

A religious painting depicting Moses, an elderly man with a long white beard and hair, wearing a white robe with a red sash. He is holding two large, dark, rectangular tablets (the Ten Commandments) high above his head with both hands. The background is a warm, golden-brown, textured surface. The overall style is classical, with dramatic lighting and visible brushstrokes.

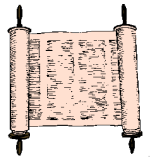
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YAHSHUA'S WITNESS MAGAZINE

Declaring a new and living way. (Heb. 10:20)

*Does Yahweh's law
apply in today's world?
P. 9*

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Yahshua's Witness Magazine

Is dedicated to His bride. Yahshua will be returning soon to receive His own unto Himself (Jn. 14:3). His bride must make herself ready (Rev. 19:7). A person who is called out of this world by the Father, who repents of his/her sins, is baptized in the name of Yahshua the Messiah (Acts 2:38), the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12), and receives the Holy Spirit must come to know Him as the Scriptures declare and witness of Him (Jn. 5:39-47). Peter encouraged, "But grow in grace, and the knowledge of our Sovereign and Saviour Yahshua the Messiah," 2 Pet. 3:18. We will, with Yahweh's help and the Spirit of Truth, seek to reveal a most wondrous Savior and Redeemer, a Savior and Redeemer that much of the world has spoken of, dreamed of, hoped for, but truly never known. While much of the world looks to a savior, the savior of whom they have been taught has become corrupted. Another has been substituted in the true Savior's place. Those who are called out of this world and given to Him are likened unto virgins. But in accordance with His own parable of those virgins, only five are wise while the other five are foolish. The five wise are able to enter into the planned marriage with the Messiah, but the five foolish have the door closed to them (Mt. 25:1-13). Let's be wise, remember our betrothal to the Messiah and the virginity to which He has restored us (2 Cor. 11:1-2), resist the wiles of the devil and look to and prepare for a joyous and glorious marriage that will endure for all eternity. HalleluYah!!!!

Inside this issue:

The Idol Shepherd	By Elder Jerry Healan	4
Yahweh's Law Applies Today	By Elder Dave Ganton	9
Messiah, Torah, And Me	By Matthew Armstrong	16
The Witness of Aaron's Rod	By Elder Jerry Healan	19



OUR COVER: Rembrandt's painting of Moses smashing the tables of the commandments is an appropriate depiction of how today's world views the commandments. The Christian churches teach that Yahweh's law is done away. Rembrandt should have been inspired to depict the leaders of the Christian churches in the process of smashing the stony tables. Yet, there was a great uproar recently when one judge defiantly exhibited the commandments in a state courthouse in Alabama. The reaction of the Christian churches in support of the open displaying of the commandments should cause all to question whether the commandments are done away or not.

Elder Dave Ganton gives an excellent, vivid, revealing and clear-cut explanation concerning how the Christian church got off track and is in error concerning their belief that the law is done away. You will find his article on page 9.

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CHOOSING THE NAME OF THIS MAGAZINE

For such a long time I saw that information as revealed in the Scriptures concerning Yahshua had suffered. One of the problems that the assemblies face is that so much of our focus has been on the name of the Father (which, don't take me wrong here, is extremely important) and the pronunciation of it. Also, much focus has been on the Torah (which is also important, so please don't take me wrong here) and how we, personally, might obey its commands. But there are too many places where the importance of Yahshua's fulfillment of the Scriptures have suffered because it seems that once people accept His sacrifice for their sins, then they go about the business of declaring the name of the Father, looking to see how we might obey the Torah, etc., etc. as already stated.

But let's read the last part of Matthew chapter 28, "Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Yahshua had appointed them. And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him: but some doubted. And Yahshua came and spake unto them, saying, **'All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things what soever I have commanded you.'** and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' Amen," vv. 16-20.

Again, Yahshua told them as related by Mark, **"Go ye into all the world, and preach the evangel to every creature.** He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (condemned, judged)," v. 15.

Luke records, "And He said unto them, 'These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, **that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me.**' Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, **"Thus it is written, and thus it behoved the messiah to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things,"** Lk. 24:44-48.

John records Yahshua's words, **"Search the Scriptures,** for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and **they are they which testify of Me,"** Jn. 5:39.

Well, of course the witnesses who witnessed these things are long since dead awaiting the resurrection, but their words are recorded for us in order to remind us of the things that they saw and witnessed to. The same thing can be said about Moses, the prophets, the psalmists, etc. But there are those in these last days who have horribly corrupted the Scriptures from their original meanings and intent. Their leaders continue to cause them to observe the things dedicated to pagan idols and deities daily, weekly and annually rather than the true things of Yahshua. Then, we have those even in the assemblies and Messianic Judaism who embraced the truth concerning the Sacred Names, the observance of Yahweh's commandments, the Savior Yahshua, etc., who are now falling away in disbelief. So very much of this has to be resulting because of a lack of focus on the reality of Scripture which is Yahshua and how the Scriptures speak of Him, as well as our need for Him in everyone's personal life.

Of course, we do know that the Scriptures tell us that in the last days scoffers will abound asking about the truth and verity of Scripture because things are continuing as they always have. The promise of the Kingdom of Heaven seemingly has failed. This has to come in order to try the patience and faith of the true believers.

But the Apostle Peter encouraged us, **"But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Sovereign and Saviour Yahshua the Messiah.** To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen," 2 Pet. 3:18. This is a very vital and important key for us to understand. We are to grow in the GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE of Yahshua the Messiah. But there are those who do not understand the boundless power of the grace and knowledge of the Messiah and through their lack of understanding, they begin to load burdens upon the shoulders of others which are grievous to be borne. You can detect these because they will be Pharisaical in their approach.

Due to this lack of this witnessing, we thought it necessary to publish a magazine which would hopefully enable the people to begin to learn of Yahshua and how He is spoken of in the Scriptures. With your prayers along with ours, and the aid of the Holy Spirit we will accomplish this task.

Because of this, we considered a couple of names for the magazine. The first consideration, of course, was the name by which we have ultimately chosen "Yahshua's Witness Magazine." But the other was "A New And Living Way." This is because of the radio program that we had when we first began this ministry. That name was inspired by a dear sister of ours, Maryland Frick. Thus, we decided to name the magazine "Yahshua's Witness Magazine" and also to incorporate "Declaring a new and living way" along with it.

I had not realized how the title "Yahshua's Witness Magazine" would play in the mix until after the first issue was completed. I took the first letters of each word Y, W, M and converted them to Hebrew **יחזק**. **יחזק** is the Hebrew word for day! Yahshua is our light and He is a great light. His light is even brighter than the light of the sun which is the light of our current day. But when Yahshua returns, His light

THE IDOL SHEPHERD

The book of Zechariah is an extremely important prophetic book. Through a careful and deep study of its pages we will be able to properly determine that there is a false idol shepherd. The false Shepherd continues to do his deceitful work to this very day. This study will enable you to properly identify and distinguish between the true and the false, and will open your eyes to the true salvation of the Creator.

By Jerry Healan

Yahweh admonished Zechariah saying, "Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd. For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces. Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his eye shall be utterly darkened," Zech. 11:15-17.

Yahweh's word can be difficult to understand or the meaning can be easily overlooked unless one carefully analyzes what is being said.

The first thing that we should seek to discover is what is a shepherd? The Hebrew word for shepherd is "ra'ah" and means: to tend a flock, i.e. pasture it; intrans. to graze (lit. or fig.) gen. to rule; by extension, to associate with (as a friend). A shepherd, therefore, is one who tends to a flock, leading it into fields of pasture so that the sheep may be fed. A shepherd is a friend to the flock for he is supposed to care for it making sure it has the best conditions, the best pasture, the purest water to drink, the safest places wherein to abide, etc. The shepherd is the leader of the flock and, therefore, is also its ruler.

The English word "pastor" is shown by *Webster's New World Dictionary* to be derived from and has an equivalent meaning to shepherd. *Pastor* means:

minister of a congregation, a shepherd, clergyman or priest in charge of a church or congregation.

THE TRUE SHEPHERD

The Psalmist David cried out, "**Yahweh is my Shepherd**; I shall not want," Psa. 23:1. David knew that he was but a sheep and that Yahweh

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was His Shepherd.

Asaph also said, "Give ear, **O Shepherd of Israel**, Thou That leadest Joseph like a flock; Thou That dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth," Psa. 80:1. The plalmist Asaph, like David, knew Who the Shepherd was.

The prophet Isaiah also was inspired to write, "Behold Adonai Yahweh will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. **He shall feed His flock like a shepherd**: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young," Isa. 40:10-11.

To ancient Israel, Yahweh was their Shepherd and they were His flock. If Yahweh was the Shepherd then who was Yahshua? Yahshua said, "**I am the good Shepherd**: the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. **I am the good Shepherd**, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock, and one Shepherd," Jn. 10:11-16.

