hebrews 4:1

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.



Understanding the Present Hour

Before proceeding into the subject matter of this book, it is necessary to address some issues that could cause the reader difficulty. Much of what is written in this book is contrary to what is commonly accepted and taught in Christianity today. This will undoubtedly cause some concern to certain readers. It is often difficult to receive some truth that we have not previously heard, but it is even more difficult when the truth is in clear contradiction to what has been preached by myriads of pastors, evangelists, and teachers until it has become the accepted standard, or norm, of our day.

Unfortunately, there are few saints who actually understand what is clearly foretold in scriptures, that the last days before the return of Yahshua would be a time when great error would exist among the saints of God. Once one understands this, then they can appreciate that when truth is proclaimed it will be very common to find that it flies in the face of the accepted beliefs of the day in which we find ourselves. Let us look at a few scriptures that reveal this understanding, that the days preceding Yahshua's return would be days of profound deception and error.

II Timothy 3:1-7

But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these. For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Note very carefully here that Paul identifies the day he is speaking of to Timothy. "But realize this, *in the last days* difficult times will come." How many ministers today are proclaiming that we live in the last days? It seems that many recognize that the hour is late, but they have failed to discern what the state of Christianity would be at this late hour. Paul begins this passage by saying, "in the last days difficult times will come," and he concludes by saying that people would be "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." In between these two statements Paul describes the heart of mankind in these days, and it is due to the corrupt state of the heart of man that these days are difficult.

Timothy was charged by Paul to preach the word, and things were already difficult in those days, but consider the difficulty of any minister who finds himself proclaiming truth to those described in this passage. Indeed, their task would be very formidable. Yet Paul doesn't stop here. Paul is still maintaining the same train of thought when he speaks the following words.

II Timothy 4:1-4

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but

wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.

When should one expect this time to come when men will not endure sound doctrine? Paul already has informed us that he is speaking of the last days, the days in which we now live. If men are not heeding sound doctrine, what are they listening to? They are listening to great accumulations of teachers that are speaking the things their wayward hearts want to hear. They are turning aside unto myths and fables.

It should be obvious that the days we live in are the subject of Paul's discourse to Timothy, for we are in the last days, yet what preacher will admit that it is his congregation that has hired him to tell them the things they want to hear? What preacher would confess that he is simply tickling the ears of those listening to him, that he is teaching falsehood and myth?

We live in very difficult days, for the masses of Christendom have departed from truth and they prefer to hear things that agree with their own lusts. Paul said that in the last days men would be "lovers of self, lovers of money... lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God." What sort of things do you suppose that such men would like to hear?

Perhaps they would like to hear a message of financial prosperity. Perhaps they would like to hear a message that says that God wants to pour out blessing after blessing of material goods upon those who are His children. Is this not what is being proclaimed today from so many pulpits? Yet men do not realize that Paul was warning Timothy about those who are within Christianity in this very day, people who have accumulated teachers unto themselves to tell them the things they want to hear.

In contrast, sound doctrine has no home among such saints who are lovers of self, of money, and pleasure. It is with difficulty that Yahshua's words are shared with them.

Luke 16:13

"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

Mammon is the system of world materialism and it is identified with the love of money and all that money can purchase. Myriads of saints today are in that tragic condition of trying to straddle the fence. They want to serve God and mammon at the same time. To accomplish this feat they have developed false doctrines that proclaim that it is the will of Yahweh that every saint should be running over with the goods of this world. Yahshua, however, said that His kingdom followers should not concern themselves with issues of what they would eat and drink, or what they would clothe themselves with, but they should seek first His righteousness and His kingdom.

The Pharisees who heard these words scoffed at Yahshua, for we are told that they loved money. Multitudes also scoff today for they share the same affliction.

Luke 16:14-15

Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things, and they were scoffing at Him. And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly

esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.”

We live in a day in which men are proclaiming those things that they esteem, while neglecting the things God esteems. I have picked just one topic, albeit a major one, that is being falsely taught today to demonstrate that men have departed from truth and have sought out teachers that would tell them things in accordance with their desires. Men in their love of self and love of money have devised all manner of false interpretations of scripture to justify their lust for things. Absent is the message of the disciple’s cross and the proclaiming of the Christ’s words that if we would save our soul life, we must lose it, but if we lose it we will save it. Absent is the message of taking up our cross daily and following Yahshua.

Matthew 16:24-27

Then said Yahshua to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds.”

The message of self denial is not found in the houses of prosperity today. Every man will be recompensed for his deeds, yet the recompense will be very grievous for those who have accumulated to themselves teachers to tell them the things they desire to hear. The very issue of self denial is at the heart of a true understanding of Sabbath, for in Hebrews we read these words of Paul.

Hebrews 4:10

For the one who has entered His rest [Sabbath] has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.

If we are to enter into God’s rest, we must cease from doing our own works. This is self denial. This is the work of the cross in the lives of the saints. Because men have not ceased from their own works, preferring to indulge the selfish desires of their hearts, they have strayed from truth and have embraced falsehood and myths. The issue of serving mammon is but one issue in which this has happened. There is virtually no area of truth that has remained unaffected due to the difficulty of the days we live. In the book of II Thessalonians, Paul described the dire state of these days with the word “apostasy.”

II Thessalonians 2:1-3

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Yahshua the Messiah, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first...

Once more Paul is writing about the days that precede the return of Yahshua. He is writing of the days we live in, and he states that Yahshua will not return unless the apostasy

occurs first. Strong's Dictionary of Greek words defines apostasy in the following manner.

646 apostasia (ap-os-tas-ee'-ah);
feminine of the same as 647; *defection from truth* (properly, the state) ["apostasy"]:

As one looks further into the meaning of this Greek word, it is seen that it shares a similar root with the Greek word meaning *divorce*. The apostasy of which Paul speaks is literally *a divorcement from truth*. Taken in relationship with Paul's other statements we can discern that the last days will be a time when those who claim to be followers of Yahshua will divorce themselves from truth, and they will in turn be wed to myths and fables. They will figuratively heap up for themselves teachers that will proclaim error and falsehood unto them.

This is the perilous circumstance that we find ourselves in today. It is not the masses that are proclaiming truth, but the remnant. Truth is not widely preached and received, rather it is largely rejected, having been replaced with falsehood. How did this circumstance come about? Again the apostle Paul informs us of the reason.

II Thessalonians 2:10-12

Because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved... for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

Because men have preferred lies over truth, the Father has sent a deluding influence upon them so that they might believe what is false. This passage and the others we have looked at are not talking about the world, but those who claim to be followers of God. Paul earlier said they would have "a form of godliness, but deny the power of it." This is speaking of the church. The true power of godliness is the power to transform men's lives, but men have preferred not to be transformed. Instead they have desired to transform the scriptures to support the pursuit of their soulish life and its desires.

Those who read this book, and other writings that are proclaiming truth in this hour, must realize that what is written here is out of synch with the masses of Christendom because the masses of Christendom are themselves out of synch with God. Yahshua said He was the truth, yet the truth is not loved in the last days before Yahshua's return, and as a result the Father has sent delusion upon mankind so that they might believe what is false, which is what they prefer.

As one examines the scriptures with an understanding heart they will perceive that it has ever been the case with mankind that only a remnant has really known what the Father was doing in the day in which they lived. In the days in which Moses led the children of God forth from Egypt and into the wilderness, there was truly a large body of people who were known as God's chosen people, but not all understood what they should have known.

Psalms 103:7

He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the sons of Israel.

What a gulf separates knowing Yahweh's ways, and witnessing His acts. Of the millions of Israel, only one man was said to have known the ways of Yahweh in the day in

which he lived. We see the same thing in the days of Daniel, of Jeremiah, of Elijah, etc..

Certainly this was also the case in the day the Father sent His Son to be born and to walk this Earth in the form of man. There were myriads of Jews dwelling in and around Jerusalem. The temple and the synagogues were a center for the people to learn the things of God. Was it to these centers that Yahweh sent His messenger to prepare for the coming of His Son?

John 1:6

“There came a man sent from God whose name was John...”

What was John’s message? Was it not to prepare the way for Messiah to come? If there were myriads of devoted Jews in that day, a priesthood, as well as many teachers of the Law, then why did not God use these men to proclaim His truth and to prepare the way for His Son? Why did He not have the message proclaimed in every synagogue?

It is ever the remnant that Yahweh works through. He chose a man who was little esteemed. He had him to grow up in the wilderness, not in the centers of power. And He had him accomplish his ministry away from the synagogues and the temple. Why should it surprise the understanding saint to hear that those who will prepare the way for the second coming of Yahshua will follow a similar pattern?

In the gospels we are told that Yahshua “came to His own, but His own received Him not” (John 1:11). Knowing this was the case of His first appearing to mankind, and that history ever repeats itself, the importance of the following scripture should give rise to serious consideration, as it speaks of His second coming.

Luke 18:8

“However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

Yahshua is here speaking of His second coming to the Earth. At His first coming there was a whole nation of people who claimed to be followers of His Father. There was a well used religious system centered around the Temple and the synagogues. People were studying the scriptures continuously, and they claimed to be waiting for the appearing of Messiah.

Do we not have a similar scenario today? There is a body of people, huge in number that claim to be followers of Yahshua (Jesus). There is a religious system that is utilized regularly. In place of synagogues there are church buildings on every street corner and at every crossroads. This great body of believers also claims to be awaiting the return of their Messiah.

With all of this teaching and religious structure in place, those who claimed to be waiting for Messiah did not recognize the day of their visitation when He appeared 2,000 years ago. Yahshua was despised and rejected. Certainly the Jews and their leaders would never have admitted to having a wrong understanding of Messiah and what His appearing would be like, anymore than would those in Christianity today. Yet Yahshua asks whether He will find faith on the Earth when He returns. Incredibly, Yahshua describes the last days prior to His return, unto His disciples in the following manner.

Matthew 24:10-13

"And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one

another. And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many. And because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved.”

Many will fall away; many will be misled; most people's love will grow cold; men will be lovers of self, lovers of money; men will not endure sound doctrine; men will turn aside to myths and fables; Yahshua will in no way return unless the apostasy occurs first; will He find faith on the Earth?

These things should sober any sincere follower of Christ. It is the remnant who will be saved. The true flock of Yahshua is called the “little flock” (Luke 12:32). Why then do the churches preach that there will be a huge body of believers worldwide who will be raptured at the appearing of the Lord? Are they not deceived? Yahshua Himself questioned whether He would find faith on the earth at His return.

I urge the reader to keep these things in mind as you proceed to read the pages of this book. Great deception has fallen upon the church in this hour, and it was foretold over and over that this would be the situation on the Earth prior to Yahshua's return. Do not be surprised that so much that is written here is in contradiction to that being preached in thousands of pulpits throughout the world today. One should expect no less when the scriptures are properly discerned and the descriptions of the days we live in are rightly perceived.

May you have eyes to see and ears to hear as you study the things written herein.



Sabbath

The word *Sabbath* in both its Hebrew and Greek forms means *to repose, to rest, to cease from exertion*. It speaks of coming into a state of restfulness where Yahweh's creation is not striving in any manner, but all is in complete harmony with the Creator.

Today mankind frequently associates the term Sabbath with a day that occurs once a week in which physical work is not performed. This is viewing Sabbath on a purely physical plane, and it leads to many false understandings. When one understands Sabbath aright they will understand that a person can be in a state of complete rest before God while physically they appear to be laboring. The Jews did not understand this so they condemned Yahshua and His disciples as Sabbath breakers. The Jews saw Yahshua's disciples threshing grain in their hands on the Sabbath day and they condemned them for it (Matthew 12:1-8). Similarly they condemned Yahshua for healing on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:10-14).

The problem for the Jews then is the same problem many have in Christianity today. Men look at things outwardly, on the surface, without discerning what it is that God is intending. Yahweh desires that all men come to a state of rest before Him. He desires that men should cease from their own labors and that they only do the things He leads them to do. Yahweh desires for man to come to an end of personal initiative; for man to set himself to do nothing that arises from his own soul. This is the Sabbath that He desires.

Yahshua proclaimed that He was Lord of the Sabbath (Matthew 12:8). His whole life was an example of true rest before the Father. The essence of this rest is found in His following words.

John 5:30

"*I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*"

John 8:28

Yahshua therefore said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and *I do nothing on My own initiative*, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me."

John 8:42

Yahshua said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me; for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for *I have not even come on My own initiative*, but He sent Me."

John 12:49

"For *I did not speak on My own initiative*, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak."

John 14:10

"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? *The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative*, but the Father abiding in Me does His works."

In these words, which Yahshua often repeated, we see what it is to truly enter into God's rest. Entering into His rest requires ceasing from one's own labors (Hebrews 4:10). Sabbath is not defined by what a man is doing externally, it is defined by being in a state of perfect harmony and agreement with God. When a man no longer seeks his own will; when he no longer goes his own way; when he is no longer guided by his intellect and reason; when he has died to all personal initiative; when he only does the will of the Father - then he has entered into rest.

It is revealed in Yahshua's words that the rest we are to enter into extends even as far as the words we speak. Yahshua proclaimed that He did not speak a word of His own initiative. He only spoke that which the Father gave Him to speak. This is perfect rest. It is true Sabbath.

It mattered not whether Yahshua and His disciples were doing something physically that looked like work on the Sabbath day. If they were doing the will of the Father then they were at perfect rest, they were fulfilling Sabbath. Sabbath is not determined by external observation, it is an inward state of complete agreement with the Father. Sabbath is perfect obedience. It is doing precisely what the Father wills for man to do, no more and no less.

When Yahshua was condemned by the Jews for healing on the Sabbath, He revealed to them what true Sabbath was, but they did not have ears to hear it.

John 5:16-17

And for this reason the Jews were persecuting Yahshua, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working."

In another place Yahshua said that He was always beholding the Father, and He was doing those things He saw the Father doing. Yahshua healed on the Sabbath day because He saw the Father healing on the Sabbath day. This is what He declared to the Jews that they did not understand. True Sabbath is doing what the Father is doing. True Sabbath is obedience to what He reveals we are to be doing.

If Yahshua had observed the Father healing on the Sabbath day, and He had refused to do so Himself, He would have been a Sabbath breaker. When the Father makes His will known to us in any instance, we are at rest when we obey. We fail to enter into rest when we refuse to obey.

The Jews only saw the external type that was given to represent Sabbath. They saw the Law which said that work was not to be done on the seventh day. Yet they failed to see what the Law was truly typifying. Yahweh was not concerned that man should rest from all physical labor one day a week. However, He was immensely concerned that man should not do anything that originated outside of the will of God. The Laws concerning the Sabbath day were merely types and shadows, but the Jews could not get past the types and shadows to see the true fulfillment.

Yahshua was fulfilling Sabbath completely by never doing anything of His own initiative. Sabbath was not fulfilled by adhering to that which was a shadow of the Sabbath. Yahshua walked in the substance while the rest of the Jews were walking in shadows and figures. The Jews would refrain from physical labor one day a week, but they failed to truly walk in Sabbath. If they had known true Sabbath rest they would not have condemned One who was walking in complete harmony with the will of the Father.

The whole Godhead is in a state of Sabbath rest. There is only one will, the will of the

Father. The Son is in complete agreement with the will of the Father, being fully surrendered to the carrying out of His will. Likewise the Spirit is in complete agreement with the Son, carrying out His will.

John 16:13

"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; *for He will not speak on His own initiative*, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come."

Yahweh is looking for man to also enter into this place of rest where there is no initiative anywhere in creation other than Yahweh's own initiative. When the Father wills one thing, and others will something else, no matter how noble or good it appears, this is defined as striving. Striving is willing something that has not originated in the mind of the Father.

Christianity is striving continuously. They are always willing things the Father is not willing. They are continuously setting their hands to do things which they have not received by the Spirit of God. It does not matter how noble or right it seems. A person can share the gospel with another human being and be striving. A person can heal the sick and be striving. A person can cast out a demon and be striving. A person can prophesy and be striving. A person can perform all manner of miracles and be striving.

How can these things be? How could it be striving and sin to do any of these things? The answer is revealed in the following words of Yahshua.

Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

The Lord reveals that on the day of judgment there will be many who will come to Him thinking they will receive praise and honor, yet dishonor and punishment will be their portion. What is the sin that these have committed? Their actions were that they were prophesying in His name, they were casting out demons in His name, and they were performing miracles in His name. What could possibly be wrong with these activities? Why are these people condemned as those who practice lawlessness?

Yahshua is not speaking against adulterers, thieves, or murderers here. Such transgressions were clearly forbidden in the ten commandments. If one has eyes to see, however, they will realize that what is spoken of here is also in violation of one of the commandments. The commandment is "remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy."

As we have already defined Sabbath, it is entering into the rest of God. Sabbath is only doing that which the Father leads us to do. Whether one does an apparently good act, or an evil act, it is still a violation of Sabbath if the Father is not the originator of it. Any activity arising of man's own initiative, even seemingly good deeds, is a violation of Sabbath. Yahshua did all of the things He spoke of in this passage; He prophesied, He cast out demons, and He performed miracles. However, He never did any of these things of His own initiative. He only did that which the Father instructed Him to do.

It was very possible for Yahshua to do miraculous works of His own initiative. Before He began His ministry He was tempted in this very point. After fasting for forty days in the wilderness we are told that He was hungry. Satan came to tempt Him and his first temptation was for Christ to turn the stones into bread and thereby satisfy His hunger. Yahshua could have done this.

One might ask, "What would be the evil of such an act?" Yahshua was hungry. He was the Son of God. It wouldn't have hurt any man or any part of creation to turn the stones into bread. It would have only violated one thing, it would not have been the Father's will.

Matthew 4:3-4

And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

Yahshua understood this matter of Sabbath and doing the Father's will, and His answer to Satan addresses this very important point. In essence He said, "True life is found in doing only those things which God reveals to us." In another place Yahshua said, "My meat is to do the will of the Father who sent Me" (John 4:34). The Father already had a provision for His Son's hunger. After Satan departed we are told, "and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him" (Matthew 4:11).

Christianity at large does not understand this most vital concept. If put in a similar circumstance, how many saints would consider whether doing an act within their power is the will of the Father? Most only think of what they are able to do. They give no thought to whether the Father would have them do it. It is possible to prophesy, and many do so very often. Few consider whether the Father would have them do so. They only concern themselves with "Can I prophesy?" They do that which seems good to them, falsely believing that any prophesying is pleasing to the Father if it is a true word of prophecy.

Many saints are involved in casting out demons, and again most only concern themselves with whether or not they can do so, not considering whether it is the will of the Father. The same is true of performing miracles, including miracles of healing. There are some who say that it is always the Father's will to heal and there is no need to seek the mind of the Father in this issue. Such people are deluded and they should take the words of Yahshua to heart. He said, "Many will come to Me in that day" and they will say, "Did we not do these things in Your name?"