Ezekiel was inspired to prophesy, "Therefore will I save My flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. **And I will set up one shepherd** over them, and he shall feed them, **even My servant David**; he shall feed them, and **he shall be their shepherd**. And I Yahweh will be their Elohim, and My servant David a prince (ruler) among them; I Yahweh have spoken it," Ez. 34:22-24.

Yahshua is the Root of David, "And one of the elders saith unto me, 'Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, **the Root of David**, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof,'" Rev. 5:5. He is called the Root and

The David that Ezekiel was prophesying of was Yahshua. Yahshua is in the lineage of King David and was called many times the "Son of David." Yahshua is the Shepherd that Yahweh prophesied He would raise up to shepherd the flock of Israel.

THE TRUE SHEPHERD'S EXAMPLE

The definition for sin is given to by the apostle John, “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for **sin is the transgression of the law,**” 1 Jn. 3:4.

Yahshua, Himself, said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or

Furthermore, the Scriptural definition for righteousness is Yahweh's commandments, "My tongue shall speak of Thy word: for **all Thy commandments are righteousness,**" Psa. 119:172.

Yahshua fulfilled the law perfectly so that His sacrifice was a blemish free sacrifice.

THE UNFAITHFUL SHEPHERDS

sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of Yahweh; As I live, saith Adonai Yahweh, surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not My flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of Yahweh;' Thus saith Adonai Yahweh; 'Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require My flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith Adonai Yahweh; 'Behold, I, even I, will both search My sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith Adonai Yahweh. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and strong; I will feed them with judgment.

And as for you, O My flock,' thus saith Adonai Yahweh; 'Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats. Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eater up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? And to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? And as for My flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet. Therefore' thus saith Adonai Yahweh unto them; 'Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; Therefore will I save My flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle," Ez. 34:1-22.

Scribes to whom Yahshua came.

ZECHARIAH 11

wood came from Bashan. But, the cedars, firs and oaks were also very popular trees among the paganistic peoples. The god of the Greeks (Zeus), of the Romans (Jupiter) and the trinity of the Druids were all represented by oak trees. The Assyrians, Babylonians and others revered their dieties as cedars and firs.

THE TWO FLOCKS

The Southern kingdom of Judah followed Israel's example of turning Yahweh's glory into the shame of idols. This was extreme treachery which Yahweh condemns with even greater vehemence than that of Northern Israel, "Yahweh said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, 'Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? She is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot. And I said after she had done all these things, 'Turn thou unto Me.' But she returned not, and **her treacherous sister Judah** saw it. And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet **her treacherous sister Judah feared not**, but went and played the harlot also. And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks. And yet for all this **her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto Me with her whole heart**, but feignedly, saith Yahweh,'

Baal became the idol shepherd. Who was Baal? Was this deity's name Baal or was Baal a title? The word baal means; master, husband, owner, etc.

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because they would not
repent of Baal worship.*

After Alexander's conquest of Persia a people called "Celts" began to migrate into western Europe from the Caucasus and "Iberian" area of what is now known as Georgia in southern

The Celts had a pantheon of deities, but they had three mighty ones (elohim). They were Taranis, the

thunder deity; Esus, the lord and master; and Teutates, the overall deity of the people (*"The Life and Death of a Druid Prince,"* p.p. 45).

E. Raymond Capt wrote in his book titled, *"The Traditions of Glastonbury,"* that the Celts had a "trinity," emanating from the god-head. They were known as "Beli," the creator as regards the past; "Taran," the controlling providence of the present and "Yesu," the coming Saviour of the future. Druidism thus anticipated Christianity and pointed to the coming Saviour under the very name by which Christ was called!!! (p. 9).

E Raymond Capt also wrote in another book titled, *"Stonehenge and Druidism,"* "It is of interest to note that the Druids revered a form of the cross. It was their custom to search diligently for a large handsome oak tree, having two large armlike branches. When viewed in conjunction with the trunk of the tree they formed a cross. This cross" was then consecrated by cutting characters for the word "Hesus," spelled "Yesu," upon the RIGHT branch. Upon the middle trunk they cut the word "Taranus," upon the left branch, "Belenus," and over them all the word "Than," meaning God.

"Hesus" or "Yesu" was the supreme God whom they worshipped as the great "ALL-HEAL" and they believed in Him as "Saviour" of the world. In both the Druidic religion and the Hebrew religion (NOTE: *The Druids were the Celtic priesthood, in other words the priesthood of Israel, the Hebrews, Ibriy*) of patriarchal times we can see a parallel preparation for the coming of Christ. The Old Testament prophets proclaimed that the promised Messiah would come as a babe, grow to be a great teacher, and finally be revealed as Redeemer.

Through the ministry of the Druids, the same doctrines were believed, with the expectation of the same Saviour, HESUS (JESUS). In the ancient British tongue, "Jesus" had never assumed its Greek, Latin or Hebrew form, but remained the pure Druidic "Hesus" or "Yesu." Talisen, a Welsh bard of the sixth century wrote, "Christ, the Word from the beginning was in the beginning our Teacher, and we never lost His teachings. Christianity was a new thing in Asia,

but there never was a time when the Druids of Britain held not its doctrines."

Despite its practice of pagan rites in "high places" and "sacred groves," it was the Druidic faith, rooted in Druidism, that nurtured the essential divine truths and prepared Britain for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When Christianity reached Britain, Druidism merged with it. Many of the Druidic priesthood became ministers in the early Christian Church. They went on to carry the message of Christianity to the far nations of the world," (p.p. 78-80).

The Druids and Celts were (are) the descendants of ancient Israel. Israel was cast out of the land of Canaan because they would not repent of the worship of the pagan Baal. Baal was worshipped as a trinity. One of their deities that they worshipped was Esus, Hesus, Yesu (Jesus). That Yesus, Hesus and Jesus are one and the same there can be no doubt because when Billy Graham went to Russia recently, everytime he said the name Jesus, the interpreter would say Yesus. We also all know that the Spanish pronunciation for Jesus is

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"Hesus." Yesu (Jesus, Jesus) was worshipped as Lord and Master of the Celts and as their coming Saviour.

What does Yahweh say about all this? "I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in My name saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed.' How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies?

Yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart; which think to cause My People to forget My name by their dreams which they tell every man his neighbor, as their fathers have FORGOTTEN MY NAME FOR BAAL," Jer. 23:25-27.

The Celtic world worshipped Baal. Their Saviour's name was Esus,

Hesus, Yesu (today called Jesus)! The modern day Christian world has forgotten the name of the Most High and His Son. Ask one what the Heavenly Father's name is. He will have to say God or the Lord because His name has purposely been taken out of the scriptures. Ask what the Saviour's name is and he will respond with Jesus, the name of Baal, not the true name "Yahshua," because it also has been cleverly removed, covered up.

The Psalmist cried out, "O Elohim, how long shall the adversary reproach? Shall the enemy blaspheme Thy name for ever?.....Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Yahweh, and that the foolish people have blasphemed Thy name," Psa. 74:10, 18. (NOTE: the words blaspheme and blasphemed is the Hebrew "na'ats" also meaning to scorn, abhor, condemn, detest.)

Yahweh's enemies, His foes, His adversary (Satan) have caused His name and the name of His Son to be hidden. Satan hates Yahweh and His Son Yahshua. He seeks to be worshipped as the Mighty One himself. He has deceived the whole world (Rev. 12:9) blinding them to the truth of their names. Yahweh's people turned to sacrifice to devils (Dt. 32:17), to gods whom they knew not. Satan turned Israel to Baal worship. Baal was the ancient pagan sun deity. Israel continues to worship Baal today under the name of Jesus. Israel has forgotten who they are and who the true Elohim is. The proverb has come true that says, "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fist? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? WHAT IS HIS NAME AND WHAT IS HIS SON'S NAME, IF THOU CAN TELL?" Prov. 30:4. Israel cannot answer this proverb's question today.

To be continued.....

YAHWEH'S LAW APPLIES TODAY

*When people begin to love their Creator, they want to know what will please Him. The teaching of most Christian churches is that "God wants only your faith and adoration." How tragic it is that they ignore the many scriptures that tell us the truth! Our Father Yahweh has given a detailed set of instructions to His children. These instructions are called the Law of Yahweh or in Hebrew the Torah. Not only does it please Him when we follow this law, but Yahshua the Messiah explained that we cannot gain eternal life if we reject it (**Matthew 19:17**).*

This article will explain the most popular scriptures that are erroneously used to support the no-law doctrine. With a little research and common sense we can sort out all the problems.

By Elder Dave Ganton

A cursory reading of many scriptures seems to imply that the law was done away. Do these scriptures all add up to the ultimate conclusion that the law is truly cancelled? Could this vast majority of religions be mistaken? Could the numerous scholars who have studied this subject and arrived at this conclusion be in error? Isn't it probable that the majority is right and the minority is wrong? Let's turn to **Revelation 12:9** to find the answer to this question: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, **called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world:** he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him," According to this scripture, the whole world has been deceived by Satan. This is the majority. Could this include the scholars and highly trained teachers?

TRUTH HIDDEN FROM THE WISE

The answer to this question is also in Yahweh's word, **Matt.11:25** Yahshua says the deeper truths of Yahweh's word have been hidden from the wise and scholarly and have been revealed to babes. The word babe in Greek is *nepios* meaning unlearned, simple thinking people. Yahweh said that He would confound the scholarly and those who propose to be great He tells us that the majority (including the scholarly) are deceived; they are mistaken. "But Elohim hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and Elohim hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty," **1 Corinthians 1:27.**

Keep this in mind during this study, you don't need to be a scholar or highly learned to understand the deep things of Yahweh. His truth has always been believed by the simple minority, which has been right, while the majority was wrong. To cite a few examples: Noah, who Yahweh said was righteous, **Gen.7:1**, was the minority but he and his family were right and the rest of the world was wrong and were destroyed on account of it. Lot was the only righteous one in two whole cities. Remember Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Elijah, Elisha, the prophets and many, many others who were the minority in their time.

Let us not neglect to mention

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ally discerned.*

Yahshua, Who was the only right one in the whole world. His apostles who He taught were the minority. Yes, the majority can be mistaken. They can be deceived. With this in mind let us begin by understanding how the unlearned, simple thinking person can understand while the wise and scholarly cannot.

1 Cor. 2:1-16 answers the question to its fullest. The deep things of Yahweh are spiritually discerned. They don't come by the wisdom of man but are given us through the Spirit of Yahweh. The Holy Spirit will lead us into all the truth if we are receptive, **John 16:13**. Through the Holy Spirit we have access to the mind of the Messiah and His Father.

1 Cor. 2:16

Let us now allow Yahweh's Spirit to work in us as we begin to study deeper into the subject of the Law. It is commonly referred to as the law of Moses. This implies that the law originated with Moses. Let's clarify just where the law came from: "And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that Yahweh's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath Yahweh brought thee out of Egypt," **Exodus 13:9**. "Then said Yahweh unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in **my** law, or no," **Exodus 16:4**.

THE LAW IN GENESIS

These and many other scriptures confirm that it is Yahweh's law. It originated and came from Him. No one will argue that point as it is self-evident. The setting of this ground-work is to show that these same laws that were given at the time of Moses were in force and known to the patriarchs and others even in pre-flood times and did not originate at the time of Moses. A careful study of the book of Genesis will reveal this truth.

A few of the more prominent scriptures on this topic start with Cain and Abel in Genesis, chapter four. Two things of note occur in this chapter. First, Cain and Abel both brought offerings to present to Yahweh. Abel's was accepted while Cain's was rejected. Cain was crestfallen over his rejection. He was angry. Yahweh asked him why he was

1 John 3:4 states, sin is the transgression of the law. Yahweh told Cain he did wrong. If he did wrong, there of necessity had to be a law defining what was right in that situation. The presence of sin necessitates a law must have been broken, else it would not be a transgression. If Cain had not transgressed a law concerning offerings and what was acceptable, his offering would have been accepted. Yahweh expected him to know what was right and what was wrong. Knowing this, his offering was rejected.

Let's go forward to another prominent case before the time of Moses where it is evident that the Ten Commandments were known to Joseph, **Gen. 39:6-10**. Joseph, after being sold as a slave into Egypt found favour with Potiphar, a captain of Pharaohs guard and was given charge over all Potiphar's possessions. Potiphar's wife desired to lay with Joseph, but he resisted her advances, saying he could not do such a terrible thing and **sin** against Elohim, **verse 9**.

my laws. It was not just the Ten Commandments that were known to the pre-flood followers of Yahweh. Noah knew about clean and unclean foods, **Gen.7:1-5**. Tithing was also known and practised long before Moses, **Gen.14:20; 28:22**.

There are many more scriptures to verify that the law as given by the Ten Commandments was known and obeyed before it was given to Moses at Mt.Sinai. But these will suffice for the purpose of this study. To come to a correct understanding as to whether the law has been done away, we first need to know what the law is and what it does and how Yahweh uses it. Let's go backward in time to Paul's day and examine a scripture that most think says that the law was given as a punishment for sin committed by the Israelites. This question arises from time to time on the meaning of **Gal.3:19**: Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions

*They were following
the practices of
Egypt where they
had been for 430
years.*

a written code of ethics). Circumstances led Jacob (Israel) and his family to take up residence in Egypt.

They were ecstatic to leave Egypt and finally be free. However, the joy soon turned to complaining as they encountered numerous problems and did not know the power and loyalty of Yahweh. This attitude continued throughout the journey to Mount Sinai. When Moses went up to Sinai to receive Yahweh's instructions for the Israelites, he was gone forty days. They were so accustomed to the false deities of Egypt that they told Aaron to make them a deity, something they could see, something they could look at. Aaron complied, **Ex. 32:1-6.**

Take special note of this: they did not realise they were sinning. This was the deity which brought them out of Egypt as far as they were concerned, verse 4. They were following the practices of Egypt where they had been for 430 years. That is why they were given the law, to identify sin for them, **Gal. 3:19**, not for punishment as some think, but to identify sin for the Israelites. The law was now written in stone to identify clearly what Yahweh's principles are. The law was etched in stone for Israel because of their sins, their transgressions.

Remember, the Israelites had been without law and any moral principles for hundreds of years while in Egypt. Yahweh could not in good conscience hold them responsible for their actions in this situation. Paul understood the concept, where there is no law there is no transgression **Rom. 4:15**. Yet he said in **Romans 5:13**: sin was in the world before the law was given referring to the written code given to Moses at Mount Sinai. Yahweh in His goodness and fairness could not impute a penalty without first outlining the transgression which He did through publishing and codifying the law.

Therein lies the purpose of the law. It instructs. It tells us the difference between right and wrong. The law does not make us righteous. It does not give us salvation. It guides. Let me qualify these statements. The law does not make us righteous. It has no power to do that. It instructs us in righteous behaviour. It does not give us salvation. It is a mirror, rule and guide. It monitors our behaviour. It establishes rules to live by. It instructs us in the righteous behaviour that leads to the salvation process. That is what the law does. It instructs. That is what it did for the Israelites and that is what it does for us. Let us proceed with the law in force and Yahshua not yet in the picture. The law defines sin. Sin is the transgression of the law, **1 John 3:4**. The wages of sin is death. **Rom. 6:23**, first part. Therein lies the curse of

Remember, there is no provision in the law for a resurrection. If we have sinned but once, the death penalty stands against us. There is no provision in the law for our forgiveness. From that point on, if we obey the law to perfection the death penalty for that one infraction still stands against us. It must be paid

Dead for all eternity. What would we gain by paying the penalty for our own sins? We are dead forever and still separated from Yahweh. What would Yahweh gain from this? Nothing. Just billions of eternally dead people whose whole existence was pointless from both positions. Question: can the law make us righteous? Answer: no, it can only instruct us and demand a penalty if we fail to heed its instructions. Can you see how pointless it would be for

Therein lies the curse of the law that Paul speaks about in **Gal. 3:13**: the death penalty that hangs over everyone. He said in **Col. 2:13** that we were dead in our trespasses. Paul fully understood the condition of mankind without Messiah. In **Col. 2:14** he talks about a cheirographon or legal bond which stands against us. This scripture has been translated in various ways: King James: handwriting of ordinances, New International: having cancelled the written code with its regulations, Revised Standard: having cancelled the bond which stood against us. All these phrases are translated from a single Greek word, cheirographon. It means a legal bond of indebtedness. This cheirographon stood against us. This legal bond of indebtedness was the penalty that the law demanded to be paid, the death penalty for our sins. Yahweh held this bond that was against us. We could not pay this debt ourselves. We have already seen the futility in that.

If Messiah has not been raised
your faith is futile and you are still
in your sins wrote the Apostle Paul.

FORGIVENESS FOR BREAK- ING THE LAW

To begin to understand our current relationship with the law let's use an example from our era. When Queen Elizabeth was coronated she granted pardons to many criminals. Some were convicted murderers with life sentences. They did not pay the penalty for their crimes. The Queen forgave them and set them free. They were under her grace.

alty not the law.

Yahweh has inserted a forgiveness clause in the new covenant. He will reapply Yahshua's blood as atonement for our sin if we do transgress the law. **1 John 1:9** also **1 John 2:1-2**. If we do sin, transgress the law (**1John 3:4**), He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins. When sin exists, it needs to be forgiven and the law must also exist to identify it.