The word *many* in this passage can have the connotation of meaning *the majority*. How incredible to think that the majority of saints will stand before Christ in judgment and they will falsely believe that they were pleasing God when they were doing all of these works of their own initiative. Yahshua clearly defines in this passage what pleases His Father. The one who will enter into the kingdom of heaven is "he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven."

The saint who only considers what he can do is on the wrong track. His first thought should always be to discern the mind of the Father in any matter. If the majority of saints are displeasing to the Father, then there is no value in being in the majority. Simply because the masses of Christendom are thinking and acting in a certain manner is no reason to join them. What comfort will there be in knowing that you and a majority of saints hear the words, "Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness"?

To those who still doubt the meaning of Yahshua's words here, consider why He

referred to these who were doing this prophesying, casting out demons, and miracles as those “who practice lawlessness.” Lawlessness is the state of being out from under authority. Lawlessness is having your own law, disregarding the established law.

Yahweh is the only true law. He alone has the power to determine what man should do. Yahshua proclaims that men who do the will of the Father in heaven will enter into the kingdom of heaven. Those who fail to do His will are considered lawless, even if their actions are seemingly good, and even if they appear to be of a supernatural nature.

You may wonder that the saints could perform such supernatural deeds if the Father is not directing them to do so. How could they have the power to do these things unless the Spirit is guiding and leading? The scriptures plainly reveal that men can do so. Yahshua could have turned the stones to bread, and likewise Yahshua has given the same power and authority that He walked in to mankind. Consider the implications of the following passage of scripture.

I Corinthians 14:27-33

If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two or at the most three, and each in turn, and let one interpret; but if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God. And let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment. But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted; and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets; for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

The church in Corinth was a church that was out of order. There was great confusion in their meetings, and this confusion was not the will of God. What was the source of confusion? Were people fighting and screaming and fornicating and indulging in every form of debauchery in their meetings? No! (Although, these things did exist among them.) Their chaos was the result of people exercising spiritual gifts. They were speaking in tongues and prophesying, but it was sheer bedlam.

Did Paul say that these people were prophesying and speaking in tongues by the power of Satan? No, he never asserted any such thing. The anointing of God was present in these things, but these saints had not learned that they needed to submit all such activity to the Father and to seek His mind and His will. To exercise these spiritual gifts apart from the leading of the Father is lawlessness, and lawlessness leads to chaos, which is what they had in their meetings.

Did you note Paul’s words, “the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets”? In essence he is telling them, “Just because you can do a thing doesn’t mean you have to do a thing. Just because you can speak in tongues doesn’t mean you must. Just because you can give a word of prophecy doesn’t mean you have to do so. You can control yourself. The spirit within you is subject to you.”

Some saints mistakenly think that every time they sense a tongue or a prophecy is present within them that they must speak it out, even if it causes a disruption to the assembled body. No! Paul is saying, “You can control it. The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.”

The Father is not honored when people speak a tongue, when they prophesy, when they cast out demons, when they perform miracles. He is only glorified when people do these things as He directs them. Yahshua did not heal every leper. He did not open the eyes

of every blind man. He did not heal all those who were sick. He only did those things the Father led Him to do. He did nothing of His own initiative.

What a critical matter this is. Christianity is running over with personal initiative. There is little consideration for the will of the Father. People only consider what they can do, disregarding whether it is the will of the Father. For this reason the majority will appear before the Lord on that day of judgment and He will say, "Depart from Me, you lawless ones."

If the Corinthian believers had considered the words of Yahshua they would have seen their own error. He said, "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak" (John 12:49). Yahshua could have spoken many profound things. He could have proclaimed mysteries. He could have spoken astonishing revelations. When He taught He could have spoken plainly instead of cloaking His meaning in parables. He could have done all of these things, even as saints today can speak many things, but He did not do so. He only spoke that which the Father commanded Him to speak, and so should we.

There are many things people *can* do today, but they are not all the will of the Father. Many saints mistakenly believe that because something is supernatural that the Father must be the author of it. This is not true in the supernatural realm anymore than it is in the natural.

In the natural realm we are told that all things in heaven and earth have been created by God, and in Him all things consist or hold together (Colossians 1:16-17). The presence of God is everywhere in His creation, and we are told that He is "over all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:6). Yet just because He is present in His whole creation we cannot argue that everything done by man is the will of the Father.

Man was created by God, and man's abilities were given to him by the same. The power of procreation is one such ability, and indeed there is much that is supernatural in this ability of man. We cannot say that because man can go out and have relations with any woman he desires, and that this intimacy can result in offspring coming forth, that it is the will of God that man do so. In fact, we have clear words from the Father telling us that it is His will that man should NOT be promiscuous in this manner. Yet the Father allows man to do this if he should desire.

It is no different in spiritual matters. The Holy Spirit has given gifts to men in the church, and they can exercise them much as they please, but it is not the will of the Father that they do so. A saint cannot assert that because he was able to prophesy that it was the Father's will, anymore than he can say that because he could raise up offspring by a woman that is not his wife that it was the Father's will. The scriptures state that spiritual gifts are good, given to edify the body, and it also states that children are a blessing from God. However, both spiritual gifts and the power of procreation can be misused in a lawless manner.

As one considers this, and as they understand what Sabbath truly means - perfect agreement with the Father and His will in every situation, it is possible to see that virtually all of the sins of this world are the result of Sabbath breaking. They are the result of man doing something of his own initiative.

Entering into the Sabbath rest of God is to embrace death to initiative. We are at rest when everything that the Father wills becomes our will. We are at rest when we have no initiative of our own, no will of our own in any matter. Even if we should discern that the will of the Father will lead us to places that are painful we should seek to proclaim as did

Yahshua, “Nevertheless, not My will, but Thy will be done.” This is Sabbath rest.



The Tree of Strife

Having read the previous chapter, you should be starting to get a glimpse of how truly foundational is this issue of the Sabbath. It is tragic that such deception and darkness has overtaken the body of Christ until the meaning of Sabbath has been reduced to a set of doctrines regarding the cessation of labor during one day of the week. The only understanding among the majority of the saints is that Sabbath refers to some desire that the Father has that mankind should not work one day out of seven. For most Christians, the true significance of Sabbath remains hidden.

As we have seen, Sabbath actually refers to man dying to all personal initiative. It pertains to man being truly governed by Yahweh so that all of his actions and all of his words have their origin in Him. Sabbath is man ceasing from his own labors and entering into a state where every moment of life is in harmony with the revealed will of the Father. This requires that man must always be sensitive to the voice of the Spirit, for it is the Spirit of God that discloses to the saint the mind and will of the Father.

I Corinthians 2:10-12

For the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God.

When Yahshua walked the Earth He said that He was always beholding the Father. He did not begin His earthly ministry until the Spirit descended upon Him and abided with Him. Yahshua is our example and it is to Him, and the pattern of obedience in which He walked, that we are being conformed (Romans 8:29).

For this reason it is essential that the saint who would walk in true Sabbath rest should be in constant communication with the Spirit of God. Unless we know the mind and will of the Father, moment by moment, we cannot walk as He would have us. In the 8th chapter of his epistle to the Romans, Paul tells the saints in Rome that those who are mature sons of God are led by the Spirit of God (Romans 8:14).

In every decision, at every turning and crossroads, man is not to have any initiative of his own. He is not to decide the course he would take. Man is not to be led by his own passions and desires, by the leading of his soul. Man is to have no will in any matter other than to know the Father's will and to do it. This is to be his highest aim and single objective.

It will necessarily and frequently occur that the desires of our souls will be in contradiction to the revealed will of the Father. Sometimes the gulf between our soulish desires and the Father's desire will be exceedingly great. In these times we are to put to death the desires of the soul that we might follow obediently the course the Father has determined for us. This is the subject of Yahshua's following discourse.

Matthew 16:24-25

Then said Yahshua to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it."

The life Yahshua is speaking of is the soul life of man. It is the mind, will, and emotions of man. Man's mind can contrive many paths to walk down that seem good and acceptable. Man's emotions can passionately urge the pursuit of a particular course. Man's will can determine to walk down paths of his own choosing. Solomon stated that "there is a way that seems good unto a man, but its end is the way of death (Proverbs 14:12, 16:25). The apostle Paul also spoke of the necessity of turning away from the desires of our flesh that we might walk the path that the Spirit guides us down.

Romans 8:13

For if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

How did man come to be in this state where present within him is an innate sense of good and evil that is out of harmony with the mind of God? The opening chapters of Genesis reveal the answer.

When Adam, whose name means *man*, was originally created he did not have an innate soulish sense of good and evil. Adam received his guidance and his understanding of what was good from God. We are told that God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden and He gave him the charge to tend it. We are also told that God caused many trees to grow from the ground, some of which were good for food, but the fruit of one tree was forbidden.

Genesis 2:8-17

And Yahweh God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground Yahweh God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil... Then Yahweh God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. And Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die."

At this point in Adam's life, he had no internal sense of good and evil. He neither had this capacity in his soul, neither did he have the indwelling Spirit of God to make known the will of God to him. Adam walked with God and communed with Him on an external level. The Father made known His will to Adam through means of this relationship. It is revealed a bit later that it was the manner of God to walk in the Garden and to meet and speak with Adam there.

Genesis 3:8-9

And they heard the sound of Yahweh God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Yahweh God among the trees of the garden. Then Yahweh God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"

Adam, in his original created form had no sense of good and evil present within him. All of his ways were determined by communication with Yahweh. Yahweh spoke to Adam

and made known to Adam that which He would have him to do. Both good and evil were made known to Adam by direct communication with Yahweh God. Yahweh told Adam the things that were good and desirable; Adam should tend the garden and eat of its trees. Yahweh also told Adam what constituted evil. There was only one thing that was described as being outside of the will of Yahweh. Adam was not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Things were very simple for Adam. If he did the things Yahweh commanded him to do he was walking in obedience and adhering to good. If Adam did the one thing Yahweh commanded him not to do he would be walking in disobedience and this would be evil. Both good and evil for Adam were made known through direct communication with Yahweh. In this we see that good equates to doing Yahweh's expressed will, while evil is doing that which is not His will.

We know the tragic occurrence that took place in the Garden of Eden. We are told that the serpent came and deceived Eve. He tempted her to eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree. What he revealed in the temptation is highly important.

Genesis 3:5

"For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and *you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*"

Let us examine these words closely. The temptation that Satan brought to Eve was the temptation to "be like God," and the particular attribute that was characterized as unique to God was the ability to know "good and evil." Up until this time neither Adam nor Eve were able to determine good and evil themselves. There was only one who determined good and evil, and this was Yahweh. What Yahweh declared to be good was good, and what He declared to be evil was evil. He alone could make such judgments. He alone had the authority to determine what was allowable and what was forbidden, what was righteous conduct and what was unrighteous conduct. Yahweh alone could determine what activities should be performed, and which should be abstained from.

In all of creation, Yahweh did not create a single being that was endowed with the authority to determine for itself good and evil. All created things came forth from Yahweh, and for all things to be at rest they had to be in a state of perfect harmony with His will. No created being had the authority to will things of its own initiative. All things found their will in the mind of the One who was the Creator.

What the serpent offered Eve was the ability to do something that was reserved for the Creator alone. Eve could determine her own way. She could decide for herself what activities were good and which were evil. She could, within her own being, find the ability to govern herself.

Some saints have the mistaken idea that the tragedy of eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was that evil activities came forth. They look at Cain murdering Abel, they look at the selfishness, lying, coveting, adultery, and all manner of evil that came upon the Earth and they say, "This is the great evil of eating of the forbidden tree."

The great evil was not these things. The great evil was that man began to look within himself to perceive what was right and wrong. Man ceased to always look to Yahweh to discern what His will was. Man now had his own initiative and a will that was severed from the will of God. It was not that man began doing bad things that was the great tragedy, it was that man began to have a will of his own that initiated things apart from the mind of

Yahweh.

If man had eaten of the forbidden fruit and then he had always chosen to follow that which he determined to be good and right, he would have been just as much of a transgressor as one who always chose to follow the course that his soul told him was evil. It didn't matter whether man was doing good or evil. What mattered was that man was now finding his sense of what was good and evil in a place other than the mind of Yahweh.

This is the intent of the scripture we previously looked at from Matthew chapter 7. Yahshua said that many will come to Him on the day of judgment saying, "Didn't we do many good things in Your name; we cast out demons, we prophesied, we performed miracles" (my paraphrase), but He will respond that they are lawless and they will not enter into the Kingdom of God.

It matters not whether we choose a path of good, or whether we dedicate ourselves to do evil. If that which we do is based upon our own soulish sense of good and evil then it is detestable to the Father. Only those who do the will of the Father in heaven will enter the Kingdom of God, and we will only know the will of the Father as He reveals it by His Spirit. We must die to that part of us which was quickened and made alive when Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden tree. We must return to a place where "knowing good and evil" is again only an activity of Yahweh. We must quit being "like God," usurping His authority in determining what is good and evil, and we must seek to always know His mind.

It is not the evil deeds of the soulish man that are such a subtle snare to the saint of God, it is the innate and fleshly knowledge of what is good. The saint, thinking that he can determine good himself, looks within his soul to find the path he should walk down. His mind may see no evil in the path he has chosen. It may appear wholly decent and good, even *godlike*, but this is the very peril of the fruit from which Adam and Eve ate. The serpent spoke to Eve and said, "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be *like God*..." (Genesis 3:5).

When the serpent deceived Eve, he knew the temptation would be set before Adam to choose a path of independence from Yahweh. Adam need not look to Yahweh to tell Him what was good and what was evil. Adam need not always seek to know the mind and will of God. Adam could determine these things within his own being. He could choose his own path. He could follow his own righteous inclinations and think himself righteous for following a course of his own choosing.

The saint of God does this as he sets himself to perform activities that seem good, but which he has no specific command from the Father to do. The saint can do something that has the appearance of righteousness, such as prophesying or casting out demons, but it is only truly righteous if the activity was initiated by the Father.

Paul informs the readers of the book of Hebrews that the one who has entered into the Sabbath rest of the Father is the one who has ceased from his own labors. It matters not whether the labor is good or evil, if it did not originate with Yahweh, it is man's labor. This is striving. This is the fruit of eating of the forbidden tree. What the serpent actually set before Adam was the temptation to violate the Sabbath rest of Yahweh. Man, from the fall of Adam, has been in a state of strife for he has been willing and initiating many things that the Father did not command.

The great tragedy today is that the body of Christ has not discerned that it is this innate sense of good and evil that they must die to in order that they might perceive by the Spirit what the good and perfect will of God is in their lives. Most saints have not discerned that they must die to the habit of looking within their soul to find the path they should walk

down.

Rare is the saint who can separate the voice of the Spirit from the voice of his own soul. When the saint looks within to see what he should do and he is met with the soul's answer of the good path before him, a path that eschews evil, he decides that this is the path he must choose and that he must look to God to help him walk this path. Such a saint fails to understand that he must die to the good he finds within his soul that he might discern the voice of the Spirit and find empowerment to walk the path God would have him walk.

This is a most important matter, and one that cannot be stressed too much. I would guess that one out of a hundred thousand decisions made in Christendom today are actually at the leading of the Spirit. All else arises from the soul of man. Look to yourself. Are you listening to the voice of your soul, or the voice of the Spirit of God? Do you recognize that there is present in your soul a sense of righteousness that does not have its source in God? Have you falsely supposed that the sense of right and wrong within your soul is in harmony with God's will for your life?

The saint of God who has been born again of the Spirit must learn to discern the difference between the voice of his own soul and the voice of the Spirit. Many, failing to discern that there is a soulish sense of good and evil present within them, wrongly assume that they are walking according to the will of God when they have only consulted with their own soul and they have not yet discerned the witness of the Spirit of God.

It may seem to some that I am belaboring this point, but it is a most critical point, perhaps the most critical matter in all of the Kingdom of God, yet it is not perceived by the majority. Consider the way the apostle ends his treatise on entering into Sabbath rest in the book of Hebrews. Some have felt like he was suddenly changing topics in the following verses, but they are all of a consistent theme.

Hebrews 4:11-12

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

In order to enter into Sabbath rest we must be able to separate between the voice of the soul and the voice of the spirit. We must refuse the good course the soul brings to mind that we might follow the leading of the Spirit of Christ. We only enter into Sabbath rest as we cease from the works that arise from the soul's sense of good and evil.

Let us end this chapter by taking another look at Yahshua's words, the words of the One whom we are to imitate.

John 5:30

"I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

Yahshua's life was an example of perfect Sabbath rest. He initiated no activity of His own. He only went those places the Father directed Him to go by the Spirit. He only performed those deeds the Father revealed that He should do. He was even perfect in His speech, only speaking what the Father commanded Him to speak. He did the will of the Father in heaven.

It should be noted to the one who would contend that Yahshua did command His disciples to cast out demons, heal the sick, etc., that a very important matter preceded this charge. Yahshua was not giving His disciples a general command for them to participate in these activities as they saw fit, according to their own understanding. He desired that they be led of the Spirit in all that they did. He commanded that they should walk even as He walked, and He always did that which the Spirit revealed to Him to be the will of the Father. We find in scriptures that when He commissioned His disciples to go forth and minister as He had ministered that He very notably commanded that they were to receive the Spirit before they began to minister.

John 20:19-22

When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Yahshua came and stood in their midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples therefore rejoiced when they saw the Lord. therefore Yahshua said to them again, "Peace be with you; *as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.*" And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "*Receive the Holy Spirit.*"

Luke 24:49

"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

Yahshua did not begin His ministry until after the Spirit descended upon Him and rested on Him. In the same way, His disciples could not begin their ministry until after Pentecost when the Spirit was given to them. Why was this so?

It is the Spirit that discloses Yahweh's mind to us. The saint cannot know what the Father would have them do until they receive the Spirit. Yet many do not know this is the reason the Spirit has been given to them. They often fail to see the necessity of the Spirit guiding them into all of their activities for it seems easy enough for them to determine what their activity should be. The scriptures state that the saints of God are to do those things which the Father has prepared beforehand for them.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's workmanship, created in Yahshua the Messiah to do good works, *which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

The saint of God who would turn away from the tree of strife, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, must return to a place where they are discerning the mind of the Father. He no longer walks with man in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the evening. We must have another way to discern His mind. The way He has provided is the indwelling Spirit of God who searches the mind of the Father and makes His will known to us.

Those who would enter into the 7th day of creation since Adam must come to a place of rest in their being. They must enter the Sabbath rest of God by ceasing from their own activity and works. They must do only that which the Father reveals by His Spirit.



Lucifer, the First Sabbath Breaker

We can gain yet more insight into this matter of Sabbath rest by looking at the scripture account of the first violation of Sabbath. As the book of Genesis opens, the first violation of Sabbath has already occurred, and the judgment of Yahweh has fallen upon the one who entered into striving. We see this judgment described even from the opening verses of Genesis.

Genesis 1:1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. But the earth became formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep...

Between verse one and verse two of Genesis a judgment fell upon the earth. This judgment resulted in the earth being made into a wasteland. This wasteland is described as being "formless and void" and covered in darkness. God did not create the earth originally as a wasteland, it became one due to rebellion and God's judgment on this rebellion.

Isaiah 45:18

For thus says Yahweh, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, but formed it to be inhabited), "I am Yahweh, and there is none else."

Due to the errors the translators have incorporated into the most popular English translations of the Bible, this understanding of judgment falling between verse one and verse two of Genesis has been obscured and hidden to the masses. As one examines the scriptures, rightly dividing them, they see that a judgment did indeed fall and that the remainder of the first chapter of Genesis is not speaking of the first creation of the Earth, but of the re-creation of the Earth after it had been judged.

A very clear witness of this fact is the scripture from Isaiah above that says that Yahweh did not create the earth as a waste place. But we see in verse two of the opening chapter of Genesis that it has become a waste place. We need not stop there, however, for the very words and phrasing that describe the state of the world after Yahweh judged it are found duplicated in other passages of scripture.

Jeremiah 4:23

I looked on the earth, and behold, it was formless and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light.

This scripture in Jeremiah serves as a key to unlocking our understanding of Genesis 1:2. We see the identical description of the earth given with all three elements being repeated; the earth is formless, void, and covered in darkness. We need only look to the context of this passage in Jeremiah to perceive that this is describing the judgment of Yahweh falling upon the earth.

Jeremiah 4:8-26

"For this, put on sackcloth, lament and wail; for the fierce anger of Yahweh has not

turned back from us. And it shall come about in that day," declares Yahweh, "that the heart of the king and the heart of the princes will fail; and the priests will be appalled, and the prophets will be astounded... Your ways and your deeds have brought these things to you. This is your evil. How bitter! How it has touched your heart... Disaster on disaster is proclaimed, for the whole land is devastated; suddenly my tents are devastated, My curtains in an instant. How long must I see the standard, and hear the sound of the trumpet? For My people are foolish, they know me not; they are stupid children, and they have no understanding. They are shrewd to do evil, but to do good they do not know." I looked on the earth, and behold, it was formless and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light. I looked on the mountains, and behold, they were quaking, and all the hills moved to and fro. I looked, and behold, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens had fled. I looked, and behold, the fruitful land was a wilderness, and all its cities were pulled down before Yahweh, before His fierce anger.

It is evident from the context of this passage that we are reading about the judgment of Yahweh falling upon those who are disobedient. In the midst of this passage we have a description of the results of His judgment. The earth is made formless and void, and light is removed from it. The fruitful land is made a wasteland.

Is there any doubt that what we read in the second verse of Genesis is describing a similar state of judgment? The phrase "without form and void" occurs in exact repetition in both of these verses. This understanding of the earth lying in a state of judgment is lost to much of Christianity due to the lack of understanding of the translators, and the traditions of the day. Most of the popular translations represent the opening verses of Genesis in the following way. (Note the highlighting)

Genesis 1:1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. *And* the earth *was* formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep...
(NAS)

This erroneous translation makes it sound as if God created the earth as a wasteland, when in fact He did not. Yahweh did not create the earth to be formless and void and covered with darkness. It became this way after rebellion occurred and His judgment fell.

The word the translators have erroneously interpreted as *and* is the Hebrew word *wa*. This word is used as a conjunction, and in many other places the translators have rendered it as *but*. We see this demonstrated in the very next chapter of Genesis.

Genesis 2:6

But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.
(NAS)

The word rendered *but* in this verse is the same word *wa* that the translators rendered as *and* in Genesis 1:2. Again, as we look at the word rendered *was* in Genesis 1:2, we see that it is equally rendered as *became* in many other instances. The word in the Hebrew is described in the following manner in Strong's Hebrew Dictionary.

1961 hayah (haw-yaw);
a primitive root [compare 1933]; to exist, i.e. be or *become*, *come to pass* (always emphatic, and not a mere copula or auxiliary):

Again, we need not look far to see that the translators understood that the word had this meaning.

Genesis 2:7

Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man *became* [hayah] a living being.
(NAS)

Why did the translators choose to render these words in Genesis 1:2 as they have done? It was simply because they either did not understand the scriptures, or they did understand, but it did not fit with the orthodox teachings of the day. Let us look one more time at how these scriptures should be properly rendered.

Genesis 1:1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. *But* the earth *became* formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep...

What was the state of this original earth of Genesis 1:1 before it was judged? The scriptures reveal that it was in some ways similar to the earth that was re-created in the following verses of Genesis. There was a Garden of Eden upon that earth as well.

Ezekiel 28:12-15

Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, "Thus says Yahweh God, "You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz, and the diamond; the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper; the lapis lazuli, the turquoise, and the emerald; and the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you."

This passage of scripture is describing Lucifer before he sinned. He is described in type as the king of Tyre, but we can see clearly from this passage that no common king is being described. It is not a man that this passage speaks of, but an "anointed cherub" who had "the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty."

Lucifer is described in his beauty and perfection. He was adorned with many precious jewels. He had access to the presence of God. And we also see that God placed him in the Garden of Eden.

We never see recorded in Genesis a description of this Lucifer, this perfect and beautiful creature being in Eden. Rather, we see him first appear as a serpent. Lucifer was described as "full of wisdom" and the word for serpent comes from the same root as the

word *sapient*, which means *wise*. Furthermore, we have this description of the serpent.

Genesis 3:1

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which Yahweh God had made.

The word cunning speaks of wisdom that has been corrupted and has been turned to evil purposes. The first appearance of Lucifer in the re-created earth of Adam and Eve reveals that he has already fallen, iniquity has been found in him. Lest some should question whether the serpent is actually Lucifer, we will add the following scripture.

Revelation 12:7-9

And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, *the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan*, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

When was Satan thrown down to the earth? It was after iniquity was found in him. It was after he rebelled against Yahweh. It was then that he was referred to as Satan (the adversary), and as the serpent. This is the only description we have of him in Genesis.

When did Lucifer exist in his perfect state in the Garden of Eden, as Ezekiel records? It was in a prior earth. It was the earth of Genesis 1:1, before the earth was judged, made formless and void and covered in darkness. In his perfect and beautiful state Lucifer (the Light Bearer) was in the Eden of God.

But something happened to cause Lucifer to fall from his once unblemished state and to become corrupted. Something occurred that led Yahweh to judge him and to cast him down to the earth along with the angels that followed him in rebellion. Something occurred which led Yahweh in His wrath to destroy the earth and make it a wasteland and to seal it in darkness as a judgment, awaiting a day when He would re-create it.

We find the account of Lucifer's transgression in two passages of scripture. One is in the book of Ezekiel. Let us look at the remainder of this passage.

Ezekiel 28:15-18

"You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you. By the abundance of your trade you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, that they may see you. By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade, you profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; it has consumed you, and I have turned you to ashes on the earth in the eyes of all who see you."

We see a further description of Lucifer, and the account of his transgression in the

book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 14:3-15

And it will be in the day when Yahweh gives you rest from your pain and turmoil and harsh service in which you have been enslaved, that you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon, and say, "How the oppressor has ceased, and how fury has ceased! Yahweh has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of rulers which used to strike the peoples in fury with unceasing strokes, which subdued the nations in anger with unrestrained persecution. The whole earth is at rest and is quiet; they break forth into shouts of joy. Even the cypress trees rejoice over you, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, 'Since you were laid low, no tree cutter comes up against us.' Sheol from beneath is excited over you to meet you when you come; it arouses for you the spirits of the dead, all the leaders of the earth; it raises all the kings of the nations from their thrones. They will all respond and say to you, 'Even you have been made weak as we, you have become like us. Your pomp and the music of your harps have been brought down to Sheol; Maggots are spread out as your bed beneath you, and worms are your covering.' How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit."

In both of these passages we see Satan associated with a king and a kingdom of the earth. Indeed, Satan is described as the "ruler of this world" (John 12:31, 16:11). He rules over the kingdoms of men, and these kings and kingdoms take on his characteristics. Even as he tempted Eve in the same way that he transgressed, to be like God, so he perpetuates his sin and his characteristics in the kingdoms of man. But clearly, this passage in Isaiah, like the passage in Ezekiel, is referring to Lucifer, not a mortal king. Satan was clearly cast out of heaven, and this is related in the following words.

"How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations!"

Yahshua spoke to His disciples of witnessing this event.

Luke 10:18

And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning."

What a tragedy that the greatest of created beings should transgress the will of Yahweh and be judged. More tragic still is that he led one third of the angels to follow his pattern of disobedience, and that he should tempt mankind to commit the same grievous error.

In examining this passage of scripture from Isaiah we can discern that Lucifer's transgression was a violation of Sabbath. Lucifer was a created being and all created beings were to be subject to the authority of Yahweh. They were to have no initiative of their own.

They were created for Yahweh's pleasure and they were to find their highest fulfillment in doing that which Yahweh created them to do.

Lucifer, however, began to look at his own beauty, wisdom, and perfection and he thought it unreasonable that he should be subject to Yahweh in all things. He desired to determine for himself what his way would be. He no longer desired to be subject to God. He wanted to be like God, to determine for himself what was good and what was evil. Rather than being at rest, having no initiative of his own, he began to manifest self-will. This is revealed clearly in his words.

"But you said in your heart, *I will* ascend to heaven; *I will* raise my throne above the stars of God, and *I will* sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. *I will* ascend above the heights of the clouds; *I will* make myself like the Most High."

Five times Lucifer said, "*I will*." He was full of personal initiative. He began to want to determine for himself what was good and what was evil. He wanted to take unto himself that which belonged to Yahweh alone, the right of determination. He wanted to purpose and to choose for himself. He no longer wanted to be subject to another, not even the One who had created him.

This is the great transgression of Lucifer, he violated the Sabbath rest of God. He was not content to do the works of God, he wanted to do his own works. He was not God, but he wanted to be like God in having the ability to choose his own way.

What a contrast this is with the Son of God. Yahshua was God, yet He did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped or held onto. Instead, He freely emptied Himself and took upon the form of a bond-servant, one who lived to do the will of another.

Lucifer was not equal with God, but he desired to become equal. Yahshua was equal, but he laid His equality aside. What a rebuke this is to the error of Satan. The Son of God humbled Himself when that which was created through the Son of God would not walk in the same humility.

Satan came and tempted mankind to repeat his error, to desire to determine their own way, to find right and wrong, good and evil within themselves, rather than looking to Yahweh to know these things. Yet the Son of God made it possible for us to return to the position of humility and submission that Adam abandoned.

Philippians 2:5-13

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Yahshua the Messiah, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross... So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

To will and to work for His good pleasure rather than our own is Sabbath rest. This is what Lucifer rejected. He was not content to will and to work for Yahweh's pleasure. He wanted to pursue his own pleasure. To do so is to set oneself in opposition to God. To do so is to enter into striving.

Five times Lucifer said, "I will," thus demonstrating an initiative of his own. Seven times in the gospel of John we have Yahshua's recorded words that He did nothing of His own initiative. As an eighth witness it is also recorded that the Spirit does nothing of His own initiative (John 16:13). In seeing this we can ascertain that the great struggle of all creation is to come into this place of rest where the creation also does nothing of its own initiative. Will mankind follow Yahshua into the Sabbath rest of God, or will they continue with Satan in a place of striving?

We read in the scriptures that Satan's initiative led to his being cast out of heaven along with the angels that joined him. The wrath of Yahweh was revealed and the earth was made a barren, fruitless wasteland and was covered in darkness. This is equally the state of any man's life that chooses the path of initiative. Their lives become darkened as they have no understanding of Yahweh's will for their lives. Though their lives may be full of activity, all of their fruit will be unacceptable before God. Their lives will become a barren wasteland. They will fail to fulfill the purpose for which they were created.

The promised land of rest is a fruitful land flowing with milk and honey. Those who would enter in must turn away from the error of Satan, they must choose to have no initiative of their own. They must seek only to know the mind of the Father and to do His will. Only then will they know Sabbath rest.



Headcovering, a Sign to the Angels

Knowing that the first Sabbath violation occurred in heaven among the angels, we should not be surprised to find there are more scriptural passages that relate to this original sin among them. One of the most enlightening and least understood scriptures is found in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. It is in his discourse concerning the issue of headcovering.

I Corinthians 11:10

Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.

Why does Paul instruct the Corinthian believers that it is the custom of the church for the women to have a covering on their heads, and what specifically does he mean when he says "because of the angels"? To find out we must look at this issue of headcovering and see what it symbolizes. The passage in which we find these words begins in this way:

I Corinthians 11:2-3

Now I praise you because you remember me in everything, and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you. But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.

The apostle Paul commends the Corinthian believers for holding to the traditions that he delivered to them as being the traditions of the churches of God. The word rendered as *tradition* here is also properly interpreted as *precept* and *ordinance*. It refers to the doctrines and practices of the church. As an apostle, Paul was instrumental in establishing the church in Corinth. In this foundational role, he delivered to them the basic doctrines and practices of the church as revealed by the Holy Spirit and proclaimed by the apostles.

At the end of this passage on headcovering, Paul concludes this matter by stating:

I Corinthians 11:16

But if one is inclined to be contentious, we have no other practice, nor have the churches of God.

Throughout his discourse on headcovering, which covers 15 verses, Paul is speaking of that which is the teaching and practice of all of the churches of God. He begins by commending the Corinthians for adhering to these traditions that he delivered to them, and he concludes by rebuking anyone who would be contentious and disagree with these traditions. He states, "we (referring to the apostles) have no other practice, nor do the churches of God." The custom of the church is to practice headcovering as Paul describes it in this passage. There is no other custom. No other practice is taught or accepted.

Paul establishes in these words that headcovering is not a Corinthian matter. It is the practice of all of the churches of God. He concludes that it is not proper or acceptable to have any practice other than that which has been delivered to them and described to be the practice of the churches. This is a universal matter. It is something that includes the whole

church of God in its scope.

What is this custom of headcovering of which Paul speaks? He continues by declaring the heart of the matter.

I Corinthians 11:3

But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.

The matter being discussed is one of government. It has to do with Yahweh's established order in the kingdom of God. In the government of Yahweh, He is the head of all things. It is from Yahweh that all authority originates. Yahweh is the source of all rule.

In the government of Yahweh, He has determined that there should be authorities and there should be those who submit to these authorities. Recognizing the government of Yahweh, and submitting oneself to it, results in rest. Failing to recognize Yahweh's government, or to submit to it, results in striving. He has set an order both among the Godhead and among all of creation.

Among the Godhead the Son takes the position of the Christ, the Sent One of Yahweh. He freely emptied Himself of His equality with Yahweh and He humbled Himself and learned obedience to the Father. He took the Father to be His head.

In essence, Christ has no head of His own. He does not determine His own way. He does not do His own will. He declares that He lives to do the will of the Father. He states over and over that He does nothing of His own initiative. He only does those things the Father reveals to Him. In His earthly walk, He was so perfect in this matter that He did not even speak a word of His own. He only spoke those things the Father commanded Him to speak. God the Father was and is the head of Christ, and Christ responds to this headship in perfect submission and obedience.

We further see, although Paul does not mention it here, that the Spirit of God also has a place in the established order of the Godhead. The Spirit is in submission to the Son. We find this stated in the gospel of John.

John 16:13-15

"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose it to you."

The established order in the Godhead has nothing to do with who is greater. It is a matter of government agreed upon in the Godhead. We are told that, as the Son, Yahshua is equal to the Father. The Jews knew that Yahshua claimed this to be true and for this reason they attempted to stone Him as a blasphemer.

John 5:18

For this cause therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.

In their essence, Yahshua declared that He and the Father were one (John 10:30, 17:22). The matter of order in the Godhead is not determined by who is greater, it is simply a governmental arrangement that has been established. As the Son, Yahshua is equal to the Father, but as Christ He steps into the role of a subordinate. He only does those things the Father instructs Him to do.

Among God's creation there is also an established order. The order of creation is a matter that Yahweh has decided. Neither man's will, nor the will of the angels have entered into the determination of the government of Yahweh. In this order we are told that Christ is the head of man and man is the head of woman.

There is also an order established among the angels, but this has no bearing upon man, so it is not discussed here by Paul, except in the one brief mention.

Christ being the head of man is the same as Yahweh God being the head of Christ. Man is to have no head of his own. He is to not will things of himself. He is to have no initiative of his own. As the sons of God are being conformed to the image of Christ, they are to walk as He walked. Although many would consider it almost blasphemous to entertain the thought, the saints of Yahweh are to get to the place where they can say as did Yahshua, "I do nothing of my own initiative. The very words I speak are not my words, but the words the Father gives me to speak."

As Christ has Yahweh God as His head, and as man has Christ as His head, through the agency of the Spirit making known to man the will of the Son, man will ultimately be doing the will of the Father. All will be at rest. There will be no striving anywhere. This is the Father's will, the will of the Son, and the will of the Spirit. I trust it is also the will of a chosen remnant of the people of God.

There is one more mention of the order of authority and headship in this passage. We are told that man is the head of woman. This is Yahweh's established order. Woman is to have no head of her own. She is to have man as her head. If she is unmarried, her father is to be her head. If she is married, her husband is to be her head. She is to have no will or initiative of her own before man. She is to practice submission to man even as man is to practice submission to Christ and even as Christ practices submission before Yahweh God.

In other places in scripture we are told that this was always the practice of godly women ever since the creation of man and woman.

I Peter 3:5-6

For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands. Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

Even as man calls Christ Lord, and Christ has Yahweh as His Lord, woman is to have man as her lord. In each case, when the one under headship is submissive to their head, this finds favor with God and it results in peace and rest among His creation. To uncover one's head is to enter into striving, and this brings the judgment of God.

This is the deep principle of which Paul is speaking to the Corinthians. There is an established governmental order in the Kingdom of God, an order that Yahweh has established by His own counsel, and when we recognize this order and submit to the one who is our head we will enter into Sabbath rest.

Peculiar among those under authority is the practice of woman. She is to have a

symbol of authority upon her head. The woman alone is given the privilege and honor of proclaiming the government of God and to give an outward testimony of her willingness to rest under that government. She does this by wearing a covering over her hair.

I Corinthians 11:4-10

Every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying, disgraces his head. But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying, disgraces her head; for she is one and the same with her whose head is shaved. For if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head. For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.

I have labored in other writings to go more into depth in this matter of headcovering, and indeed there is much more that can be said. However, I wish to not stray too far from the subject at hand, which is Sabbath rest. We saw in the previous chapter that Satan uncovered his head. He was not content to remain in the place in creation that Yahweh had established for him. Although he was perfect in beauty, full of wisdom and the sum of perfection, he was not satisfied. It was not enough that he was the anointed cherub that covered. He desired more. He did not want to submit to Yahweh's order for him.