As was stated in the beginning of this study, the general erroneous teaching of those religions professing Christianity is the law was done away and nailed to the stake. Let's take this concept to its ultimate con-

When Queen Elizabeth was coronated she granted pardons to many criminals.

clusion. Assume for a moment that this is true, that the law is done away. **1 John 3:4** says sin is the transgression of the law. If, then, there is no law there can be no sin. Then there can be no penalty. Paul said, where there is no law there is no transgression, **Rom. 4:15; 5:13.**

Therefore, Yahshua did not die for your sins or mine as we haven't committed any, as we were born after He died and got rid of the law, and to this day we have not sinned, according to the "no law teachers." That is the ultimate conclusion to the law done away concept. In that case we are not under grace because it is not necessary. There can be no other conclusion. How does this concept square with scripture? **1 John 1:8** says, if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. John wrote this statement some 50 to 65 years after the death of Yahshua. He also said sin was still in the world, (**1 John 1:10**) if we say we have not sinned we make **Him** a liar and the truth is not in us. So what are we saying by the law done away statement? We are calling Yahshua a liar and the truth is not in us. Read the scripture again. **That is what it says!!!**

What about the many scriptures that are quoted that seem to say the law was done away? Most of these scriptures are in the writings of Paul. The first thing we need to know is Paul's attitude toward the law. A good place to start is with Paul's own words in **Acts 24:14**: but this I admit to you, that according to *The Way*, which they call a sect, so I worship the ELOHIM of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the law or written in the prophets.

Yakshna's Witness Magazine

We have seen previously that Paul recognised that the law identifies sin. **Rom. 3:20.** Remember, Yahshua had died and was resurrected many years before Paul wrote this. But Paul said the law still identifies sin. It is still doing what it had done since creation, defining what sin is. It still instructs.

YAHSHUA'S WORDS

In **James 2:8-12**, we read in **verse 10**: if you break one point of the law you become guilty of it all. He adds that the one who said do not commit adultery also said thou shalt not kill. Can you see how the royal law we are to live by encapsulates each of the Ten Commandments? They are the full embodiment of Yahweh's law. James wrote many years after the death and resurrection of Yahshua. Even so,

PERVERTED UNDERSTANDING

Let's go now to the Head of the assembly, Yahshua, [Eph. 5:23] and see what He has to say about the notion that the law was done away.

This is an example of the way word meanings change over the centuries. Another example of this is **1 Thes. 4:15**; for this I say unto you

MAGNIFIED THE LAW

Nov.—Dec. 2004

The Old Covenant was obeyed from compulsion. The new covenant is obeyed from the desire to be close to and to please Yahweh and Yahshua. There are many other scriptures that are used in an attempt to prove that the law was done away. This is done mainly by changing the subject of a statement to something it is not. An example of this mindset is the attempt to do away with the Sabbath by using **Rom. 14** and also **Col. 2:16-17**.

First, let's examine **Rom.14**. The attempt is made to make the Sabbath the subject of this chapter when it is not. The subject of this chapter is judgment of those who are new to or weaker in the faith. The subject is set forth in **verse 4**. Those who were stronger in the faith and understood the deeper meanings of Yahweh's word were passing judgment by their actions and words on their fellow brethren. Some felt that it was okay to eat meat while those weaker in knowledge felt that they should eat only vegetables. Why would they think this? Why was it not right to eat meat?

Suffice it to say that the Sabbath was **not** the subject being discussed by Paul, for it is nowhere mentioned in this entire chapter. This is confirmed by **verses 5 & 6**.

Turning to **Col. 2:1-7** let us first note that it is not the Jews who are judging or condemning the brethren concerning the matters of food and drink, festivals, new moons and Sabbaths. The erroneous belief is that the Jews were telling the followers of Yahshua that they should be observing these things and Paul is telling them that it is not necessary, as they are only a shadow of things to come. Is this really the case? We will see very clearly that this is not the case at all. **Col. 2:8** clearly sets the stage in stating, see to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit according to **human** tradition The Sabbath, new moons and festivals are not meant here, for they are not from human tradition but from Yahweh's clear commands. **Verse 18** will further prove that the Jews were not the instigators here. "Let no one dis-

qualify you insisting on self abasement and the worship of angels.” These are not Jewish beliefs or teachings. You will not find them either in scripture or in Jewish tradition. **Verses 20-22** will verify that it is the pagan culture around them that is causing the trouble. **Verse 21:** "Do not handle. Do not taste. Do not touch. This is alleged to be referring to the clean and unclean foods mentioned in the books of the law, but is in error as **verse 22** will verify. The reference is according to human precepts and doctrines from the **mind of man** not Yahweh.

Let's now begin to understand what Paul is talking about in **Col.2:16-17**. Who is doing the judging and why? We have already established that it is the pagan culture around the brethren at Colosse who are being judgmental. For what reason? Let's come forward to the same situation that still exists today. Nothing has changed. As **Ecclesiastes 1:9** wisely states: There is nothing new under the sun. A great many religions of this age wrongfully insist Yahshua is just one of many ways to salvation when scripture specifically says that Yahshua is the only way to salvation. (**Acts 4:12** And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.) He is only one of many mediators between the Almighty and man. Are you shocked that this would be said?

What is said about those who believe that the law of Yahweh is still to be obeyed, including the Sabbath and Holy Days? Are we judged as doing wrong by those around us? The answer is evident every day.

This letter to the Colossians was written by Paul toward the end of his life some **60** years after the death of Yahshua and His resurrection. It is obvious that the culture around them was not observing the things mentioned in verse 16. Since Paul mentioned these things, it should be just as obvious that the Colossian brethren were observing them. Paul called these things a shadow or preview of things to come.

From the literal Greek to English translation, it reads: therefore, Let no one judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of Sabbaths which are a shadow of things coming but the body of Messiah. Paul is simply saying let there be no judge but the body of Messiah. About what? Eating, drinking, new moon celebrations, festivals and Sabbaths. Why are these things important to followers of Yahweh? Because they preview things that are to come in the accomplishment of His plan. Those who study and know their Bible will comprehend the importance of clean food, improper imbibing, special Holy Days and Sabbaths.

Paul said that all these other things being foisted on the Colossians by the Gnostics and Hellenists had the appearance of piety or holiness but were of no real value since they were from man and not from Yahweh. It is very difficult in a study such as this to expound to the fullest all of the scriptures that have been misrepresented as doing away with the law. It would take a large volume of books to do this. The purpose of this study is to begin to see the law from a positive viewpoint rather than a negative one. If a scripture is misrepresented then the true message is missed and one fails to understand what the Messiah and our Heavenly Father are telling us.

In this study we will cover one more misrepresented scripture because it has been quoted many times. First we will see the inconsistency of the argument against the law, **Rom. 10:4**, For Messiah is the **end** of the law, that everyone who has faith may be justified. This is misinterpreted as saying that Yahshua brought an end to the Law.

Let's look at another scripture that uses the same Greek word when talking about Yahweh in the days of Job. **James 5:11**, Behold, we count them happy that endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job and have seen the **end** of Yahweh: that Yahweh is very pitiful and full of tender mercy. Both use the same Greek word "telos" If **end** means the law has been brought to an end then the other means that Yahweh has been brought to an end. Is this really the case? Has Yahweh been brought to an end? What a silly concept! The truth is, neither has been brought to an end. The Greek word *telos* does not mean end in the sense of stopping or bringing something to its final conclusion. *Telos* means **goal, purpose or aim**. Paul says that Messiah is the goal, purpose or aim of the law. James says we saw the purpose or aim of Yahweh in His dealings with Job.

How then is Yahshua the Messiah the aim or purpose of the law? Remember, there is no clause in the law that offers eternal life. There is

See how misrepresenting such a scripture conceals its true message?

no provision in the law for forgiveness. The death penalty hung over us all apart from Messiah. The curse of the law is the penalty demanded by it that we can never pay. The writings of the prophets tell of One Who would pay that penalty demanded under the law on our behalf. The Jews missed it. That is why Paul is lamenting his people. They were attempting to achieve righteousness and a reconciliation to Yahweh through their own efforts and could not see the futility of their human works. They could not see that reconciliation and forgiveness comes only through the atoning sac-

MESSIAH THE END OF THE LAW

Therefore, the Messiah is the goal, objective, purpose, intention, reason, hope, desire, aim of the law so that all who will accept His atoning sacrifice on their behalf will be reconciled and justified before the Father. What a beautiful scripture when properly understood! See how misrepresenting such a scripture conceals its true message? What a sad thing to do.

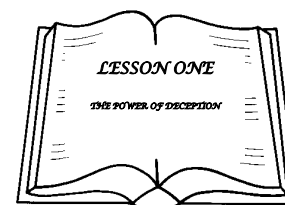
I pray this study will help in beginning to see the law as Paul really did from a positive perspective.

Rom. 7:12, So the law is Holy and the commandment is Holy, just, and good.

May Yahweh bless your studies.
Elder David Ganton

it was the Father in Him that did the work. *Continued on page 15.....Continued from page 23.....*As we search the scriptures, seeking eternal life, we will find that they testify of Yahshua and if we are to fulfil His plan for us and receive eternal life then Yahshua must be in us doing the work, for it is He Who overcame and is set down at the

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THE MESSIAH, TORAH, AND ME

PART II

By Matthew Armstrong

CIRCUMCISION AND TORAH

One crucial reason for pointing out that it was the matter found in verse 5 that was the direct cause of the “apostolic council” is that, with out this foundation some may claim that the “apostolic council” was only regarding circumcision as a requirement for salvation – the reality of verse 5 dispels that. This *does* make a difference in the sense that, while verse 1 only mentions circumcision, verse 5 ties both circumcision and Torah together to show us more clearly the question leading to the apostles coming together.