What is to be observed in this passage of scripture in I Corinthians is that it is the precept and practice of the churches of God to refuse to continue any longer with Satan in his rebellion. It is the precept and practice of the church to declare that they recognize Yahweh's governmental order, and they freely accept and embrace it. As an outward testimony to this, the women of the church are to wear a covering over their heads. In doing so they are testifying that they find Yahweh's governmental order acceptable. They do not wish to overthrow it as did Satan.

Paul states that women wear the covering "because of the angels." The church is always being observed by both the holy and the fallen angels. As an outward and visible symbol the woman covers her head and in effect is stating that she has chosen to accept the place Yahweh has determined for her in His Kingdom. She seeks to neither rise above it, nor to fall below it. She refuses to take the path of Satan and to overthrow the government of God and to begin to walk in her own initiative.

By having a symbol of authority on her head, the holy women are giving a rebuke to the fallen angels, and they are giving a positive affirmation to those angels who did not follow Satan in uncovering his head. If women could understand how they are constantly being observed by the angels, and what a powerful witness headcovering gives, they would not so casually dismiss these words of Paul as something that was merely a custom of the time, or something that was simply a practice of the Corinthian church.

As one reads this passage, one can see that this was not a Corinthian matter. It was the practice of all of the churches of God. Furthermore, as one understands what headcovering symbolizes they will realize that it touches on the great struggle of all of creation. It relates to the issue of Sabbath rest and whether the saints of God will enter into God's rest, or whether they will continue to uncover their heads and perform their own works.

Headcovering is a declaration of being in a condition of rest under the government of God.

As one looks at Christendom today they will find that headcovering is seldom practiced. This is in keeping with the days we live in. There are precious few saints that are truly walking in a position of rest before God. Myriads are following their own will and their own ways. They are speaking their own words. They are choosing for themselves what their activities will be. They are prophesying as it seems right to them. They are casting out demons according to their own counsel. They are building church buildings and creating their own kingdoms according to their own desires. They are asking the Father to satisfy their lusts and to prosper them in the mammon of the world. They are failing to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

In actuality, Christianity by and large has their head uncovered before Yahweh and in turn women in the church have their heads uncovered before their husbands and fathers. Many women know nothing of submitting to their husbands. Calling their husband lord is the height of absurdity to them. Likewise, men know little of submitting to Christ. They do the things that seem good to them, and if Christ happens to ask them to do something they agree with they will do it. However, they know little of what it is to die to self and to follow Christ down paths that are not attractive to the flesh and to the soul.

Like many wives, men tell Christ that they will do what He asks if it seems good to them. The Father is merely letting us see in marriages within the church a reflection of the relationship between the church and Christ. There is currently little submission in either realm.

Paul stated in Ephesians 5:22 and following that the relationship between a man and his wife is a mysterious representation of the relationship between Christ and the church. It is my belief that the state of marriages within the church is an accurate reflection of the church's relationship with Christ. Currently there is very little reverence, obedience, submission and love present. The church to a large extent has its head uncovered. But these things will change among a remnant of believers before we enter the 7th millennium and the Sabbath rest of God.

Knowing that Satan's original transgression before Yahweh was uncovering his head, it is no wonder that he works so tirelessly to get all others to follow his pattern of rebellion. Even as he desired to be like God, he also enticed Eve by telling her that if she ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, she would be like God. Even as he uncovered his head and abandoned his place in the order and government of Yahweh, so he entices men and women to do the same.

It requires humility to walk in submission to God's order, but Paul in describing the last days to Timothy said that in these days men would be proud (II Timothy 3:2). Due to the pride of men and women today, even those in the church, there is little headcovering practiced. Like Satan, many have cast off the headship established by Yahweh and they declare this to be good. To be uncovered, however, is to fall from the place of Sabbath rest in God. It leads to barren lives that do not produce fruit that is acceptable and pleasing to the Father.

As we are poised to enter into the 7th day of mankind, the day that typifies Sabbath rest, a great upheaval must occur among the saints of God. Men and women must learn to cover their heads and to have no initiative or will of their own. They must return to a place of rest before God where they can say with Yahshua, "My meat, (that which gives me

sustenance and life), is to do the will of the Father.” Yahshua said, “Those who do the will of My Father in heaven will enter into the kingdom of God.”

Is it not amazing that the Father has given a charge to the church to provide an outward sign and testimony that they have refused the error of Satan, the error of not being satisfied with Yahweh’s will for His creation? How the church has failed to discern that in casting off obedience in this matter, they are walking in the same original sin as Satan. Satan wanted to determine his own way. He wanted to do as he pleased. Many men and women in the church have this same attitude. They do as they please and they think that the Father should be satisfied with the offerings of their own rebellious will.

It was a minority of Israel who left the bondage of Egypt and entered into the promised land. Only two men out of a whole nation revered Yahweh enough, and demonstrated faith in Him that they were willing to go in and possess the land as directed. Paul states that the generation of those who perished in the wilderness are given as an example to the church today, and they are a warning of the consequences of disobedience.

The church’s failure today to practice the ordinance, precept, and custom of headcovering that the apostles delivered to the churches is more than just an external failure. The church’s failure is a spiritual one as well as physical. Not only have the majority of women scorned this instruction to cover their heads with a sign symbolizing their understanding and acceptance of the government of God, but the men and women of the church have by and large spiritually uncovered their heads before God. They prefer to govern their own lives and determine their own course and actions. The church is full of independence and of man’s initiative. Multitudes are unaware of the peril before them of failing to enter into God’s rest.

Let us apply all diligence in seeking to enter into God’s rest.



Paul Defines Man's Struggle

Ever since Adam first sinned in the Garden of Eden, mankind has known striving and it has been with great difficulty that he has sought to enter into the Sabbath rest of Yahweh. A great war has raged as the Spirit has made known unto man the mind of Yahweh, yet man's flesh has desired to go a different path, a path of its own choosing. Within the saint of God there is always this struggle present. The spirit of the saint agrees with the revealed will of God, yet the saint's flesh wars against it.

Sabbath rest could be defined as a place where mankind finds contentment with the will and desires of Yahweh. Paul describes the struggle to find this place of contentment in the following scriptures.

Romans 7:18-23

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish... I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

Good and evil in this passage are not the same as the good and evil that arose from eating the forbidden fruit. This is not a good and evil of man's own choosing. Paul defines good here as "the law of God." It would be helpful here to define the law of God as His rule. Yahweh alone has the right of determination. Anything He declares to be good or evil must be so. Any command He issues must stand. He declares His mind and it is made known to man by His Spirit. Paul states that "in the inner man" he joyfully concurs (or agrees) with the law, or rule, of God.

Although the inner man may find perfect agreement with those things Yahweh reveals to be His will for mankind, there is a part of man that does not share this agreement. This is the flesh of man. The flesh of man was cursed when Adam sinned. The flesh of man always desires to seek and to satisfy its own longings. The flesh of man does not want to give up its own will and desires so that the will and desires of God can be fulfilled. Paul further describes this conflict to the Galatian church.

Galatians 5:16,17, 24

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please... Now those who belong to Yahshua the Messiah have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Paul is describing here a state of rest and a state of striving. The Spirit makes known the mind of the Father to the saint. If the saint responds in obedience then he has entered into Sabbath rest. However, the flesh must be overcome to enter into this rest. The flesh must be put to death for it opposes that which the Spirit reveals to be the mind of the

Father. As we have seen, this opposition need not take the form of an apparently evil deed. All the flesh needs to do is propose another path other than that which the Father has revealed to be His will.

Many a saint has balked at the will of Yahweh in their life. Perhaps He has revealed that His will is something other than what their flesh desires. Yahweh may reveal that it is His will that a man sell all of his goods, give the proceeds to the poor, and embark on a path of faith following the Spirit wherever He leads. A man may say, "This does not appeal to me. I want to have my nice things. I will choose to keep these things. I will attend church regularly. I will give much money to the programs of the church. I will teach Sunday School. I will provide for my family. I will live a moral life, but I will not do this thing the Father has revealed to me." Such a man is walking in disobedience and sin, no matter how righteous he appears on the outside.

How many saints fall into this pattern? There are myriads who appear to be the most faithful of church members, they are good and decent people to all external observation. They are active in their local fellowships. They have set their hands to do many good things, yet they have failed to do that which the Father has revealed is His will for them. They go on year after year in this pattern, finding acceptance within their peer groups and receiving the praise of man. They may even endure persecution due to the moral and righteous activities they have chosen to participate in, but none of it finds favor with Yahweh if it is not that which He has led them to do by His Spirit.

This is the great peril of the flesh. It is not just evil that it sets itself to pursue, but it seeks to define its own righteousness. A man may think that he merely needs to live a *good* life, to live a *godly* life, but it is a false godliness. It is a godliness that derives from Satan's temptation to "be like God," for such a saint has determined for themselves what life they will live and what sacrifices they will make.

The saint of God must crucify his flesh and the desires of the flesh in order to enter into the obedience the Father demands of him. This is not easy, and for this reason it is infrequently practiced. The masses of Christianity are not content with the Father's will for them. They prefer to choose a path that is more acceptable to their flesh. All the better for them, they think, if they can offer acceptable service to God and not have to deal too harshly with their own flesh. What they have not discerned is that there is only one acceptable service to God, and that is complete obedience to His revealed will.

Paul spoke about coming to this place of contentment where he found Yahweh's will to be perfectly acceptable to him. To come to this place he had to crucify his flesh.

II Corinthians 12:10

Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Philippians 4:11-13

Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

How many saints and ministers can make a similar confession today? How many are content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties? How many would be content if in the fulfillment of the ministry Yahweh entrusted to them they had to endure humble means, going hungry, suffering need?

It is evident that the church today is not content that these things should be the Father's will for them. They have devised doctrines that proclaim that this will never be the lot of the faithful saint of God. They have devised doctrines that state that it is always the Father's will that saints should prosper, they should have plenty to eat, they should never suffer lack. Many have gone so far as to accuse any who do endure these same things that Paul endured as lacking faith, or walking in disobedience. Did Paul suffer these things due to disobedience? Did he suffer these things because he did not have as much faith as the "name it and claim it" crowd today?

These doctrines have been devised because the flesh of man does not want to be crucified. It wants to make some compromise with the Spirit. The flesh says, "I should not need to suffer in order to accomplish Yahweh's purposes." However, the clear testimony of scripture is that the flesh must not only suffer, but it must be crucified. It must be put to death.

In my own walk of obedience to the Father's revealed will I have found that it has led to fellow ministers separating from me and rejecting me. Those whom I considered fellow laborers have condemned me and turned away. It has led to similar rejection by my own family, and I have found that it has led me to be placed outside of the main camp of Christianity. In pursuit of obedience I have endured the loss of many physical things. I have not been able to gather to myself houses and lands and many material comforts. I have not been able to seek to satisfy both the flesh and Yahweh. I have had to choose one over the other.

Did not Yahshua clearly foretell that all saints would have to make such a choice?

Luke 16:13

"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

Many saints have made a decision as to which master they will serve, and they do not even realize they have done so. Many have chosen a course of compromise. They have not said with Yahshua, "I live to do the will of my Father which is in heaven." Instead they seek to serve God and to hold onto the things that satisfy the flesh's longing. In the end they do not satisfy the Father at all, for they have failed to fully count the cost of following Him.

Paul did count the cost. He lived to do the will of Yahweh and he was content with whatever circumstances to which this commitment led him. Paul knew contentment when he had a sufficiency, and when he knew lack. Paul knew contentment when he was well fed, and when he was hungry. Paul lived to do the will of the Father and he did not seek to coddle his flesh. On the contrary, he ruled over the desires of his flesh and put these desires to death.

I Corinthians 9:27

I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

Some debate who the author of the book of Hebrews is, but I have little doubt that it was the apostle Paul. There is too much of his other writings in this book. Paul constantly described by his example, his life, and his epistles the great struggle to enter into the Sabbath rest of God. In the book of Hebrews he comes out and clearly defines the issue of Sabbath and he gives the readers a true understanding of its meaning. To Paul it was certainly more than a list of rules and regulations describing a cessation from labor one day out of the week. To Paul it was the great struggle of mankind. It was the conflict between Yahweh's will and man's will.

Hebrews 4:9-11

There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience.

Paul learned the secret of contentment. He learned to crucify his flesh that the will of the Father might be accomplished in him. Paul buffeted his body and kept it in subjection to the will of the Spirit. In the book of Hebrews Paul speaks much of the great struggle of mankind to enter into the Sabbath rest of God. He speaks much of the example of the Israelites who came out of the bondage of Egypt, yet they failed to enter into the promised rest of Yahweh. These same people are given as an example to the church today and the saints are warned against following the same example and falling short of their calling.

Of those over the age of 20 who left Egypt, only two men entered into the land of promise. The church should be warned lest the same percentages apply to them as well. Many have received spiritual salvation and have been loosed from the bondage of the flesh, yet many remain as though they were still enslaved. They seek to satisfy the flesh and to serve God at the same time, not realizing the impossibility of such a proposition.

Paul, by his life and words, demonstrated that the great struggle for the saint of God is to overcome the flesh and find contentment with the will of Yahweh. As we will see, this was the struggle for those Israelites who wandered in the wilderness for forty years.



The Message of the Manna

The apostle Paul speaks much about the Israelites who wandered in the wilderness for forty years. They are given as an example for the church, and their failings are also mentioned as potential pitfalls for the saints today. Those whom Moses led out of Egypt struggled with the same issues that the church must face and overcome if they are to enter into the promised rest of God.

It is often underappreciated that those who have gone before us serve as examples, both good and bad, to today's saints. The people of Israel who followed the pillar of fire and the cloud throughout their wilderness wanderings are referred to in scripture as "the church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38). Paul clearly states that the church should pay careful attention to their failings, lest their same errors should be repeated.

I Corinthians 10:1-11

For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved. And do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play." Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

Paul affirms repeatedly that the things we read about the Israelites in the Old Testament were written for those who are a part of the current age, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. What was the great struggle of the Israelites? It was this very issue which we are studying. Yahweh desired for them to be loosed from the bondage to the flesh, a bondage symbolized by the cruel taskmasters of Egypt. He desired that they should live to follow Him obediently, putting the flesh and its desires to death.

Paul states that the Israelites were not successful in overcoming the flesh, dying to all personal initiative and living only to accomplish the will of Yahweh, and for this reason God was not well-pleased with the majority of them. Could Paul have any meaning other than that the same peril exists for the church today? Is it possible that God might not be well-pleased with the majority of the church as well?

Paul mentions specific instances of failing among these Israelites. They were a grumbling and a murmuring people. Yahweh spoke to Moses of them in the following manner.

Numbers 14:22-30

"Surely all the men who have seen My glory and My signs, which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these ten times and have not

listened to My voice, shall by no means see the land which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who spurned Me see it." And Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who are grumbling against Me? I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel, which they are making against Me. Say to them, 'As I live,' says Yahweh, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you; your corpses shall fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me. Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.'"

The sins of the Israelites were threefold: they failed to trust Yahweh; they made idols and declared them to be God; and they were not content with His provision and will for them. I would like to look specifically at this last offense and how it can disqualify the saints from entering into the Sabbath rest of God.

We have previously defined Sabbath rest as being in a state of harmony with the revealed will of Yahweh. It is apparent that the Israelites were not in such a state of harmony. In fact, they were very dissatisfied with Yahweh's will and provision for them. Even when Yahweh's provision came in a miraculous and unheard of manner, it did not satisfy the fleshly longings of a carnal people.

Exodus 16:2-31

And the whole congregation of the sons of Israel *grumbled* against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the sons of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by Yahweh's hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction. And it will come about on the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." So Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, "At evening you will know that Yahweh has brought you out of the land of Egypt; and in the morning you will see the glory of Yahweh, for He hears your *grumbings* against Yahweh; and what are we, that you *grumble* against us?" And Moses said, "This will happen when Yahweh gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for Yahweh hears your *grumbings* which you *grumble* against Him. And what are we? Your *grumbings* are not against us but against Yahweh." Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Come near before Yahweh, for He has heard your *grumbings*... And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, "I have heard the *grumbings* of the sons of Israel; speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and you shall know that I am Yahweh your Elohim.'" So it came about at evening that the quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground. When the sons of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, "It is the bread which Yahweh has given you

to eat... And they gathered it morning by morning, every man as much as he should eat; but when the sun grew hot, it would melt... And the house of Israel named it manna, and it was like coriander seed, white; and its taste was like wafers with honey.

It seems a most remarkable thing that a people that had spent 430 years in a foreign land, most of the time serving as slaves, should find themselves suddenly delivered in a most spectacular fashion, and yet they should grumble continuously against the One who delivered them. Not only did the Israelites witness the miraculous and terrifying plagues that came against Egypt, but they were protected from the same plagues. Not only were they released from captivity, but they spoiled the Egyptians when they left, taking great wealth from them. Not only were they freed from their cruel taskmasters, but they saw the mighty Egyptian army perish in the Red Sea as Yahweh sent confusion upon them and then covered them with the waves of the sea.

Despite all of these miraculous events and a tremendous change in their fortunes, they grumbled at every inconvenience and they murmured against the good intent of Yahweh, accusing Him of not caring for them. Having barely left Egypt, they began to complain that they did not have all of the appealing things to eat that they had while they were slaves in Egypt. Clearly, knowing the will of Yahweh for their nation and performing His will was not the greatest of concerns to them. Their great concern was to satisfy their own fleshly cravings. Like the majority of Christians, they were concerned for what they could get out of their relationship with God.

In a most spectacular manner, Yahweh provided bread from heaven to meet the physical needs of the Israelites. The bread is even described as having a pleasing taste like unto wafers with honey. The manna that the Father provided had everything in it necessary to sustain life and to cause the bodies of the Israelites to be strong and healthy, but the flesh is not so easily satisfied. The flesh lusts after many things to satisfy its desires. It wants a rich variety of meats and delicacies. It not only wants to live, it wants to live in great pleasure. It wasn't long before the manna was no longer pleasing to the Israelites.

Numbers 11:1-10

Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the hearing of Yahweh; and when Yahweh heard it, His anger was kindled, and the fire of Yahweh burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. The people therefore cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to Yahweh, and the fire died out. So the name of that place was called Taberah, because the fire of Yahweh burned among them. And the rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, "Who will give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic, but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna..." Now Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, each man at the doorway of his tent; and the anger of Yahweh was kindled greatly, and Moses was displeased.

How far removed were these people from the attitude displayed in Yahshua's life. When Yahshua was in the wilderness for forty days without any food we are told that He became hungry. Yet even in His hunger He was content to wait for the Father's provision

to be manifested. Satan's temptation to turn the stones into bread was akin to the sin of the Israelites. Satan was in effect saying to Yahshua, "You haven't eaten for forty days. It is not reasonable that you should be deprived of food. It is a small thing for you to speak to these stones and turn them into bread. Why don't you do so?"