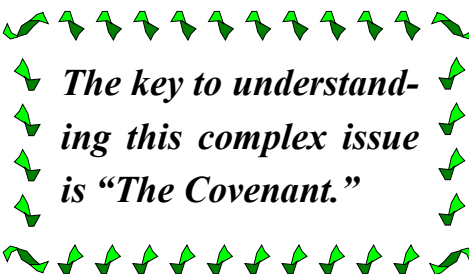
TWO ISSUES ONE PROBLEM

While it is important to see that it is the issue in verse 5 that was the immediate cause of the “apostolic council,” there is a bigger significance with regard to the nature of the two matters that needs to be realized. While the substance of the two matters are different, they are in essence saying the same thing. Salvation is a covenant issue. To be part of the covenant Gentiles must be circumcised and keep Torah. Or to put it another way: Circumcision and Torah are the signs of covenant membership, unless you are in the covenant, you can not be saved. When it is said in verse 1 that, “except you be circumcised...you cannot be saved,” what these “certain men” were getting at is – circumcision is the sign that makes you part of the covenant, and you can’t be saved outside the covenant (covenant membership = salvation). Now to suggest that these men pushing circumcision would not expect Gentiles to “keep” Torah is like suggesting that a Christian would say “confess with thy mouth the Lord Y’shua but don’t worry about believ-

ing in your heart that Elohim raised Him from the dead.” Of course, that’s ridiculous! Circumcision and torah observance go hand in hand. If a Gentile submitted to circumcision, he was openly submitting to the whole Torah, to do it. This is how the two issues at hand, that of verse 1 and that of verse 5, are in essence saying the same thing. Even though the “certain men” only mentioned circumcision, by implication they were very clearly confirming Torah observance as being necessary for Gentiles as well. The Pharisees in verse 5 were saying that the Gentiles who are entering into covenant, i.e. salvation, needed to bear the marks of covenant membership, that is, circumcision and Torah observance.

FOR SALVATION?

Now that we see that the immediate

*The key to understanding this complex issue is “The Covenant.”*

cause (verse 5) of the apostolic council and the initial cause in verse 1 are really, in essence, the same problem being expressed in different ways, we need to address whether or not the apostles are coming together to consider “a requirement for salvation” or keeping of Torah (circumcision included) in general.

The key to understanding this complex issue is “The Covenant.” The Elohim of Israel is a covenant Elohim. As I have already said, the Jews of the 1st Century did not view salvation as a

works issue but rather, a covenant issue. Understanding “Covenant Theology” is central to understanding the major themes of the New Covenant (Testament). If we can see that “salvation” and “covenant membership” are one and the same we will begin to get a clearer picture of what is going on in Acts 15. Is it necessary for Gentiles to be circumcised and keep Torah to be members of the of the covenant (salvation) even though they do not bear the signs of covenant membership, namely circumcision and Torah observance? Can you separate “necessary Torah observance” from a “requirement for salvation?” Are they mutually exclusive ideas?

To the Israelites salvation came by virtue of “covenant membership,” the keeping of the Law (Torah) was required for you to remain “in” covenant membership. It was Elohim’s faithfulness to His promise, His great mercies and loving kindness to His people that would offer hope to the Hebrew looking for salvation. Though salvation was not, and is not, a works issue, the works of Torah (the covenant document) were required for you to remain as a member of the covenant (salvation). Thus, the idea of “necessary” Torah observance and Torah observance “as a requirement for salvation” are not mutually exclusive ideas. Once you were “in” the covenant, staying “in” did require you to “keep” Torah. That requirement was indeed “for salvation,” even though salvation in of itself was by grace. With this understanding of salvation by covenant, covenant membership, and Torah, I must now point out something that only further establishes this understanding.

There are many believers that believe it is necessary for us to keep Torah in

general. I say in general because there are a vast array of conflicting views and opinions with regard to what exactly we are to “keep,” though the view that we are to keep Torah is agreed upon in general. It is commonly said among such groups that the issue in Acts 15 is regarding “a requirement for salvation,” that being so, the apostles were not saying Torah observance (in general) for Gentiles was not necessary. I would like to point out something very interesting with regard to Torah observance as a requirement for salvation. Let’s look at verse 5 one more time:

But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

Did you notice the fact that these Pharisees were *believers*?

“...certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying...” Yes, these were Pharisees that believed, ... and they said that circumcision and the keeping of torah was “needful,” there is no mention of “a requirement for salvation.” What did they believe? They believed that Yahoshua was the Messiah!!!

STRONG’S CONCORDANCE
believed NT:4100

pisteuo (*pist-yoo’-o*); from NT:4102; to have faith (in, upon, or with respect to, a person or thing), i.e. credit; by implication, to entrust (especially one’s spiritual well-being to Christ):

That this phrase “...which believed...” is referring to their belief or faith in the Messiah is clear as this phrase is used often in this manner. Here are a few examples...Acts 13:39, 10:43, 11:22, 14:1, 17:34, 21:20... Why does it matter that these Pharisees believe in the Messiah? Because, whatever is meant by **“That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.”** Has to be within the context of belief in the Messiah. This puts a new twist to the idea of “a requirement for salvation” in the traditional sense. Another thing is the fact that it was *the writer of the book of Acts* that

noted that these were Pharisees “which believed.” This was the writer’s own observation. This takes away any argument that these Pharisees weren’t “really” believers. Why would they believe in the Messiah? For the same reason anyone believes, for the forgiveness of sins, to be saved, to be justified. See Acts 13:39. Also, we can say most definitely that the “certain men” of Acts 15:1 whom Paul and Barnabas were dealing with had to be believers by implication of the circumstances. The dispute between Paul, Barnabas, and these “certain men” was not about whether Yahshua was the Messiah but whether gentiles needed to be circumcised to enter into covenant. Thus the meaning of “Except you be circumcised...you cannot be saved!” must also be understood from within the context of belief in the Messiah. This observation is crucial, I believe, in understanding just what the issue that brought the apostles together was. Any idea that says the issue at hand in Acts 15 was about a requirement for salvation must first fit within the context of Jews who already believed on the Messiah. This, I think, further illustrates the fact that the issue was regarding gentiles and torah observance, circumcision in-

This observation is crucial, I believe, in understanding just what the issue that brought the apostles together was.

cluded, in a general covenant sense. Is it necessary for gentiles to be circumcised (initial “sign”) and keep torah (on-going “sign”) for covenant membership?

THE BIGGER PROBLEM

Now returning to the text of Acts 15...

6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

So here, in Acts 15:6, we have *the apostles coming together for a specific reason*: to consider whether it was needful for the gentiles to be circumcised and keep the torah to be part of Yahweh’s Covenant People. This is very significant in that the very men who were instructed by the Messiah seem to address this issue in some way. Our job is to seriously examine what was said and see what relevance it has to our question: Do believes in the Messiah, as partakers of the “new” covenant, need to be seeking to follow and fulfill the commands of torah in the sense of physically keeping the laws, statutes and judgments?

Moving on in the text of Acts 15 we come to verse 7 (Note: it is highly probable that at some point within the dispute in verse 7 that Paul’s issue of verse 1 was brought forth and expounded upon):

7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago Yahweh made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 And Yahweh, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why tempt ye Yahweh, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

What I would first like to point out before getting into Peter’s testimony is, at the beginning of verse 7 it says, **“And when there had been much disputing...”** We see here that **when the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter there was “much disputing.”** We see something similar to this in verse 2: **“When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension**

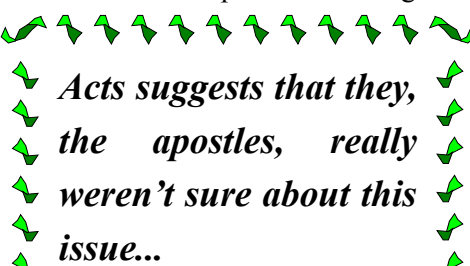
and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

Now I want to note the following verse often referred to as “The Great Commission”... Matt. 28:19-20, Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. As you just read, in Acts 15: 2, 7 we see the apostles *disputing*, i.e. questioning, arguing, over a “doctrinal” issue. Notice when the Messiah gave the apostles the “Great Commission” He told them specifically to “teach all nations” **“...to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”** What’s my point? There is no doubt that those apostles which were sent to preach the risen Messiah among the Nations, preached and taught what they understood the Messiah Himself to have taught. The question is, were they teaching torah observance in its traditional sense? Another way to put that question would be thus: Why do we see an apparent confusion, disputing, and conflict over whether Gentiles need to keep torah (circumcision included), requiring the apostles to come together to consider the matter, if the Messiah clearly taught that Gentiles were to keep torah?