Yahshua, however, saw the heart of the matter. To fail to wait on the Father's provision was no different than the murmuring and complaining Israelites saying that they were not cared for by Yahweh. It was an issue of trust as well as an issue of being content with the will of the Father. If Yahshua had turned the stones to bread He would have demonstrated that He was not content to await the provision of Yahweh. He would be declaring that Yahweh's will for Him in this matter was not acceptable.

Yahshua did not respond as did the Israelites, however. Instead He rebuked Satan with the words, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God'" (Matthew 4:4). Yahshua understood that true life is found in being in harmony with the will of Yahweh. If it was Yahweh's will for Yahshua to wait yet a little longer to be fed, then this was the essence of true life. Life would not be improved by feeding the desires of the flesh. Life would not be any fuller, richer, or vibrant by satisfying the longings of the flesh. The only true life is found in being in complete agreement with the will of God.

When the Israelites came to this same test they failed it. The Father also led them into the wilderness and He allowed them to become hungry. Would they look at all of the signs and miracles they had witnessed and proclaim, "I know the Father must have a perfect provision for us in this matter. He has shown His concern for us over and over. How can we doubt Him now? We will await His provision with patience and thanksgiving."

This would have been an appropriate response, and one that would have found favor with Yahweh. Why did they not respond in this manner? It was because they did not want to have to suffer any inconvenience to the flesh. They had been taken out of bondage in Egypt, but they were still in bondage to the fleshpots of Egypt. They still lived to satisfy the carnal desires of their fleshly nature.

Seeking the will of Yahweh was not their aim and desire; satisfying their flesh was. Moses revealed to the Israelites that they were led to these tests to expose what was in their hearts.

Deuteronomy 8:3

"And He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of Yahweh."

Moses was declaring that the true essence of life is to know the will of Yahweh (that which proceeds out of His mouth) and to fulfill His desire and His will. It was this passage that Yahshua quoted when He was tempted. Yahshua knew the purpose of the wilderness testing, both for the Israelites and for Himself. Where they failed, He succeeded. He did not allow Himself to entertain any thoughts of dissatisfaction with Yahweh's will for His life.

This is the message of the manna. Yahweh has a plan and desires for each one of His children. Will we be satisfied with His will for us? Will we be content to know His will and walk in obedience whether our flesh must suffer, or not? Will we resort to murmuring and complaining as the Israelites did? Will we be tempted to alter Yahweh's provision and plan

by acting of our own initiative as Satan tempted Yahshua to do?

This is not an easy matter to judge. It would have been a simple matter for Yahshua to turn the stones into bread. In our lives it is also a simple matter for us to seek our own will over the will of God. There are many things we can do to satisfy the longings of our flesh. All we need do is stretch out our hands in an act of our own initiative and we can have what our flesh desires. Multitudes do so every day, and multitudes fail to enter into the Sabbath rest of God.

If we are to walk perfectly before Yahweh we must seek His will at every turning and we must be ready to accept whatever His will is. We must not grumble or murmur. We must say, "My meat is to do the will of the Father. His will is what I live for. Accomplishing His will is my sole desire. I have no will of my own. I will not allow my flesh to dictate what course I will follow. I will put the flesh to death and follow the leading of the Spirit of God."

The church knows little of such a walk today. The church is full of its own initiative. Few seek to even know the will of the Father in a matter, and should the Spirit make His will known there are even fewer who will willingly follow where the Spirit leads. The church today has conformed itself to the description of the church of Laodicea. The church has not crucified the flesh, but has pursued the fulfilling of the flesh's desires until the following is true of her.

Revelation 3:14-21

And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this... "Because you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent... He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."

A church that esteems the satisfying of the flesh's desire has sought to fill itself with many things to gratify its longings. In gratifying them this church feels that it has gained all that is needed. It declares that it is not lacking in any way, yet Yahshua says that this church is wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. Vast is the disparity between the church's view and Christ's view of things.

Yahshua overcame the desires of the flesh. He did not love His soul life, not even at the cost of death on the cross. At the height of His greatest struggle between the will of the Father and the desire of His flesh to preserve itself, He declared, "Nevertheless, not My will, but Your will be done." He states that those who overcome as He did will be worthy to sit down with Him on His throne.

As we enter the seventh day of creation, God is looking to find those in the church who will once more count the cost of following Him. There is no provision for the flesh promised. As Winston Churchill proclaimed to the residents of the English Empire as the threat of Nazi Germany loomed over Europe and all of the free world, "All I can promise you is blood, toil, sweat, and tears."

The Father calls His children to count the cost and to follow the example of His Son.

Those who lose their life will find true life, but those who seek to keep and protect their soulish and fleshly life will lose out on obtaining real life.

Once again Yahweh has brought His people to a wilderness where decisions must be made. Once again He is giving them manna to eat. Will the church be content with His provision, or will they long for the fleshpots of Egypt?

John 6:32-35

Yahshua therefore said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." They said therefore to Him, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." Yahshua said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."

Never has the saying "You are what you eat" been more true. As we eat the Bread of Life we become like Him. As He did not seek to save His life, neither will we. As He sought above all to do the will of the Father, so will we. As He never did anything of His own initiative, neither will we. As He would not stretch out His hand to do anything that was not the will of the Father, neither will we.

Only in this way will we enter into the Sabbath rest set before us. Let us receive the manna that God gives us from heaven with thanksgiving. Let us not enter into the error of the children of Israel. This is Paul's message to us and this is the message of the manna.



The Prodigal Returns

There are no words that more accurately encapsulate the true meaning of Sabbath rest than the words of the Messiah, “yet not My will, but Thine be done.”

Luke 22:41-42

And [Yahshua] withdrew from [Peter, James, and John] about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray, saying, "Father, if Thou art willing, remove this cup from Me; *yet not My will, but Thine be done.*"

We have seen how Lucifer was the first Sabbath breaker as he repeatedly declared “*I will.*” In absolute contrast we see the Son of God proclaiming, “*Not My will.*”

This is the position of rest that was surrendered in the Garden of Eden. Adam went from a place of contentment with the Father’s will, to being dissatisfied with His will. Adam wanted to direct his own path. He wanted to decide for himself how he would lead his life.

Adam was the original prodigal son. As he was abiding in the place the Father had chosen for him, an unrest began to grow until finally it gave vent to action as he set himself to do that which was not the will of God. In a sense, all of mankind is represented in the prodigal son. We have all left the place of rest with our Father and have gone seeking our own fortune. We have lived either riotously or self-righteously. In either case we have directed our own course and have chosen to go a way that was not the Father’s will.

The Father has waited for us to come to our senses and to realize that things were better before we left His side. That which we thought was so confining and unbearable begins to look good after we find out how hollow life is apart from the Father. After we endure shipwreck and enslavement, moral destitution and abasement, we begin to consider how far we have fallen. The story of the prodigal son is the story of mankind.

Luke 15:11-24

And He said, "A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' And he divided his wealth between them. And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be in need. And he went and attached himself to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he was longing to fill his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him. But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."' And he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him, and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and

bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.' And they began to be merry."

The prodigal's realization of his status was correct. Mankind is no longer worthy to be called sons of God, yet the Father is still willing to consider us sons. The son goes back to his father with the intent of willingly submitting himself to be a servant. He knows that the righteous thing is for him to live to do the will of his father.

When the saints of Yahweh realize that they too have taken the inheritance given to them and they have spent it as they pleased, according to their own will and desire, they will see that it also leads to a spiritual famine. It is quite possible to gain all that our soul desires and yet to remain destitute spiritually. Like the Laodicean church, we can appear wealthy and lacking in nothing, yet a true appraisal reveals that we are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

The father's words upon greeting the son hold much meaning; "For this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again." When we are living according to our own initiative, our own will and desires, we are dead. When we are being guided by the innate soulish sense of good and evil we are dead. The story of the prodigal son goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden for it is a retelling of the fall of man and an unveiling of the nature of the two trees that are named in the Garden.

The scriptures are full of contrasts: darkness and light; good and evil; rich and poor; love and hate, etc.. In the opening chapters of Genesis we see many contrasts. The light is separated from the darkness. The dry land is separated from the water. Should we not expect that there should be a distinct contrast between the only two trees named in the Garden of Eden?

Genesis 2:9

And out of the ground Yahweh God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

At first appearance these trees may not appear as opposites, but they are. One tree is called the tree of life, and we have this report concerning the other tree.

Genesis 2:17

"but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely *die*."

One tree is named the tree of life. The other tree brings forth death. These trees are truly opposites set in contrast to one another. By knowing this we can identify the nature of the trees.

We know that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents man living independent of Yahweh and His rule. This tree brings man to a place where he attempts to govern himself independently of His Creator. By eating of this fruit Adam and Eve had birthed in them an ability to determine right and wrong, good and evil within their own beings. But in gaining this ability they became separated from Yahweh.

The tree of life represents the exact opposite of the tree of the knowledge of good and

evil. The tree of life brings one into union with the Father where all knowledge of good and evil finds its source in Him. The tree of life represents man in union with Yahweh. The tree of life is a place of rest where man has his head covered, where man refuses to act or speak of his own initiative, but where he receives every command, every direction from the mouth of God. The tree of life is the Sabbath tree.

In the parable of the prodigal, the wayward son represents every man. “All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one of us to our own way” (Isaiah 53:6). When we come to our senses we are led to return to the Father and we determine that we will now live to do His will. We know the righteous thing is to present ourselves as servants, knowing that we are not worthy to be called sons. Yet in His mercy Yahweh does call us sons. He declares, “This son of mine was dead: (he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; he went and lived according to his own will and desires and he walked in death.) Now my son has returned alive: (he has forsaken his own way and he has returned with the heart of a servant to do My will. Now My son is eating from the tree of life.)”

There is great hope for this son that was lost. He has discovered how barren and hopeless life is apart from the Father. He has discovered that living a self-directed life leads to death. He is able to see what true life is. He understands that man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. By experiencing the depths of his own depravity and his inability to govern himself he has seen his need and great dependence upon the Father. There is great hope for this son for he has now come to make a similar confession as did Yahshua; “No longer will I live for my will... I will live for You Father.”

Much of the church has missed the point of this parable of Yahshua. It is not enough to simply realize that you are headed for hell and you are in need of forgiveness for your sins. It is not sufficient to pray a sinner’s prayer if you do not have a similar heart change as did the prodigal son. What is needed is a realization that we are unable to govern ourselves. It is no solution at all to make a confession of Christ and then to continue to direct one’s own life according to the leading of the soul.

Much of the church remains in this place, however. They renounce the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and they proclaim the praises of the tree of life, but even as they do so they are still eating of the tree that brings death. Much of the church proclaims Yahshua to be the Son of God. They know that He alone led a life that was pleasing to the Father, but they have failed to identify what made His life so pleasing. Yahshua said, “Not My will... but Your will be done.” This was the chief characteristic of Yahshua’s life. He lived to do the will of the Father. Yet many saints continue to live to fulfill their own desires. They look to Yahshua for salvation, but they have not identified what they truly need saving from.

Many saints wish to continue living their lives much as they did before they heard about Yahshua, but they want to know that their sins will be forgiven and they will go to heaven when they die. Little do they realize that the Father wants to conform their lives to the image of the One they look to for salvation. It is no salvation at all to remain in independence from the Father, being led by one’s own soul. Such a saint is still walking in spiritual death. The Father wants His elect to confess, “Not my will... but Your will be done.” The Father wants His elect to forsake the tree that leads to independence that it might be said of them as it was the prodigal son, “This child of Mine was dead, but now they are alive.”



Resting in Ministry

It is a great paradox that most of those who function as ministers today are by their very example demonstrating what the Father despises. Many of these ministers have a sincere desire to labor in service to Yahweh, yet they have failed to distinguish what type of service is pleasing to Him. By doing whatever seems good to them in ministering, they are actually practicing the principle of Satan which is to be governed and ruled by one's own soul.

I feel quite safe in stating that the vast majority of men and women in positions of ministry in the body of Christ have not been placed there by God. They have arrived at their position through the work and will of man. The very process that many go through to become "qualified" for ministry is far removed from Yahweh's methods. Going to Bible College and Seminary to have one's head filled with the doctrines and methodologies of the church is far removed from the process God would take His true ministers through in order to prepare them for service. (I am not discounting that there are some true ministers that have gone this path, but their qualifications in the kingdom of God have little to do with the institutions of man.) The common methods today may give one the stamp of men's approval, but they fail in gaining the stamp of God's approval.

The process the Father would take men through to prepare them for ministry is seen everywhere throughout scripture. The Father prepares His chosen ones for service by bringing them to an end of personal ambition, and to a death to seeking anything for self. Only those who are truly emptied of ambition and self-seeking can be effective ministers in the kingdom of God.

The preparation the Father takes His servants through is most grueling. The Father's school of service leads to self-abasement and humility. Quite often it will bring a man to a place where all have turned against him but God; where he is misjudged, evil spoken of, and where he has had his motives and judgment brought into question. This is a necessary part of the minister's preparation for he must be a man who is dead to his own reputation; where he is quite content with insults, with personal weakness, with distresses, with persecutions and difficulties (II Corinthians 12:10).

Seminaries and Bible Colleges do not bring a minister to this place of readiness. Instead, the student is apt to feel quite welcomed, accepted, and proud that he has earned a degree from a reputable school, knowing that his diploma gains him entry into the good graces of many denominational churches. By completing a course of study and receiving a piece of paper duly signed by those overseeing such programs, the graduate is perceived as being ready for service as a minister.

Yahweh's course of study is much different. Consider Joseph, the favorite son of Jacob. He was given dreams and visions while yet a young man that he would one day be in a position of ruling and reigning. It would have been nice if Jacob could simply have sent his son to school to receive whatever knowledge was necessary to fulfill his calling. This was not God's way, however.

Joseph's calling was great, and his preparation process was equally awesome. Joseph was to be given tremendous power and authority and the Father needed a man that would not misuse that which was entrusted to him. Yahweh needed a faithful servant that would accomplish all of His desire.

Joseph began his schooling right after having received the vision that revealed his future promotion. Joseph was sent by Jacob to check on his brothers and to bring back a

report. Joseph had formerly done so, bringing back an evil report of the activity of his brothers. Joseph's brothers despised him. They were indignant at the fact that he would be used to report on their activities and that their father favored Joseph more than them. Joseph received a bitter course in human envy, jealousy and hatred. Some of his brothers wanted to kill him, but instead they were talked into selling him into slavery to a foreign land and people.

Joseph cried out bitterly with many tears for his brothers not to abuse him, but they turned a deaf ear to his cries. His brothers then went and reported to their father that Joseph had been killed by wild beasts. In great despondence, Joseph was taken to Egypt and sold as a slave to an Egyptian official.

At this point, many would have been tempted to throw in the towel and to say, "God, if this is your training for future service, then I would prefer not to be a minister in your kingdom." But Joseph was faithful. Even though he had been rejected by brothers and sent far away from the father he loved, he performed every service that was entrusted to him with the greatest of integrity.

Joseph's faithfulness was soon noticed, and it was evident that everything entrusted to his hands prospered. His master took this young Hebrew slave and placed him in charge of his whole household. Everything in this man's house was blessed through the faithful service of Joseph.

For a while it seemed that things were going well for Joseph. Although he still was enslaved and rejected by brothers and separated from his father, he was given some honor and he received the benefits befitting his position of service. But Joseph's training was about to be turned up a notch in its intensity.

The wife of Potipher, Joseph's master, was physically attracted to Joseph, for he was a handsome youth. She began to entice Joseph to have sexual relations with her. Joseph knew that to do so would be a violation of his master's trust in him, as well as a sin against God. Joseph resisted her temptations day after day. One day this woman found herself alone in the house with Joseph and she pressed him mightily to lie with her. Joseph fled from her, leaving his garment in her hands, for she had grasped hold of his garment.

Potipher's wife, angry at being rebuffed, called the other servants and reported that Joseph had tried to make sexual advances toward her and that he had left his outer garment with her when she cried out. Joseph was seized and falsely accused. What a grief for this young man who had been completely faithful in the discharge of his duties, even while enduring enslavement at the hands of his brothers. Joseph was placed in prison, but even in prison he was faithful.

Quite often in the training programs of man, a student ascends from one level to another and greater honor is accorded at each level. In God's training program for Joseph he descended, first into slavery, and then into prison. In this position as an imprisoned slave Joseph had no rights and no honor. The temptation must have been great to cry out to God and to find fault with Him due to Joseph's harsh circumstances. The days turned into months, and the months into years as Joseph saw no release from the prison in which he had been placed. In the Psalms we have this testimony of Joseph's trial.

Psalms 105:17-19

He sent a man before them -- Joseph, sold as a slave. They bruised his feet with shackles, his soul was laid in irons, until the time His word was fulfilled, the word of Yahweh tested him.

Yes, Yahweh was testing Joseph. Like metal that is tried in a fire, Joseph was tried and purified and strengthened. Finally, when Yahweh saw that Joseph still remained faithful despite the most grievous of circumstances, when Yahweh was certain that Joseph had as his highest goal to be found faithful and obedient to God, then Yahweh was able to bring Joseph out of prison and place upon him great authority and power.

This is not an isolated example of Yahweh's preparation process. David also went through a similar process. David was faithful in all circumstances, yet he met with the disapproval of his brothers, and the envy and hatred of a wicked king. For years David lived as an exile from his own country, and he even reported that his father and mother had turned against him (Psalms 27:10). David's training process took him from a position of some honor, as he was a servant in Saul's household, only for him to descend lower and lower until the day the Father determined that he should be made king.

Moses went through a similar path of humility on his way to being prepared for Yahweh's purposes. Even Yahshua followed this same path. Like David and Joseph, Yahshua knew that He had a calling on His life from His childhood, as was demonstrated by the recorded events of His life when He was only twelve years of age.

Luke 2:41-51

And His parents used to go to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He became twelve, they went up there according to the custom of the Feast; and as they were returning, after spending the full number of days, the boy Yahshua stayed behind in Jerusalem. And His parents were unaware of it, but supposed Him to be in the caravan, and went a day's journey; and they began looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. And when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, looking for Him. And it came about that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them, and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. And when they saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, your father and I have been anxiously looking for you." And He said to them, "Why is it that you were looking for me? Did you not know that I had to be in My father's house?" And they did not understand the statement which He had made to them. And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

Yahshua knew that He had a calling on His life from the time of His youth. How anxious He must have been to accomplish all that the Father intended for Him. Yet an important thing is revealed in the phrase "*and He continued in subjection to them.*" Yahshua knew that He must wait until the fulness of time to begin His ministry. He had to first learn servanthood and humility. He had to await the moment when the Father determined that He should be revealed to the world as the Son of God.

Many ministers today fail in this point. It is difficult to wait upon the will of the Father, but if a man cannot wait for the chosen time the Father has established to enter into ministry, then how can he be expected to wait upon the Father's provision and direction while fulfilling that ministry? If a man enters into ministry of his own initiative, he can expect to continue in the same way, being full of his own direction as he is led by his reason,

impulses, and will.

Yahshua waited until He was thirty years old to begin His earthly ministry, and then His ministry lasted only three and a half years. David and Joseph also were thirty years old at the time of their receiving that which had been promised them. Moses was eighty years old when he was called of Yahweh to begin his ministry. Moses had attempted to fulfill his calling forty years previous, but his premature attempt was a dismal failure.

We see that in all ministry men must be at rest. They must enter into the Sabbath of God where they have ceased from their own labors. It is no good trying to fulfill the ministry of the kingdom of God through human effort. It will simply lead to striving, and nothing built through such human effort will last. All our labors will be tried by fire and much of it will be burned up, as the scriptures proclaim.

I Corinthians 3:10-15

According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Yahshua Messiah. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but his soul shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

It is a difficult thing to bring a man to understand what is being spoken of here. Men want to believe that they are completely qualified for ministry. They look at one another and they say, "I am just as qualified as the next man to be used of God." Much pride is revealed in such an attitude, however. Men often fail to look to God to see whom He has proclaimed as qualified to be a minister in the kingdom. Rather, they compare themselves among themselves and in doing so they act as those who are unwise (II Corinthians 10:12).

A minister must come to a place of rest before he is considered ready for advancement in the kingdom. A man that will not wait upon Yahweh, and a man that chafes at the long and grueling preparation process of a minister; at the abasement and humility that must become a part of his nature, will never come to a place of effectual service in the kingdom. The character of God's workman must be free from ambition and self-initiative. God's workman must understand his complete inability to bring forth anything of lasting value through his own effort. The successful servant of the Lord must live a life of total submission to the will of Yahweh.

The Father's school of preparation exacts a toll upon all those who go that way. Joseph longed to be free of his imprisonment, and he begged Pharaoh's cupbearer to remember him when he was restored to Pharaoh's service (Genesis 40:14). The cupbearer promptly forgot Joseph, however, and Joseph remained three more years in prison while the word of Yahweh tested him. I believe that Joseph finally came to a place of rest before the Father called him out of prison.

David, too, felt overwhelmed at times by all of his trials. He cried out to Yahweh to answer him and deliver him lest he should be overwhelmed with sorrow and grief. The Psalms are full of David's cries for relief from his perilous and woe-filled circumstances. In all of David's trials he never resorted to fleshly means to deliver himself. When he could

have easily killed the man that was making his life perilous and who stood in the way of his becoming king, David did not act in the flesh. He waited for God's provision.

The minister must learn this lesson of waiting. The minister should do nothing to bring himself into the position he feels in his heart is his ultimate calling before Yahweh. He must wait for Yahweh to bring him forth in His own timing. It is Yahweh who exalts men such as Joseph, David, and Moses, and it is Yahweh who will raise up the men that He has called and qualified for positions of service today.

I Peter 5:6-7

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.

It is especially hard for those who are young to wait upon Yahweh. Many have failed to wait and they have embarked on some course of ministry that they were not yet ready for. Pride is often the product of failing to wait, and Paul communicated this truth to Timothy.

I Timothy 3:2-6

An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money... *and not a new convert, lest he become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.*

Was not Satan's condemnation that he attempted to ascend to a position that Yahweh had not determined for him? Such presumption can be born out of a heart that is zealous for God and a heart that desires greatly to be of some real service to Him. But true service has this as its guiding rule, "It is performing the will of the Father in heaven." Nothing else qualifies as acceptable service.

Our service will only be acceptable when it is born out of waiting upon the Father to give us a command concerning what we are to do. Like a soldier under authority, we are to do that which our Head commands us to do. We are not to strike out on our own and do whatever our reason leads us to do lest we end up as those whom Yahshua warned his disciples about who will say to Him, "Lord, Lord, did we not do many things in Your name?" His answer is, "You did not perform the will of the Father. You are lawless ones who have become an authority unto yourselves."

Can any minister operate from such a position of independence and be found pleasing to God? In the book of Acts we read that immediately after Saul (Paul) encountered Yahshua on the way to Damascus and was converted, he began to go out and preach the truth of Yahshua. He was not yet ready to enter into ministry, however. The Spirit led him to a time of preparation in Tarsus that lasted a number of years (Galatians 1:15-18).

Paul must have been exceedingly eager to embark on the ministry to which he was called. He must have yearned to build up that which he had formerly sought to destroy. Yet Paul had to wait until the Spirit signified that it was time for his ministry to begin. This was made known to the church in Antioch.

Acts 13:1-4

Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who

had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

How critical are these words, "*So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit...*" All true ministry will bear this witness; it will begin at the Spirit's initiative, it will be empowered by the Spirit, and it will be continually guided by the Spirit. If men are merely sent out by their own will, or at the hands of other men, they may make a lot of noise and they may even build impressive ministries and make a name for themselves, but when their work is tested it will be burned up. All that which is born of the flesh of man or the soul of man will not stand the test of fire.

Although Paul is a great example of a kingdom minister, Yahshua is even a greater example. As we saw, He submitted unto His parents and awaited the day when the Spirit would lead Him to begin His ministry. The Spirit initiated Yahshua's ministry, and He will initiate the ministry of all who follow in Yahshua's footsteps.

Matthew 3:16-4:1

And after being baptized, Yahshua went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." Then Yahshua was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness...

How many ministers today can attest to the fact that the Spirit initiated their ministry? How many can proclaim that the Spirit led them to where they were to be? People make many such claims today, but are they true? Has the minister gone through Yahweh's school of preparation to prepare him to be a humble servant, or has he followed a course of man's devising and choosing?

What is the fruit of the minister's labor? Does the church exist to provide a platform for the minister to perform his calling, or does the minister live to wash the feet of the saints, to equip and release them to do the work for which they have been called? Has the minister's position resulted in an attitude of pride, or does he walk in humility esteeming others more highly than himself?

It is difficult to walk the path that Joseph, David, Moses, Yahshua, Paul and others walked to be qualified for ministry. It is excruciating at times to wait upon the Spirit of God to declare, "Now is the time!" But if a minister is to lead others into the Sabbath rest of God, he must first enter in himself. This is an important matter, and many failing to grasp and adhere to the truths spoken of here are building that which will not stand the test of fire. It is my prayer that they will receive eye salve that their eyes might be opened and they can see the truth. The days are short and the Sabbath is upon us.



Yahshua, the Tree of Life

There is a tree that grows in barren and wilderness places. It is found in the western United States and it bears the name “The Joshua Tree.” Knowing that Joshua is the anglicization of the Hebrew name Yahshua, it should be no surprise to learn that this tree fits the physical description of the Messiah.

Isaiah 53:2

For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.

This tree does indeed grow out of parched ground and it has no stately form or majesty. As far as trees go, there is little to attract a person’s attention or to think that there is anything particularly noteworthy about this tree. I would not be surprised to find that the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden was similar in form. Quite often the Father clothes those things that are highly prized by Him in forms that have little appeal to the natural man.

Yahshua declared that He was Lord of the Sabbath (Matthew 12:8, Luke 6:5), and we are told that He had no stately form or majesty that men should look upon Him, nor appearance that men should be attracted to Him. Similarly, there is little in the message of the Sabbath rest of God that appeals to the natural man. The message of Sabbath rest leads men to cease from their own works. It leads men to consider that their own efforts are without any value before God. The message of Sabbath brings one to abasement and humility.

Such things do not stir the flesh. Instead the flesh wars against these things. The flesh of man devises many paths and activities to pursue, but only true rest will bear fruit for eternity.

The church of this day has largely rejected the message of Sabbath, and indeed it is unknown to many believers. What attracts the saints are bold and vibrant ministries that have stately form and majesty. The saints are attracted to those churches that have built impressive edifices with tall steeples, stained glass, and banners proudly flying. The church seeks to make itself attractive to the world so that the world will be lured into its embrace. This is not the way of the Spirit, however.

Yahshua was a rock of offense and a stone of stumbling (Romans 9:33, I Peter 2:8). The rich and the powerful, the worldly and successful, largely rejected Yahshua. They wanted a strong and powerful leader who had great majesty and who was impressive in stature. They were greatly disappointed by this man who preached death to self, and obedience to the voice of God.

The church has tried to remold itself so those who despised and rejected Yahshua will find themselves attracted and comfortable with them. Many worldly people have entered into the church, and because the more difficult teachings of Messiah have been avoided, they have remained worldly, and their presence has encouraged others to be worldly.

The church today does many things that outwardly appear good, and even godly, but many of these things are born out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In eating of this fruit they appear “like God,” and many saints have been fooled by this godlikeness. If one has eyes to see, however, they will realize that the godlikeness is merely a facade.

Underneath, much of the works and activity of the church is birthed from the will of man.

In Western society such characteristics as ambition, initiative, and independence are viewed as strong and desirable virtues. Humility, patience, meekness and dependence upon another are considered to be weak qualities. The church has adopted this mindset as well. The church desires to be attractive, majestic, and to have great stature in the world. These were not qualities of Yahshua, nor are they qualities that are the need of the church in this hour. The church needs to adorn itself with humility (I Peter 5:5), to become lowly in its own eyes where it will no longer presume to guide and direct itself. Only through abasing itself before Yahweh will the church enter into the Sabbath rest to which it has been called.

Our problem is a problem of competing kingdoms. What is esteemed in the kingdom of this world is despised in the kingdom of God (Luke 16:15). Yahshua was rejected by His own people, but in the kingdom of God He was highly esteemed and has sat down at the right hand of power next to His Father. It is similarly those who will look beyond the present and temporal kingdoms of man to the eternal kingdom of God who will adorn themselves with humility and who will cease from their own labors.

As we are poised to enter the seventh day of man, this is the call of the hour. Will you cease from doing as your soul desires? Will you seek to know the mind of Yahweh and do His whole will?

Hebrews 4:1-11

Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it... For He has thus said somewhere concerning the seventh day "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works"; and again in this passage "They shall not enter My rest." Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, "Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts..." There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience.

Yes, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. Not all will enter in. We are exhorted to be diligent to enter that rest. To fail to do so is to fail to accomplish the Father's will for us.

Will you be content with less than the will of God for your life? Don't make the mistake of many in the church and think that the Sabbath is merely one day out of seven in which man is prohibited from performing physical labor. Sabbath is the heart of the Father's desire for mankind. Sabbath is a state of rest where man returns to union with the Father; where man finds his purpose and reason for living in the revealed will of Yahweh God. Sabbath is a place where man ceases from his own work and activity, from his own thoughts and plans.

Sabbath is the inheritance, the promised land set before the saints of God. Let us be diligent to enter into our inheritance. May Yahweh have a people that live to accomplish all His will.



Entering In

I consider it a landmark day to be writing this final chapter to the book “SABBATH” on this 12th of August, 2003. The book has been posted and made available to readers since September, 2001, but I realized even then that the book was not finished. Like Moses who was allowed to see the inheritance of the children of Israel, the promised land of God, from a distance, but who was not allowed to enter in, in like manner I have also seen what the Father’s desire for us has been, but I have been unable to enter in.

I have seen that there is a place where God desires for all of His children to enter. It is a land of Sabbath rest where men and women cease from their own labors to do only the will of the Father. It is a place where all personal initiative ceases and where all that is done finds its origin in the mind of Yahweh, Who alone is worthy to be the source and originator of all words and deeds. The Son of God demonstrated to us what such a life and walk looks like. He was truly Lord of the Sabbath, for He was the manifestation of perfect rest. He never did anything of His own initiative, neither did He even speak a word that arose from self. Everything He said and did found its source in the Father.

In this book we have learned that it is the Father’s desire that ALL should enter into this place of rest. All must be conformed to the image of His Son. All must come to the place where they can also testify, “I never do anything of my own initiative. I only do the will of the Father.” We must be so perfect as to declare, “I do not even speak a word of my own initiative, but I speak only those things the Father has commanded me.”

Our great temptation is to deny that these things are truly the Father’s will for us, for we have never yet experienced such a perfect obedience, nor have we seen any man other than Yahshua Himself enter into this place of perfection and absolute rest. We may be tempted to believe that these things will only be attained and experienced in heaven, but listen to the words of our Lord as He taught His disciples to pray the will of the Father.

Matthew 6:9-10

Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. ***Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth*** as it is in heaven.

Our Savior prayed for God’s Kingdom to come, and for His will to be done on earth. When the will of God is done on the earth then the Kingdom of God will be seen among men. The coming of the Kingdom is synonymous with the children of God entering into this place of Sabbath rest. It is here on earth that Yahweh has determined that men and women should enter into this place of perfect obedience, and absolute rest, and should we doubt it we need to remind ourselves of the apostle’s warning:

Hebrews 3:16-19

For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we

see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

What do these words mean, "For who provoked Him when they had heard?" Moses was sent to the Israelites to tell them that God had seen their toil and their groaning and He was going to bring them out of their place of cruel bondage and lead them into their own land. This is what they heard. They heard Moses speaking the mind and will of God that He would give them a land wherein were cisterns they did not dig, houses they did not build, vineyards they did not plant, and in this land they would be His priests to all the earth, no longer slaves subjected to harsh servitude, but free men.

Why did they not believe such wonderful things? Was it not that they looked at their ability to possess it based upon an examination of their own strength and abilities, rather than looking to God's ability to perform what He had promised? They looked at the fortified cities with their massive walls. They saw that there were giants in the land, and they saw themselves as grasshoppers. They rightly judged that entering into this land and possessing it was impossible in their own strength, and they failed to reckon on God's strength. Because they would not believe, God was angry with them and allowed an entire generation to die in the wilderness.

God was able to take them in. He chose Joshua (Yahshua) to lead them in, and He declared "I have given you every place where you will set your foot" and "no enemy will be able to stand against you." Yet the apostle declares that this Joshua did not give the people rest, but there yet remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. There is another Yahshua whom God has sent who will lead the children of God into the true place of rest. This latter Yahshua will establish the children of God as kings and priests in the land, and they will walk in complete victory over every enemy, and they will fully possess their possessions.

Do you believe it? Or will you also be as those with whom the Lord was angry? Will you enter into the promises of God, or will your body die in the wilderness? It is those who believe who will enter in. The Scriptures show us how we must enter in, for Yahshua is our forerunner, and He is our pattern Man. Where He went, we are also to go, and the victorious overcoming life He walked in is also our portion.

When Joshua took the children of Israel into the land of promise, the first step was into the waters of the Jordan River. It is no coincidence that when our Lord began His ministry where He reigned victorious over every enemy that it too began as He stepped into the Jordan River.

Matthew 3:13-17

Then Yahshua arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?" But Yahshua answering said to him, "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him. After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

The entire pattern of entering into God's rest is revealed in these words. Baptism is a picture of death, and we all must enter into the promised land through the waters of the Jordan. We must all allow Christ to put us to death in our natural life which we have

inherited from Adam that we might enter into the newness of life that belongs to the Heavenly Man.

Well did John the Baptist speak here when he said, “I have need to be baptized by You.” This is perhaps the greatest prophecy of this greatest of the prophets, but who has truly heard what he said? John said in another place:

Matthew 3:11

“As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

When John said to Yahshua, “I have need to be baptized by You,” it was these two baptisms of which he spoke. John needed to be baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire, and so must all those who would enter into perfect Sabbath rest. What does it mean to be baptized with fire? The word “fire” in the Greek is “pur,” and from this Greek word we get our English words “pure,” “purity,” “purify” and “purge.” Fire has always been associated with purification, for it burns up all that is dross, all that is impure. It is the fire of God that burns up the wood, hay and stubble of our lives. It was the fire on the altar that burned up the sacrifice of flesh, and it is the fire of God that will also burn up our flesh in this day and hour.

The apostle Paul shared that it was the will of God that all of the saints present their bodies as a “living sacrifice” upon the altar of God that their flesh might be destroyed. He expressed this in another way to the Galatian believers when he declared that those who walk after the Spirit “have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”

Yahshua passionately expressed His desire when He said, “I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled.” It was from the dust of the earth that man’s flesh was formed, and it is in this flesh which sin dwells. Yahshua came to cast fire on the earth of this flesh. Why did He long so earnestly for this work to begin? It was because He knew that the flesh being consumed, purged, crucified, buried in the waters of baptism, was necessary in order for the other baptism to be given, the baptism of the Spirit.

When John baptized Yahshua in the waters of the Jordan River, which mark the boundary of the land of promise, the way was being shown in which the body of Christ must enter into their inheritance. It is always through death. Those who resist the working of the cross in their life will not enter into the land of Sabbath rest. Those who refuse to take up the disciple’s cross will not come to a place of reigning as kings and priests. The word states:

II Timothy 2:11-12

It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him...

Saints, if we refuse to enter into the waters of the Jordan and be baptized along with our Lord, we cannot enter into the promised land of Sabbath rest. There is but One Way, and our Lord has shown it to us. All who try to enter by another way are thieves and robbers. The Lamb of God laid down His life, and the sheep who follow after Him must also lay down their lives. “We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Note then what happened as Yahshua came up out of the waters of the Jordan.

And behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him.

These two things are absolute necessities for any who would walk as our Lord walked. If we are to make the confession He made, and we are to walk as He walked, never speaking or doing anything of our own initiative, but always doing the will of the Father, then we too must have an open heaven, and we must have the anointing of the Spirit of God resting upon us in power.

Any saint who is honest, and who has sought to walk in obedience to God for any length of time, will confess that they have seen their inadequacy and impotency revealed. Like Paul confessed, the desire to obey is present, but the performing of it is not. As Christ spoke of His disciples on the night of His passion, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." How often have we stumbled and fallen, to weep tears of regret and bitterness? What weakness is bound up in this sinful flesh!

And should we be called to ministry (and all saints are ministers in one fashion or another), consider how soon the Lord will lay us in the dust as we see our inability to walk as Christ walked. We do not see every demon present as He did. We do not speak a word and the unclean spirits flee. We are not able to heal everyone for whom we pray, or to raise the dead with a word. We cannot place the elements under our feet, walking on the waters and calming the storms with a word. We do not come forth victorious in every encounter with Satan. Yet this is what we have been called to. This is the land of our inheritance. This is our promised possession.

How strenuously do we deny that these things be so. We think that Christ walked this way, but He was God and we are not. We do not see Him as Joshua leading the entire nation into their inheritance, vanquishing every enemy and possessing the good land before them. It was not just Joshua who entered in and walked victoriously over the enemy. It was the entire nation of the children of God. Neither is it merely Yahshua who has been called to walk in the victory, power, authority, and Sabbath rest that He manifested in His life. He is the forerunner, but we are called to run behind Him.

Hebrews 6:19-20

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Yahshua has entered as a forerunner for us...