That is something to think about. I believe we cannot say that the Messiah taught that Gentiles *were not* to keep torah. But I also believe we cannot say that Messiah taught clearly that Gentiles *were* to keep torah either, by the very fact that the apostles had to “consider the matter.” They obviously had some difference of opinion and, as I already mentioned, this shows that when Messiah said “go...and teach all nations...to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” this did not specifically mean to the apostles, “teach torah.” It is within this light that we be-

gin to see the reason of the question of “covenant membership” and gentiles. It seems that the reality was, the apostles, **as a whole**, had not dealt directly with this question before it came up in Acts 15. The message of the Gospel had just recently been voiced abroad, and the implication of the record we have in Acts suggests that they, the apostles, really weren’t sure about this issue, that of Gentiles and covenant membership, i.e. circumcision, and the law, was inevitably going to happen and it was this very reality, that it did happen. That further propelled the apostles to realize the newly developing role of the Holy Spirit and what belief in Messiah meant to a fuller extent, what membership in the New Covenant was all about.

To finish this thought I would like to simply state that the full revelation of what significance this has can not be addressed in entirety here. However, it should have given you something to further consider and investigate. What is the significance of Matthew 28:19-20, John 14:26 (THE QUESTION OF Gentiles and covenant membership came after receiving the Holy Spirit), and many other verses, in this light? What were the apostles teaching the

***Acts suggests that they, the apostles, really weren’t sure about this issue...***

gentiles?

John 14:26, But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

UNCLEAN GENTILES MADE CLEAN BY FAITH

Now back to the text of Acts 15... I believe that one of the most important elements to the issue at hand is under-

standing the testimony that Peter gives in verses 7-11. I just mentioned that it seems the apostles and elders weren’t totally sure about the gentiles and the newly developing covenant, as they had difference of opinion about this very important issue. However, although the apostles, *as a whole*, had not dealt directly with this issue, **Peter had** (Acts 10 and 11) Peter becomes the man of the moment.

7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago Yahweh made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 and Yahweh, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

What Peter has just said, particularly in verse 8 and 9, can not be taken lightly, especially in its 1st Century context. No torah observant Jew of the 1st Century would have been able to swallow this very rash statement that Peter just made with out first experiencing a moment of question and confusion. Once again, the context is very important. The Jews were in a Roman dominated world, they themselves subject to Gentiles as Judea was under Roman rule. There was a spirit of revolt very alive and well amongst the zealous Jew as they awaited the day that the Elohim of the world, the Elohim of Israel would vindicate His chosen people in the face of her evil pagan enemies. The oppression of the Jews at the hands of ungodly “unclean” Gentiles left a bitter taste in the mouths of those longing for the kingdom to be restored to Israel.

It is within this context that Peter testifies that the “**unclean**” Gentiles had received the **Holy Spirit**. How could the Gentiles, who were sinners (Gal. 2:15), be given the Holy Spirit? What does this mean? Notice the fact that Peter brings this peculiar reality to the attention of the apostles in the midst of a dispute about whether Gentiles

THE WITNESS OF AARON'S ROD

Yahshua declared, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which TESTIFY (WITNESS) OF ME. And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life...Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" Jn. 5:39-40, 45-47. Moses wrote of the rod of Aaron, Israel's high priest. This treatise will help you understand one of the ways in which Moses wrote of Yahshua.

By Jerry Healan

The book of Hebrews chapter 9:1-9 declares that the tabernacle, its appurtenances and priesthood was a "**figure**" for the time then present (v. 9). The Greek word for "figure" is "parabole" which is elsewhere translated as "PARABLE!!!" Yahshua came speaking in parables which caused His disciples to question, "Why speakest Thou unto them in parables?" He answered and said unto them, 'Because **it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.** For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak **I to them in parables: because they seeing seen not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand,**' Mat. 13:10-13.

Yahshua spoke in parables in order to keep the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven hidden. Those who thought they had the power of the kingdom, the Pharisees, Sadducees and scribes, couldn't understand what Yahshua was saying. Neither could His disciples, unless or until He explained the meanings to them.

Yahshua told His disciples before His death, "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from Elohim," Jn. 16:25-27.

One of the items spoken of in Hebrews, chapter 9, verse 4 is the rod of Aaron that budded. This rod is a testimony, a witness of Yahshua.

We find in the book of Numbers, chapter 16, beginning in verse one that Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On conspired together, rising up before Moses to question his authority. Their conspiracy had influenced and infected two hundred fifty princes of Israel, it says FAMOUS in the congregation, men of RENOWN, verse 2.

They gathered together against Moses and Aaron charging that they took too much on themselves and questioning why they lifted themselves above the congregation seeing that they were all holy.

The earth opened its mouth swallowing the assembly of dissenters and fire came down from heaven to consume the two hundred fifty princes. But after all this the children of Israel murmured and complained against Moses and Aaron saying, "Ye have killed the People of Yahweh," verse 41.

Yahweh's anger burned against these complainers so hotly that a plague broke out on them slaying 14,700 before it was over. In order to stay the plague, Moses commanded Aaron to take a censer, put fire in it off the altar, put incense on it and to go quickly into the congregation making an atonement for them which stayed the plague (read all of Numbers 16.)

Twice Yahweh had made a special distinction between Moses and Aaron and the children of Israel. Yahweh distinguished between Moses and Aaron, and

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bloom and bear fruit.*

the children of Israel yet a third time in Numbers chapter 17.

"And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying, 'Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod. And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers. And thou shalt lay them up on the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony (wit-

ness), where I will meet with you. And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from Me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.

And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their father's houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods. And Moses laid up the rods before Yahweh in the tabernacle of witness.

And it came to pass that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and blossomed blossoms, and yielded almonds. And Moses brought out all the rods from before Yahweh unto all the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man his rod. And Yahweh said unto Moses, 'Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony (witness), to be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from Me, that they die not.' And Moses did so: as Yahweh commanded him, so did he," Num. 17:1-11.

AARON THE HIGH PRIEST

Aaron's rod was selected out of all the rods of Israel to bud, bloom and bear fruit. He had already been chosen and anointed by Yahweh to serve as high priest. The chosen high priest had to be selected because he was a type of the "heavenly High Priest," Yahshua, Who was also anointed, selected beforehand.

The book of Hebrews says, "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to Yahweh, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honour unto himself,

but he that is called of Yahweh, as was Aaron. So also Messiah (the Anointed) glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He That said unto Him, 'Thou are My Son, to day have I begotten Thee.' As He saith also in another place, 'Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.' Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him That was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared; though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him; called of Yahweh an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec. Of whom we have many things to say and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing," Heb. 5:1-11.

Just as Aaron had been pre-ordained, pre-chosen, predestinated as High Priest, Yahshua also was pre-ordained, pre-chosen, predestinated as High Priest for we find many accounts stressing that He was the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, Rev. 13:8. Yahshua witnessed that the Father loved Him before the foundation of the world, Jn. 17:24. He was the First, the Beginning, the Author, etc.

The High Priest was the only one able to take the blood of sacrifice, offering it to Yahweh. He was the only one able to enter the Holies of Holies on earth while the Heavenly High Priest, Yahshua, is the only one worthy to enter the Holiest place in heaven offering His own blood.

Aaron was an earthly type or model of the Heavenly High Priest Who was to come with a more perfect priesthood.

THE ROD

The Hebrew word used for rod in this instance is "matteh" and means; a branch (as extending); fig. a tribe (there was a rod for a tribe). Twelve rods for twelve tribes) also a rod, whether for chastening (fig. correction), ruling (a sceptre), throwing (a lance) or walking (a staff; fig. a support of life, e.g. bread). "Matteh" is generally translated as, rod, staff, tribe.

From whence does one generally obtain a rod? Isn't it usually cut from a select tree limb or "branch" or a straight sapling, sprout or shoot coming out of the ground?

A rod is selected, chosen, preferably the best one can find. It is then "cut off" from the tree or root causing the life support

system to "cease." Daniel says that "Messiah shall be cut off," (9:26) witnessing to the death that He would have to suffer.

All of the rods of the princes of Israel were dead witnessing to the fact that we are all dead for we have all sinned earning the wages of sin which is death, Ro. 3:23; 6:23.

The rod of the High Priest, however, typified the sinless Messiah, Who, though He was cut off, though He died, was sinless, pure, innocent making it impossible for the gates of hell, the grave, death to hold Him. Therefore, as the rod of Aaron sprang to life, by the power of Yahweh, budding, blooming and bearing fruit, even so Yahshua the Messiah sprang to life, was resurrected from the dead, able to bud, blossom and bear the fruit of and to the kingdom of heaven!

The rod springing back to life witnesses to Yahshua, the heavenly High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, Who now has the power of resurrection.

THE BRANCH

The Hebrew word "matteh" also means "branch." Yahshua is called the BRANCH in the book of Zechariah, "Take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Yahshua the son of Josedech, the high priest; and speak unto him, saying, 'Thus speaketh Yahweh of hosts, saying, Behold the Man

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whose name is the BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of Yahweh; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both (King and Priest)," Chapter 6, verses 11-13.

The Hebrew word for BRANCH here is "tsemach," and it means, a sprout (lit. or fig.) being translated; branch, bud, that which grew, spring or springing. Its root word is "tsamach" which is translated; bear (fruit?), bring forth, cause to bud, make to bud, bud forth, cause to grown

again, grow up, to spring forth, to spring up, etc.

Zechariah says that the BRANCH will grow up out of His place, verse 12. Isn't that what Yahshua did? Wasn't His true place heaven? Didn't He empty Himself of His glory and power that He had and find Himself in the form of a physical, fleshy man? Didn't He grow up in the earth?

Yahshua son of Josedech, the high priest, was also a type or model of Yahshua. Josedech is really Yehowtsadaq. Yehow, of course, refers to Yahweh. Tsadaq means, to be right or righteous.

Yahshua son of Josedech, the high priest would be interpreted, Yahshua son of the righteous Yahweh, the High Priest, which is exactly what Yahshua the Messiah was and is.

Yahshua the Messiah, the High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, the son of the righteous Yahweh was the Man the BRANCH. He, as a branch "cut-off," sprang, sprouted back to life, budding and blooming and bearing fruit to the kingdom.

The book of Zechariah is one of the places in Scripture that names the Savior in advance.

TRIBE OF LEVI

"Matteh" also means tribe. Aaron's rod (matteh) was chosen above the rods of the other tribes of Israel, even Judah's. Aaron was a son of Levi but Yahshua was of the tribe of Judah. Why the difference? What is the meaning of it?

The name Levi has a significant meaning in the Hebrew. It means, "joined" or "attached." Moses and Aaron were brothers, sons of Levi. The rest of the sons of Levi served in the tabernacle, performing various tasks in assistance to the high priest and his sons. They camped around the tabernacle. Moses, Aaron and Aaron's sons, the priests, camped on the eastern side which was the only avenue of approach to the tabernacle for there was only one door or gate and it was on the eastern side.

The sons of Kohath, son of Levi were camped on the south side. The sons of Gershon, son of Levi were camped on the western side. The sons of Merari, son of Levi were camped on the northern side.

The Levites served as a buffer zone between Yahweh's tabernacle and the children of Israel. Entrance into the tabernacle's courtyard could only be made on the eastern side where the high priest

and his sons resided.

This, of course, is a type, for entrance to our heavenly Father, Yahweh, can only be made, today, through the heavenly High Priest, Yahshua.

Since the name “Levi” means “joined” or “attached,” they served, not only as a buffer zone between Yahweh's tabernacle and the other Israelite tribes but they also served as mediators of the Old Covenant, just as Yahshua is the Mediator of the New Covenant, Heb. 9:15; 12:24. They were the ones who “joined” the Israelites to Yahweh and His tabernacle or dwelling place.

Now, the priesthood of Yahshua after the order of Melchizedek is the priesthood that joins Israel and all people to Yahweh.

THE MYSTERY OF THE FIRST

Paul reveals that, “The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second is the Master from heaven,” I Cor. 15:47.

He says, “That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural (earthly, fleshly); and afterward that which is spiritual,” verse 46. Furthermore, He reveals that the first body, the natural, earthy body is sown in corruption, dishonour and weakness, verses 42 & 43. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of Yahweh (verse 50) because flesh and blood is corruptible, dishonourable, weak. Adam, the first man, a man of the earth, may have been a physically strong and powerful man, but he had no power to resist the temptation to sin and didn't. His flesh corrupted and he died as has all of his descendants.

The Aaronic priesthood was the first priesthood chosen by Yahweh to serve Him in the earth. They followed the pattern of their forefather Adam who didn't resist error or failure when tempted. Adam took of the forbidden fruit and ate of it. Aaron was encouraged to make a golden calf which caused the children of Israel to err (Ex. 32).

Yahshua, the last Adam, the second Adam, the Master from heaven, may not have been physically strong (He fasted 40 days and nights which would have greatly weakened a physically strong body, and, at the end, He couldn't carry His own stake) but His strength was of the Spirit. He was able to resist the temptation to sin.

Yahshua said, “Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit,” Jn. 12:24.

He was speaking of Himself, for He is the corn of wheat. We make bread from wheat. He is the bread from heaven. He descended into the earth from His heavenly dwelling place, sowed the seeds of the kingdom, died and was resurrected so that He might bear much fruit. The difference between Him and Adam is that He never sinned, therefore His flesh was not left to corrupt, but He was resurrected, sprang to life. He sprang to life as the corn of wheat from heaven, budding, blossoming, bearing much fruit.

Now we who are fleshly, corruptible, mortal can put on incorruption, put on immortality by putting on Yahshua, “But put ye on the Master Yahshua the Messiah, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof,” Ro. 13:14. “For as many of you as have been baptized into the Messiah have put on the Messiah,” Gal. 3:27.

The major point now is that the Aaronic priesthood was an earthly priesthood. It was the first priesthood in Israel, it came to corruption and had to be done away.

The first covenant was made with a physical, fleshly people who, as Adam, had not the heart nor will to fulfil it. Yahweh cried out, “O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!” Dt. 5:29. But in another place Moses said, “Ye have seen all that Yahweh did before your

The major point now is that the Aaronic priesthood was an earthly priesthood.

eyes in the land of Egypt unto all his land; the great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles: yet Yahweh hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day,” Dt. 29:2-4.

The book of Hebrews states, “For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them (Why? Because they were physical, fleshly, corruptible, mortal), He saith, ‘Behold, the days come, saith Yahweh, when I will make a new covenant (a

second, a spiritual, incorruptible, immortal, everlasting covenant!) with the house of Israel and the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not saith Yahweh. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days (after what days? After the days when the Old Covenant has expired), saith Yahweh; I will put My laws into their mind and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them an Elohim and they shall be to Me a People:’.....In that He saith, ‘A New Covenant,’ He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away,” Heb. 8:7-10, 13. Yahshua the Messiah now serves as the High Priest in the heavenly tabernacle not made with hands, Heb. 9:24. The old earthly priesthood with its sacrifices, tabernacle and temple has perished, vanished away!

Yahshua, the BRANCH, the Rod has sprang back to life, budding, blossoming and bearing fruit, the fruit of the new covenant which is administered by a new and living way of the Spirit and not the old weak, dishonourable, corruptible administration of the flesh.

THE TRIBE OF JUDAH

But we need to ask the question, “Why the tribe of Judah?” The answer is, “Because Judah contains the very name of Yahweh, Himself.” Judah's name in the Hebrew is “**יְהוּדָה**” (Yehuwadah). It can be separated into two words, “Yehuw” (**יְהוּ**) and “Yadah” (**דָּה**).

“Yadah” means, lit. to use (i.e. hold out) the hand. The Psalmist recorded, “Yahweh said unto my Adonai, ‘Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool,’” Ps. 110:1. We know that he is speaking to Yahshua here for He records in verse 4, “Yahweh hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” The book of Hebrews confirms that this is speaking of Yahshua, chapter 5, verses 5-6. But now look at Ps. 110 verse 5, “Yahweh at Thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.”

Who is at the right hand? Yahshua. Who is He called here? Yahweh! Yes, Yahshua also bears the Father's name, Yahweh. Yahshua prayed to the Father, “Keep

through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one as We are," Jn. 17:11.

When one receives Yahweh's Holy Spirit, he is sealed with the Father's name. We may not add it to our personal name yet, but in time we will be given the name of the Father, the name of the city, new Jerusalem and Yahshua's new name also, Rev. 3:12.

The Psalmist David cried, "Shew Thy marvelous lovingkindness, O Thou That savest by Thy right hand them that put their trust in Thee, Psal. 17:7.

Yahshua serves as the right hand and arm of Yahweh. Yahweh extends His grace, mercy and salvation through Him. He will also use His right hand and arm, Yahshua to strike through His enemies in the day of His wrath.

"Yadah" also means, to throw (a stone, an arrow) at or away. Yahshua, the stone, the Rock will be thrown at the kingdoms of this world (the ten toes of Daniel 2) at the end of the age.

"Yehuw" the other part of the name "Yehowdah" is also extremely significant for it denotes the name "Yahweh."

The extended or elongated form of the names of many prophets and holy men of old contain this form, e.g. Isayah = Yeshayahuw, Jeremeyah = Yirmeyahuw, Eliyah = Eliyahuw, etc. Two of the men that wrote the New Testament evangels actually had this form on their name. They were, Matthew whose Hebrew name was actually, "Mattityahuw" and John whose real name was "Yehowchanan." Even Yahshua's full name was "Yehowshua."

The book of Matthew or "Mattityahuw" means the Branch or Tribe of Yahweh which is a witness of the good news or evangel of Yahshua. John or "Yehowchanan" actually means "Yahweh's favor" or "Yahweh's grace." Again, speaking of the good news of the grace, the favor that Yahweh extends to us through Yahshua.