As our pattern Man, Yahshua has shown us the way to enter into the Sabbath rest before us. We first must be baptized with Him in the waters of the Jordan. This is not merely some symbolic union that is depicted in the ordinance of baptism. We must have an experiential baptism. We must allow Yahshua to lead us through many wilderness places where our flesh is broken until we come to the place where we loathe the flesh and we despise the initiative and self-effort that we see within it.

We must all enter the wilderness as Moses who was a man "mighty in word and in deed," men who have great strength in their own flesh and who wrongly think that this strength of the flesh can bring forth the kingdom purposes of God. We must all exit the wilderness as Moses did after forty years of tending sheep, declaring "God, I cannot speak. I cannot act. I have nothing to offer You." Only then can the Lord place His great power upon us and through us destroy every enemy and every false god that stands before Him.

Do we not see this process of death plainly revealed in Scripture. Yahshua said that

He never did anything of His own initiative, and He did not even speak a word of His own initiative. In action and in word He was completely dead to those things that arise from self. Compare this to the words spoken of Moses.

Acts 7:22

Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds.

This power of Moses' was a power that came from his flesh. In this power he attempted to deliver his people and failed miserably. How many ministers of God are trying to deliver God's people and perform the will of God in their own power? I tell you that nearly the entire lot are doing so, and they are just as surely failing to accomplish God's desire as was Moses. People, do not be driven by those who tell you that you must be out doing the works of Christ. If you have not been given the power of God to do such works, then all is vanity and striving after the wind. We must all learn the lesson of Moses.

Were the forty years that Moses spent in the wilderness before God sent him to Egypt wasted years? Was Moses wasting his life when the people of God suffered in cruel bondage? Was it a sign of his selfishness and lack of compassion that he did not go back and try to deliver them again, through whatever means that he might employ? No! Moses wanted to deliver his people, but he was an honest man who realized that the ability to perform this work was not in him.

How many are the saints today who are less honest? How many are told, and tell others, that those who are compassionate for the world will be out winning souls and bringing forth the kingdom of God, and that they must not wait for God to empty them and then empower them? Oh how deluded we have been! As I look at all the gimmicks and programs and plans of human effort to win souls and bring forth the kingdom I am greatly grieved. A world of men and women who are mighty in their own carnal words and deeds has gone forth to bring forth the kingdom of God on the earth, and to deliver the inhabitants of the earth from bondage. They may manage to slay a single Egyptian, and encouraged by this achievement they go on tirelessly as they believe that the kingdom of the enemy is being destroyed by their efforts. And all the while Satan laughs with derision, for the church grows darker and darker while gross darkness creeps over the earth.

What is needed is for the children of God to flee to the wilderness, acknowledging their inability to bring forth salvation for the earth. In the wilderness they need to experience the emptying that Moses knew, so that no longer will they ever seek to perform the works of God in the strength of their own words and deeds. They must remain in the wilderness until they confess, "God, I have nothing to offer You. I cannot even speak."

See then the cleverness of Satan's corrupted wisdom. By driving the children of God to spend their lives in one activity after another, in this program and that campaign, and to get them to engaged in works done in the power of their own flesh, falsely thinking that this is the voice of God driving them to these things, they never enter into the wilderness where God can truly prepare them for Kingdom works. Satan is such a deceiver that the saints are made to feel guilty if they do not immediately embark upon some work and effort in the name of God. To go to a place apart where God can bring forth a death to their soulish life is a luxury they feel they cannot afford. The enemy speaks to them and tells them that they are lacking in compassion if they are not somehow ministering every day. By such deceit does the enemy prevent the children of God from receiving the power that Moses finally

attained in order to destroy the kingdom of the enemy.

Saints, have you not come to see yet that the kingdom of the enemy is not being toppled through your puny human efforts? Can you not see darkness everywhere entering into the church, rather than light into the world? The reason is plain. The people of God are trying to bring forth the kingdom through the strength of man, rather than by the power of God. The power of God is not entrusted to those who have not been broken, so this breaking is the first order of business for all those who receive the salvation that is found in Yahshua.

Observe how the apostle Paul immediately upon being saved began to reason with the Jews in the city of Damascus. He had great debate with them, but we are not told that there was any fruit. We then read that God sent Paul to the wilderness where nothing more is heard from him for many long years. This was his period of breaking. This is where he died to all those things which he was formerly so proud of, his Jewish heritage, his great education, his own Pharisaical righteousness, the strength of his natural life.

If Paul were in the churches of today they would not have allowed him this period of breaking and emptying. They would have said, "Look boys, we have a winner here. This man is something. He has education. He has connections. He is zealous for God. Let's put him to work immediately." Think of all the things that might be done in this way. Paul could be the figurehead for many different ministries. He could write books on how to debate the Jews. He could go out immediately and tell one and all about his experience on the road to Damascus. And in all his busyness, he would miss out on the preparatory work which alone could ready him to do the works of God.

But pastors today would cry out, "How can you tell him to delay in acting. The world is lost and going to hell today. Every day babies are aborted and children abused and the lost are dying. We need him to work today." And because of such thinking the works are all man's works, and the power needed to bring forth the kingdom is nowhere present. Thus the Scripture is fulfilled that in the last days men would have a form of godliness without power.

So we see in the baptism of Yahshua a picture of what is required in order to have the heavens opened to us and for the Spirit to descend in power. The working of death precedes the life of power.

Throughout this book it has been declared that it is the will of God for all of His children to come to a place where they only do the works they see the Father doing. This is the example that Yahshua set before us, and it is the only thing that will satisfy God. Many will come to God in the day of judgment and declare that they did many works in His name, but because these works were not His will, nor done at His command Yahshua will declare, "I never knew you." There is only one way in which we can avoid these tragic words being spoken over our lives. We must KNOW with a certainty what the will of the Father is at all times. We must know what words He would have us to speak, and we must be careful to speak only these words. The requirement for this level of intimate knowing is that we must have the heavens open before us as they were before Yahshua.

John 5:19-20

Therefore Yahshua answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel."

Yahshua did not begin His ministry until after John baptized Him and the heavens were opened to Him. Immediately we read that the voice of the Father is heard and then we read that the Spirit begins leading Yahshua. During His entire ministry Yahshua was able to do the works of the Father and speak His words because He had an open heaven before Him. He testified that the Father shows Him all things that He Himself is doing. How can we walk in this same place, and do even greater works than Christ did, unless we too have an open heaven set before us? I tell you that we cannot, and will not be able to do so.

In this late hour when Christ will raise up a remnant to walk in power and authority before Him in the earth, it will initially be only a very small number who will know both an open heaven and the anointing to carry forth His desire. The reason is that there are only a few who have allowed Christ to baptize them with the fire of purging and purification. Most have shunned the cross and sought to protect their flesh. Many have given themselves wholly over to the deceptions of a prosperity doctrine and messages of ease and comfort. Splashing around in what they call "the river of God," they have despised Christ's invitation to join Him in the fiery lake where the strength of the flesh is consumed and totally broken.

Yahshua was also a man mighty in words and deeds. The crowds marveled at His doctrine saying, "Never did a man speak like this." The multitudes noted that He spoke with power, and not as the Scribes and teachers of the Law. There are many charismatic speakers today who can whip the crowds into an emotional fervor, but this is merely a counterfeit power, and not the true power of God. It is the power that Moses had before his strength was broken.

Yahshua was also a man mighty in deeds. He did all the things that He saw the Father doing, and the people marveled. He healed blind, deaf, lame, and sick. He raised the dead. He cast out demons. He ruled over the natural elements, and He gave this same authority and power to His disciples who would follow after Him. For a period of time the world saw the saints walking in this same power, for they did not shrink away from the working of the cross in their lives. But as the church drifted into a message of ease, the ability to see into the heavens and the power to do the works of God was seen less and less. Men and women were satisfied to simply do what they could in their own strength, and they devised false doctrines to abrogate the need for miracles and signs and wonders.

A day is soon coming when the Spirit will once more come in power upon a company of those saints who have followed the Lord into places of refining, and death to all reliance upon the flesh. These ones will shine forth as brilliant lights in the midst of gross darkness. The church will wonder where they received this power, and demand of them an answer, but most will not receive their words. These ones will enter into their inheritance as kings and priests to the world. They will see into the heavens and know what the Father is doing and perform the same. These ones will be lords of the Sabbath, and thus the words spoken of Christ will find earthly fulfillment, namely that He is "King of kings and Lord of lords," for His kings and lords will follow in His footsteps.

I do not say that those who have not yet experienced this baptism of power will not hear the Lord speak to them in some measure, nor that the Lord will ever call them to some task until that day. We see the disciples of Christ walking in some measure of authority before the day of Pentecost, for the Lord commissioned them and sent them out to preach the kingdom and cast out devils and heal the sick, and we do see these things done in some measure today. Yet this is not the same as entering in fully to the place of Sabbath rest and power to which we are called.

There is a pattern seen in the lives of those whom the Lord called to some special work. They are often given a brief period of success, as David knew in his early days in Saul's household, or as Joseph knew in Potipher's, but then a time of breaking and refining comes forth, often for a prolonged period, and the end of this work is that the natural strength of the man is broken and it is replaced with a total surrender to, and dependence upon, God.

Even so, in my life I knew days when the Lord had called me to function as a minister to His body, only to see these days cut short before they bore any perfected fruit, and a wilderness period then ensued. This wilderness period is filled with trials, and suffering and an absence of things that appeal to the flesh and soul of man. It is a time when self-confidence and a reliance upon our own strength is replaced with humility and a leaning wholly upon the Savior. A remnant of saints have been enduring these same experiences, which all must pass through in order to enter into that good land before them. This is the pattern that God has established by His own counsel.

If you have found that the message of this book has pierced your soul and stirred up the spirit within you, then I encourage you to press into these things. The apostle has instructed us in this way, "therefore let us be diligent to enter into that rest" (Hebrews 4:11). The first step in this exercise of diligence is to believe what it is that God has said He will do for those who believe. Search the Scriptures and see if these things are true. Do not allow the walled cities and giants in the land to deter you. All enemies before us will be as prey as our conquering leader Yahshua leads us into battle.

Second, follow wherever the Lord leads. The overcomers spoken of in Revelation are marked by this distinction, "they follow the Lamb wherever He goes." Many in turning back from paths of difficulty and suffering are forfeiting things that will cause them to weep and wail and gnash their teeth when they are fully revealed unto them. Then their shortsightedness will be seen to be as Esau's when he sold his birthright for a bowl of stew. Rather, let us be like Jacob who wrestled with the angel all night and said "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

The children of God are called to be lords of the Sabbath, and possessors of the promises of God. May many enter into God's rest.



Epilogue

The Usage of Divine Names

Since I was a youth I have often wondered why the most common English translations of the scriptures have chosen to not represent the names of the Father and the Son as they originally occurred in the Hebrew and Greek, but instead they replaced the names of deity with titles that are not names at all. At one time when I was yet a very young man I began to go through my Bible and replace each occurrence of “the LORD,” “the Lord,” “God,” “the Lord God,” and other such renderings with the actual divine names and titles that occurred in the ancient manuscripts. This proved to be a daunting task since the name “Yahweh” alone occurs over 6,800 times in the Old Testament.

For various reasons the translators down through the years have chosen to render the divine names as something other than that which is accurate and original. One reason is due to a misapplication of the third commandment that Moses brought down on the stone tablets from Mount Sinai. The commandment I refer to is the one which instructs the followers of Yahweh to not use His name in a vain manner. The command is often rendered in the following fashion in popular translations.

Exodus 20:7

"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain."

(NAS)

You will note the uppercase spelling of the word LORD in this verse. If you were to read the translators' notes for this Bible version, and many others, you would find that the translators chose to replace the name *Yahweh* with the title *LORD* everywhere that it occurs. Additionally, the word *God* is a translation of the word *Elohim*, which denotes a divine being. This verse could be more authentically rendered in the following manner.

You shall not lift up or bear the name of Yahweh your Elohim falsely, deceptively, or in vain, for Yahweh will not regard him as guiltless who lifts up or bears His name in a false, deceptive, or vain manner.

The Hebrew word that is often rendered as *in vain* is translated as *false* just a few verses later in the commandment “Thou shalt not bear *false* witness,” so one can readily see that the Hebrew word holds different shades of meaning. The Elohim of Israel whose name is Yahweh was declaring that His name was not to be used indiscriminately. The name Yahweh was to be used with great integrity.

It was the practice of Jewish scribes, when making copies of the scriptures, to not write out the name Yahweh when it occurred in the text, for they misconstrued the above commandment to mean that Yahweh's name should not ever be written or uttered, for it was a holy name. Indeed it is a holy name, but Yahweh never commanded that it should not be written or uttered. He commanded that it should not be used in a false, deceptive, or vain way.

For example, today when men give oaths they often swear on the Bible, or they swear

by God. They are saying that as God and His word are true, so is their word true. If a man were to swear by the name of Yahweh this would be a similar binding oath. However, if the man really did not mean what he was saying, he would be using the name of Yahweh falsely.

Another very common and appropriate application of this command has to do with speaking forth things, and claiming the words which are spoken are of divine origin. Throughout the Old Testament we find that there were often myriads of false prophets of Yahweh for every true prophet. When a man proclaims himself to be speaking the words of Yahweh, he should make very certain that his words are indeed Yahweh's words. The punishment for prophesying falsely in the name of Yahweh was that the prophet was to be stoned.

Was it such a great issue that a man should speak something that was untrue? We know that Yahweh also forbid lying, but we are not told that liars were to be stoned. False prophets were to be stoned because they went beyond lying and they used Yahweh's name in a false manner. They ascribed something to Yahweh that He did not say or command to be spoken. This was a most serious violation and it touches on the commandment regarding how men are to use Yahweh's name.

The intent of the commandment regarding Yahweh's name is that His name is to be used faithfully, honestly, and with good purpose. It is not to be used falsely, deceptively, or in a vain or trivial way. Unfortunately, many translators even today have a false understanding of this command and it is the practice to not write out the name of Yahweh at all. Yet we are plainly told in scriptures that man was given this name as the name by which Yahweh was to be remembered throughout all generations.

Exodus 3:15

And Elohim, furthermore, said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'Yahweh, the Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob, has sent me to you.' *This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.*"

The name Yahweh is often also rendered in a shortened version as Yah. It occurs in this form 49 times in the Old Testament. As one realizes this they can see that it was not the practice of the most ancient Hebrews to avoid usage of the names Yah and Yahweh, for many of them had His name as part of their own. Elijah is Eliyah, his name meaning *mighty Yah*. Jeremiah is Jeremiyah, his name meaning *Yah will rise*. Joshua is Yahshua, his name meaning *Yah's salvation*. There are many more instances of Israelites who had Yah's name as part of their own. Clearly, they had no understanding that His name was not to be uttered.

As one looks at the root of the word *hallelujah* it is further evidence that there was no prohibition in using His name. The word *hallelujah* is *hallelu-yah*. (The J in old English was pronounced as a Y, and only in recent years has the pronunciation changed, but not when this word is pronounced.) The word *hallelujah* is of Hebrew origin and it means *praise Yah*.

The name *Jehovah* is an incorrect way of rendering the name *Yahweh*. In a misguided attempt to preserve the holiness of the divine name, the Hebrew scribes would place letters from the word Adonai above every occurrence of the name Yahweh. This reminded those reading the scriptures to not speak the name of Yahweh, but rather to speak the word Adonai, which simply means Lord. Translators, not understanding what the scribes had done, combined the words Yahweh and Adonai and came up with *Jehovah*. Recent

discoveries have revealed what was actually done, and a correction has been made.

It is very unfortunate that the divine names have been so obscured and hidden. Yahweh has been given as the Father's memorial name to all generations, yet through error and tradition the name is seldom heard among the saints today. Other names have also lost much through poor renderings, and the link between Old and New Testaments has in many ways been obscured.

The general of Israel, Joshua (Yahshua), is a type of Yahshua (Jesus) who is to lead His people into the promised rest of Yahweh. The name Yahshua means *Yah's salvation*, and it was an appropriate name for both the Son of Yahweh and the general and leader of Israel. We actually see the name of the Savior revealed in the names of the two great prophets Elijah (Eli-*yah*) and Elisha (Eli-*shua*).

Many today are coming back to an understanding of the divine names, and they are once more beginning to use them. Of those who do, some have adopted very narrow views concerning the manner in which divine persons are to be addressed or referenced, and they condemn those who still use titles for divinity such as *Lord* or *God*. In many instances, however, these titles are quite appropriate.

The title *God* is the English equivalent of the Hebrew *Elohim*. Both words denote divinity and even as Elohim was used to refer to false elohims (Exodus 12:12, Jeremiah 43:12, etc.), as well as the true Elohim of Israel, so is the word god used to refer to false gods as well as the true God. Similarly, Lord is an appropriate title that many use for both the Father and the Son. When one discerns the etymology, the word origin, of the title *Lord*, it seems especially appropriate as a designation of the Son of Yahweh. The word *Lord* is synonymous with the word *Master* and it is derived from the Old English word hlááford which literally means bread (loaf)-ward. It was a reference to the head of a household. The servants in the house were entitled to be fed by the master, or loaf-ward of the house.

Yahshua is certainly the one who is the master of His household, and He gives bread to those who are servants in His household. Examine the following scripture.

John 6:32-35

Yahshua therefore said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." They said therefore to Him, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." Yahshua said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."

Let me rewrite verse 34 and it becomes very illuminating. "They said therefore to Him, 'Loaf-ward, evermore give us this bread.'" Yahshua in turn, as the Loaf-ward (Lord), gave them His flesh as their bread.

Mark 14:22

And while they were eating, He took some bread, and after a blessing He broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take it, this is My body."

There are certain groups today that assert that the title *Lord* should never be linked to the Father or the Son, for the word *Baal* found often in the Old Testament is commonly interpreted as *lord*. Oftentimes these groups will replace the word *Lord* with the word

Master wherever it is indicated in scripture, but in truth *Baal* could just as easily be translated into English as *Master*, and it sometimes is, so there is very little point in this.

In my study of scripture I have found occurrences where the word *baal* is used descriptively of Yahweh. Many recoil at this because *Baal* is quite often the name or title ascribed to false gods in the Old Testament, and those who worshiped Baal or who were prophets of Baal came under the judgment of Yahweh. One must realize that a single word in almost any language can be used with multiple applications. This is certainly the case with the ancient Hebrew language. For example, consider the usage of the word “baal” in the following verse.

Jeremiah 3:14

'Return, O faithless sons,' declares Yahweh; 'For I am a master [baal] to you, and I will take you one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.'

The word for *master* in this verse is *baal*, and it is the same word that is used throughout scripture to refer to many of the false deities of the nations that surrounded Israel in ancient days. In this verse Yahweh is calling Himself a baal (master) to those sons whom He brings forth from Israel to bring them to Zion. The word bears no negative connotations in this usage. This word is listed as Strong's number 1167. If you were to do a search on the word *Baal* you would find that it is Strong's word 1168 and it bears this note, “the same as 1167.”