Yehuw or Yahuw or Yehow, etc. means Yahweh (is) He, or He (is) Yahweh. Many of today's Jews have this as a part of their name, e.g. one man who has been in the news lately has the name Benjamin Natanyahuw. Another has the first name of Eliyahuw, etc.

THE DOOR

As already stated the only entrance to the tabernacle, and later, the temple was on the eastern side. Moses, Aaron and the

sons of Aaron dwelt on the eastern side of the tabernacle. The tribe of Judah was also the central tribe situated on the eastern side.

The name Judah in Hebrew is **יָדָה** (yod, hei, waw, dalet, hei [reading from right to left which is the characteristic of Hebrew]).

If we delete the "dalet" (**ד**) from the name Judah (**יָדָה**) we get the Hebrew letters **יָהוּ** which is the name of the Heavenly Father.

The "dalet" (**ד**) not only serves as a letter of the alphabet, but is an hieroglyphic for a "DOOR!"

Yahshua proclaimed, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep...Then said Yahshua unto them again, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, I AM THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP. All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I AM THE DOOR: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture'," Jn. 10:1-2, 7-8.

Yahshua was a son of David through His mother's lineage. His step father was Joseph, also descended from David. David was of the house of Judah. Yahshua was born of the house of Judah (**יָדָה**)! Judah was the central tribe of the east

The reader should understand that none of this was happenstance!

which was the only access to the tabernacle. Yahshua is the only way, the door (**ד**) to the heavenly throne of Yahweh (**יָהוּ**)!

The reader should understand that none of this was happenstance! It was all arranged in advance by the Spirit, power, and intellect of the Great Elohim and Creator Yahweh. No man could have figured this out beforehand. We can only understand it afterward and even then only when Yahweh gives us the understanding by His Spirit to see these things.

THE STAFF

Another meaning of the word, "rod" or "matteh" is, a staff; or figuratively support

of life, e.g. bread.

One uses a rod or staff as a walking stick for support. Jacob worshipped leaning upon the top of His staff, Heb. 11:21. The Psalmist said, "Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me," Psal. 23:4.

The most significant use of the word "matteh" as a staff, however, is in the sense of "staff of life" or "bread," for bread is a most important staple. Bread has been called the "staff of life."

The Psalmist says that, "bread strengthens man's heart," Psal. 104:15. Wisdom says "Come eat of my bread," Prov. 9:5. Yahshua said that He is the bread of life, Jn. 6:48. If we eat of this bread, this "staff of life" then our heart shall be strengthened and we will receive great wisdom for life everlasting.

Yahshua declared, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life. Your fathers did eat manna (bread from heaven) in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die, I am the living bread which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world," Jn. 6:47-51.

The Jews of His day couldn't understand what He was saying, for it is written, "The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, 'How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?'" Jn. 6:52.

Yahshua was speaking to the Jews in the synagogue in Capernaum. This would have included the most learned of their day. Yet, they couldn't understand because they didn't have Yahweh's Spirit in order to give them understanding.

Is Yahshua the rod and staff that comforts you? Is He the one Who supports you? Is He your bread of life; your staff of life?

THE ALMONDS

One more thing must be touched on for the rod that sprang to life budded and blossomed and bore the fruit of almonds. The almond is very significant for several things.

The first is that the almond is good for food, typifying Yahshua as the food, meat or bread of life. We must eat of Him.

The second thing is that the almond, when crushed or beaten, yields an oil that is used for "medicinal" purposes, the purposes of healing. Yahshua was beaten so that we might also be healed both spiritually and physically. His beating and

death made it possible for the Holy Spirit to be given, the soothing oil of "comfort" and "healing."

The Prophet Isaiah proclaimed, "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised (crushed) for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed," Isa. 53:5.

The third thing is that the almond tree is the "first" tree to bloom and bear fruit in the Middle East. It blooms in January quickly yielding its fruit before any others. This typifies Yahshua as the "firstfruits" for He was the first to be resurrected into eternal life.

Paul writes, "But now is the Messiah risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in the Messiah shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: the Messiah the firstfruits; afterward they that are the Messiah's at His coming," 1 Cor. 15:20-23.

The rod springing back to life in order to bud, bloom and bear almonds speaks of Yahshua as the One Who has the power to open the grave in a great resurrection for He has power over death. Death and the grave can no longer hold His people. At the proper time Yahshua will descend from heaven again and will raise His people from the dead, establishing the kingdom of heaven on the earth.

At the beginning of His prophecy Jeremiah is asked, "What seest thou," And I said, 'I see the rod of an almond tree.' Then said Yahweh unto me, 'Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten My word and perform it,' Jer. 1:11-12.

The words "almond" and "hasten" are

variations of one another for almond is "shaqed" coming from "shaqad" from whence comes also "hasten."

Yahshua hastens to do the Father's will. The book of Hebrews says, "For yet a little while and He That shall come will come, and will not tarry," Heb. 10:37.

THE MYSTERY

The Apostle Paul wrote, "We speak the wisdom of Yahweh in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which Yahweh ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Sovereign of glory. But as it is written, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which Elohim hath prepared for them that love Him.' But Yahweh hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of Yahweh. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of Yahweh knoweth no man, but the Spirit of Yahweh. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world but the spirit which is of Yahweh; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of Yahweh. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual," 1 Cor. 2:7-13.

Yahshua spoke in parables in order to keep the mysteries of the kingdom hidden. The most learned Jews of His day couldn't understand what He was saying. Yahweh has purposely blinded them (Ro. 11) in order to eventually have mercy upon all.

The tabernacle, its appurtenances and priesthood were all parables (Heb. 9:1-9) which also served to blind the people.

When Moses wrote concerning many, many things, he was actually writing of the Messiah. We must utilize the formula given by the Apostle Paul. If we are truly going to learn of the majesty and glory of Yahshua. We must, with the inspiration of the Spirit, compare spiritual things with spiritual. When we do this, Yahweh will bless us with open minds to be able to receive the parables and to greatly rejoice at our most wondrous and majestic Savior.

We truly hope that this treatise has been helpful to you, that you can understand it, and that it will be useful to help you keep your eyes on our only true Light and that Light is Yahshua the Messiah.

SUMMARY

Aaron's rod that budded is a powerful witness of He that was to come. It witnessed to Him as "cut off" yet resurrected, as High Priest after the order of Melchisedek. The rod spoke of Him as the Mediator of a new and better covenant, as the Man the BRANCH. It witnessed of Him as the staff for support, as well as, the staff of life. It witnessed of Him Who is continually in the presence of Yahweh, as the door to the heavenly throne, for the rod of Aaron was placed in the Holy of Holies before the ark of witness. Finally it witnessed of Him as the firstfruits, the one Who is able to heal and revive us, the One Who also feeds us.

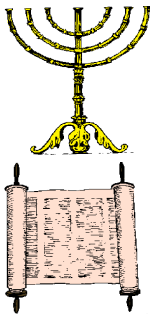
Just as Yahshua said, We must search the scriptures to see how they speak of Him, for Yahweh's word prophesies of His plan. Yahshua, Himself, testified that He could do nothing without the Father, that

Continued on page 23.....Continued from page 18.....are to be circumcised and keep torah. Remember, physical circumcision was the sign of the covenant; torah was the covenant document; salvation was a covenant issue. Without these accompanying signs, are Gentiles part of the (salvation) covenant? Here in verse 9 Peter says something as disturbing as it was revealing. Yahweh had put no difference between the (torah observant) Jew and the Gentile, since he has purified their hearts by faith. While the natural reaction of the 1st Century Jew

would undoubtedly be to see the believing Gentiles as "lower class," Peter is astonishingly proclaiming that, to Elohim there is no difference between them. *This is the great work and meaning of the risen Messiah, the establishment of the New Covenant, the breaking presence of the Kingdom of Elohim, the out pouring of His Holy Spirit...all of which are inseparable.*

What we find in Peter's testimony thus far is that, with regards to whether the gentiles need to be circumcised and keep torah, he says, "Yahweh, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the

Holy Spirit, even as he gave it to the Jews (who were circumcised and practicing torah). This (and his revelation of the vision in Acts 10) signaled to Peter that Elohim put no difference between "us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." If the issue at hand was regarding the signs of covenant membership, as I believe it was, Peter seems to be confirming that the gentiles are part of the covenant without the traditional signs of the covenant membership (circumcision and torah), as Elohim has purified their hearts by faith, the giving of the Holy Spirit being the evidence of this.



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>The Idol Shepherd</i>	<i>By Elder Jerry Healan</i>	4
<i>Yahweh's Law Applies Today</i>	<i>By Elder Dave Ganton</i>	9
<i>Messiah, Torah And Me</i>	<i>By Matthew Armstrong</i>	16
<i>The Witness of Aaron's Rod</i>	<i>By Elder Jerry Healan</i>	19

NEXT ISSUE!

Who is The Idol Shepherd? Continued

COMING SOON!

Who Is EliYah the Prophet?