There are many groups today that have detected the error of the translators in replacing the divine names of God. Some of these groups even publish their own Bible translations. Many have gone overboard, however, in rejecting titles that have a legitimate place in scripture. The title *Lord* is one such example.

Whereas it is quite acceptable to use titles to refer to deity, there is little doubt that there is great error in substituting the names of Yahweh with titles in every instance throughout the scriptures. In this way many have forgotten the name of Yahweh. This should not have happened, since His name is recorded over 6,800 times in the Old Testament. Where the name Yahweh is found in scripture, it should be recorded faithfully, without substitution.

What justification do the translators of the most common English Bibles give for replacing the Divine name of Yahweh with a titular substitute? Following is the explanation found in the New American Standard Bible put out by the Lockman Foundation.

The Proper Names of God in the Old Testament: In the scriptures, the name of God is most significant and understandably so. It is inconceivable to think of spiritual matters without a proper designation for the Supreme Deity. Thus the most common name for the deity is God, a translation of the original Elohim. One of the titles for God is Lord, a translation of Adonai. There is yet another name which is particularly assigned to God as His special or proper name, that is, the four letters YHWH (Exodus 3:14 and Isaiah 42:8). This name has not been pronounced by the Jews because of reverence for the great sacredness of the divine name. Therefore, it has been consistently translated Lord. The only exception to this translation of YHWH is when it occurs in immediate proximity to the word Lord, that is, Adonai. In that case it is regularly translated God in order to avoid confusion.

It is known for many years YHWH has been transliterated as Yahweh, however no

complete certainty attaches to this pronunciation.
(NASB © 1985 Holman Bible Publishers)

As I look at this explanation I find some very distinct problems. The publishers admit that “the name of God is most significant and understandably so,” yet they go on to state that they have removed His “special or proper name” in every occurrence throughout the Old Testament, without exception. Furthermore, they state that “the most common *name* for deity is *God*,” yet *God* is not a name at all, it is a title denoting a divine being and it can be equally ascribed to false divinity as well as that which is true. They have even stated that God is a translation of Elohim.

Elohim is never given as the proper name of Yahweh in scripture. Elohim is a title that refers to a divine being and in the following passage we can see that it was not exclusively used as a reference to Yahweh.

Exodus 12:12

'For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the *elohim* of Egypt I will execute judgments-- I am Yahweh.'

The translators are clearly wrong in stating that “the most common *name* for deity is God.” They would have been closer to the truth in saying “the most common *title* for deity is God.” Anytime the writers of scripture wanted to declare who their Elohim was they gave His “special or proper name” Yahweh. They did this with amazing consistency so that Yahweh occurs 6,828 times in the Old Testament with Yah occurring an additional 49 times. Yet for all this, the translators have chosen to totally remove the names Yahweh and Yah from scripture and they have based it solely upon the following argument: “*This name has not been pronounced by the Jews because of reverence for the great sacredness of the divine name. Therefore, it has been consistently translated Lord.*”

Did the translators give some divine commandment as their authority for removing Yahweh’s name from scripture? No! They based this very profound decision totally upon the tradition of the Jews. It was these same Jews to whom Yahshua spoke the following:

Mark 7:6-9

And He [Yahshua] said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.' Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men." He was also saying to them, "You nicely set aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition."

What is the commandment of Yahweh concerning the usage of His name? We are not left without understanding.

Exodus 3:15

And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel, Yahweh God of your fathers ... hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

Deuteronomy 28:58-60

"If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book, *to fear this honored and awesome name, Yahweh your God*, then Yahweh will bring extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, even severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic sicknesses. And He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you."

I Chronicles 17:24

"And let Thy name be established and magnified forever, saying, 'Yahweh of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel; and the house of David Thy servant is established before Thee.'"

Psalms 29:2

Ascribe to Yahweh the glory due to His name; worship Yahweh in holy array.

Psalms 72:17-19

May his name endure forever; may his name increase as long as the sun shines and let men bless themselves by him; let all nations call him blessed. Blessed be Yahweh God, the God of Israel, who alone works wonders. And blessed be His glorious name forever; and may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen.

Psalms 83:16-18

Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek Your name, O Yahweh. Let them be confounded and dismayed forever; yes, let them be put to shame and perish, that they may know that You, whose name alone is Yahweh, are the Most High over all the earth.

Psalms 105:1-3

Oh, give thanks to Yahweh! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; talk of all His wondrous works! Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those rejoice who seek Yahweh!

Psalms 113:3

From the rising of the sun to its going down Yahweh's name is to be praised.

Hosea 12:5

Even Yahweh, the God of hosts; Yahweh is His name.

Zechariah 13:9

"And I will bring the third part through the fire, refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' and they will say, 'Yahweh is my God.'"

These are but a few of the many thousands of instances in which the name Yahweh is mentioned throughout scripture. We are told that this is His memorial name. This name is to be praised. This is the name His people are to call upon. We are to ascribe to Yahweh

the glory due His name. We are to give thanks to Yahweh in this name. We are to proclaim this name and honor and fear His name. This is the name that is to endure forever.

What a tragedy has occurred in removing the revealed name of God from scripture. The name Yahweh has been totally removed. It brings one to consider Jeremiah's words:

Jeremiah 23:26-27

Is there anything in the hearts of the prophets who prophesy falsehood, even these prophets of the deception of their own heart, who intend to make My people forget My name by their dreams which they relate to one another, just as their fathers forgot My name...

Truly, Christianity today has forgotten the name of Yahweh. Most only know Him by titles and by the substitutions the translators have placed in the scriptures that are used throughout Christendom.

It has not just been the NASB publishers that have followed this pattern of removing the name of Yahweh from scripture. All of the most popular English translations have done the same. Their reasoning is no more righteous, for they have not based their decision upon the commandment of Yahweh, but upon the traditions of men.

For two reasons the Committee has returned to the more familiar usage [of substituting YHWH with either the LORD or GOD] of the King James Version: (1) the word 'Jehovah' does not accurately represent any form of the name ever used in Hebrew; and (2) the use of any proper name for the one and only God ... was discontinued in Judaism before the Christian era and is entirely inappropriate for the universal faith of the Christian Church. (Revised Standard Version)

What a bold declaration, "the use of any proper name for the one and only God... was discontinued in Judaism before the Christian era and is entirely inappropriate for the universal faith of the Christian Church." Where is the scripture to justify such a statement? Where is any explanation other than that the Jews through their traditions, not by commandment from Yahweh, quit using His name? How can they so brazenly assert that it is "entirely inappropriate" to use the name Yahweh? If the Holy Spirit inspired the scriptures and chose to have the name recorded nearly seven thousand times, how can man declare that it is inappropriate to use the name?

The NIV Study Bible merely gives the following statement regarding their practice of name substitution:

In regard to the divine name YHWH, commonly referred to as the tetragrammaton, the translators adopted the device used in most English versions of rendering that name as "LORD" in capital letters to distinguish it from Adonai, another Hebrew word rendered "Lord," for which small letters are used.
(NIV Study Bible © 1985 by The Zondervan Corporation)

A similar statement is made by the translators of the New Living Translation:

We have rendered the tetragrammaton (YHWH) consistently as "the LORD," utilizing a form with small capital letters that is common among English

translations.

(New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale House Charitable Trust)

Again, there is no divine command cited to justify this practice. It is merely stated that “the device used in most English versions” has been followed. When one undertakes such an important labor as producing a copy of the holy scriptures to be read by millions of people, one should approach the labor with the greatest of integrity seeking to walk in strict obedience to the revealed mind of the Father. Making profound decisions that result in altering the scriptures *just because other men have done so* is no justification at all. It is the height of audacity to then turn around and say that using the divine name, as recorded by holy men and prophets at the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is totally inappropriate for the universal Christian faith. What is truly totally inappropriate is making wholesale changes to the scriptures and basing such decisions on tradition and the devices of men.

It is not wrong to refer to divinity by titles, but we should not forget the true names of the One to whom we refer. The disciple Thomas certainly knew the Messiah by His Hebrew name Yahshua, but he also called Him, “my Lord and my God” (John 20:28).

In the Old Testament the name Yahweh was very frequently used, but Yahweh was also referred to by the titles El, Elohim, and Adonai. Yahweh gave no prohibition against referring to Him with a title, but certainly it is inappropriate to replace His name in every instance throughout scriptures with titles, thus obscuring His name to multitudes as do the publishers of many of the most common Bible translations today. Knowing someone’s name is a mark of intimacy and those who are members of the Kingdom of God should know the name of the God they serve.

As we enter into the seventh millennium, the Sabbath day of creation, Yahweh will call forth a Bride for His Son. The Bride is to know the Bridegroom, and the Father of the Bridegroom, intimately. It would be very fitting that this Bride should come once again into an understanding of the divine names. One of the most intimate encounters between Yahshua and His elect regards the knowing of the name He gives to them. This is a sign of the greatest intimacy. We find this recorded in Revelation.

Revelation 2:17

'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

The sharing of this private name is a mark of great friendship. Some will be given a name that is only known by themselves and Elohim, the Godhead. It is a special token denoting some facet of their relationship with God. On the other end of the spectrum, our Messiah will say to those who have never known Him intimately, “Depart from Me, I never knew you” (Matthew 7:23).

It is my conviction that the Father would have me to refer to Him often by His name, as well as using the name Yahshua when referring to the Messiah, rather than Jesus, for Yahshua conveys a greater understanding of the relationship between Yahweh and His Son. *Yahshua* literally means *Yah’s Salvation*, and this He is. The name Jesus is an English rendering of a Latinized Greek translation of the Hebrew name Yahshua. The Hebrew Yahshua has been altered as it has been changed into Greek, then Latin, and later into

English. As the name has been altered it has come to lack any resemblance to the name Yahweh to which it is linked, and its meaning has been obscured.

From my studies I have come to the conclusion that Jesus holds the same meaning as Yahshua if one understands ancient Greek and Latin, but few do today. One can determine that *Yah's Salvation* is the meaning of the name of the Son of God by examining the following scripture.

Matthew 1:21

"And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus [Iesous (ee-ay-sooce - Strong's 2424)], for it is He who will save [soosei Strong's 4982 - to save] His people from their sins."

I am not a great scholar of ancient languages and history, and I am much at the mercy of other's research when trying to ascertain the history of certain facts or name origins. What I have found in my searching is that one form of Yah in the Greek language was Iah, (pronounced Ee-yah). Furthermore, the word for "save" in Greek is "soosei." Combining these two words could very well lead to the Latinized Greek name Iesous (pronounced ee-ay-sooce) from which we get Jesus.

Many are asserting today that the *sus* in the name Jesus is actually a rendering of the name Zeus, or that Jesus is a form of the name Isis or some other pagan god, but I have been unable to substantiate these allegations. The argument of some states that, in an attempt to make Christianity more appealing to the people of the Roman Empire, a pagan name was given to the Messiah. It seems likely, however, that if this had been the case that there would have been a wide outcry among the saints, and this very egregious error would have been well documented. I have found nothing in the writings of the early church leaders to indicate that this did in fact take place. It seems more plausible that Iesous was a legitimate translation of the Hebrew name Yahshua and that to the people of the Roman Empire it would have held a similar meaning of Yah's Salvation (you shall call His name Iesous for He will soosei His people from their sins).

Believing that the name Jesus is derived from the name of a pagan deity seems dubious, but there are reasons that I prefer to use the name Yahshua. Knowing that in Hebrew the Messiah was called Yahshua, and knowing that there is great significance in His name, I desire that these things should be recognized. When bringing forth English translations of the scriptures, there is no reason to preserve Latinized Greek renderings of words that were originally Hebrew. It is much more accurate to go back to the Hebrew and make a translation from there.

Why should we place greater emphasis on the name the citizens of the Roman Empire used when speaking of Messiah, than the name He was actually known by among His family, disciples, and others who knew Him and met Him? Yahshua said that the Father had sent Him to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, not to the Gentile nations (Matthew 15:24), so He would have been known His whole life by His Hebrew name. The Messiah was born of the Hebrew people and His Hebraic roots should not be obscured, but rather clarified.

As I have looked at the scriptures, it is certain that Yahshua was never known to those He walked among by the name Jesus. There is no letter J in the Hebrew language. There was not such a letter in ancient times, nor is there today. Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionary states that the Latinized Greek name Iesous, from which we get Jesus, was

derived from the Hebrew name that we know as Joshua. The leader of Israel who took the people into their promised land was indeed a type of Yahshua the Messiah, and in the day in which Yahshua lived others would have recognized the Messiah's name as being the same as the hero of the Old Testament.

Yahshua (Joshua) was a common name in the day in which Messiah appeared. There are others recorded in scripture who shared the same name. In the genealogy of Yahshua, another of the same name is also mentioned, although most translations record it differently.

Luke 3:29

the son of *Joshua* [Greek Iesous, Hebrew Yahshua], the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi...

Also, Yahshua the Messiah often had appellations added to His name to identify which Yahshua He was. He was referred to as "Yahshua the Christ or Messiah," "Yahshua of Nazareth," "Yahshua Messiah of Nazareth," etc.. This was to identify which Yahshua was being referenced.

A question I have not been able to arrive at a satisfactory answer to is "Why did the translators render the Greek Iesous as Jesus in some instances and as Joshua, Jose, or other renderings in other places?" If the translators knew that the Messiah shared the same name as the leader of Israel who took the people into the promised land, then why did they not render both names the same? It would be much more authentic if the English speaking church knew the Messiah by the name Joshua, for Joshua is the anglicization of the Hebrew Yahshua.

It is evident that the translators understood this. One need only look at a couple of New Testament scriptures to discern this fact.

Luke 3:29

the son of Joshua [Strong's 2424 Iesous]
(NAS)

Acts 7:45

"And having received it in their turn, our fathers brought it in with Joshua [Strong's 2424 Iesous] upon dispossessing the nations whom God drove out before our fathers, until the time of David.
(NAS)

Hebrews 4:8

For if Joshua [Strong's 2424 Iesous] had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that.
(NAS)

This word, Strong's 2424 Iesous, is the same name translated as Jesus nearly everywhere else in the New Testament. If the translators knew that Jesus was the same name as the Hebrew leader whom we know as Joshua, then why did they not translate the names the same? The rather indiscriminate manner of choosing how to render Biblical names has led to the obscuring of the links between those who serve as types and antitypes

of one another.

To approach the name of Yahshua from another perspective, it is said that Yahshua would come in the name of Yahweh. Let us examine what this means.

John 12:12-13

On the next day the great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that Yahshua was coming to Jerusalem, took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of Yahweh, even the King of Israel."

Of course, all of our popular English translations say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord," but this scripture in John is actually a direct fulfillment of Psalms 118:26.

Psalms 118:26

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of Yahweh; we have blessed you from the house of Yahweh.

What does it mean to come in the name of Yahweh? On one level it certainly means that Yahshua came in the authority of Yahweh. On another level it also indicates that He came bearing the name of Yahweh. As we have already indicated, Yah is a form of the name Yahweh that occurs 49 times in the Old Testament. Yahshua fulfilled this scripture by coming in the authority of Yahweh and also by bearing His name as part of His own.

The apostle Paul was a Pharisee, well versed in the scriptures. When he spoke the following, he was quoting from the scriptures that he knew so well.

Romans 10:13

for "Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved."
(NAS)

What scripture was Paul quoting from?

Joel 2:32

"And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape, as Yahweh has said, even among the survivors whom Yahweh calls."

When Paul said "Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved," to whom was he referring? If we look only a few verses further down we see that it is the Messiah, or Christ.

Romans 10:17

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

As the message of Christ, or Messiah, is preached then people are able to call upon His name and be saved. We are further told that "there is salvation in no other name" (Acts 4:12), yet when Joel prophetically writes about coming days he states, "And it will come

about that whoever calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved.”

As we relate these verses together we can determine that the Messiah did indeed share the same name as the Father. The Father is Yahweh, or Yah, and the son is Yahshua, literally Yah’s salvation. When people call upon the name of Yahshua they are not only speaking the name of the Father, but they are proclaiming the Son to be the Father’s salvation.

Furthermore, we are told that John the Baptist came as a fulfillment of the scripture that Elijah would precede Yahshua’s coming. This prophecy was recorded in Malachi. Whom did Malachi say would follow Elijah? Young’s Literal Translation phrases this scripture in this manner.

Malachi 4:5

Lo, I am sending to you Elijah the prophet, Before the coming of the day of [Yahweh], The great and the fearful.

(Young’s Literal Translation)

It is remarkable to note that John came in the spirit of Elijah, to announce to the Jews the coming of their Messiah. Elijah literally means “Yah is God.” This was the message John proclaimed. He identified Yahshua as the Son of God, the Messiah.

Even as Father and Son were one in essence, so they shared the same name. Yahshua made this quite evident when He said, “Before Abraham was, I AM” (John 8:58). In making this declaration, all the Jews knew that Yahshua was proclaiming that He and the Father were one, for He was quoting from Yahweh’s revelation to Moses.

Exodus 3:14

And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

In many ways Yahshua proclaimed that He and the Father were one. Yahshua proclaimed Himself to be the Rock (Matthew 16:18, I Corinthians 10:4), and in Isaiah 44:8 Yahweh is proclaimed to be the Rock. Yahshua proclaimed Himself to be the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End (Revelation 1:8), and in the Old Testament the same is spoken of Yahweh (Isaiah 44:6, Isaiah 48:12). If they shared the same titles and descriptions, should they not also share the same name?

Indeed, there appears to be more to this proclamation that Yahshua came in the name of the Father than a reference to the fact that He came in the Father’s authority. He truly did share the Father’s name.

John 12:12-13

On the next day the great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that Yahshua was coming to Jerusalem, took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of Yahweh, even the King of Israel."

I am convinced that it is the Father’s will for His name to be known. It is said that the heavens would receive Yahshua until the time of the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21). Is it not appropriate that His name should be restored before He returns? Should not the

name of the Father also be restored? I am witnessing many, who have previously not known the names Yahweh and Yahshua, come to know these names and use them. This is not something organized by man, but it is a sovereign work of the Holy Spirit.

The replacement and subsequent forgetting of the memorial name of God is a great tragedy and it is at least partially attributable to men choosing their traditions over the will of Yahweh. In my own life I am convinced that I am to choose the will of the Father over the traditions of men. If the Holy Spirit thought it important to record for mankind the name of Yahweh, then I must conclude that it is both significant and important.

To those who call the Savior by the name Jesus, I find no reason to condemn this practice. As a teacher to the church of Yahshua I seek to impart understanding of the mysteries hidden in the scriptures. It is my conviction that the Spirit of Yahweh would have me use the name Yahshua in these writings to facilitate understanding, not to throw rocks at those who use another name.

I trust this will serve as a suitable explanation of the usage of divine names throughout this book, and other writings of this author.

