

Pentecost - The Feast of First-Fruits The Feast of Weeks The Last Day

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1Co 14:26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

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Today I want to speak about the feast of "Pentecost". Now the feast of "Pentecost" is our feast (the "churches" feast) it's called the "Feast of First-Fruits" & the "Feast of Weeks" and it's also referred to, numerous times by Christ Himself, as: "The Last Day." (The "last day" is referring to the count to Pentecost, the day that Christ will raise up His church. I hope we will see this by the end of today's message.)

Now in order to better understand the feast of Pentecost, we need to better understand the "count" to Pentecost, the count that commences during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and ends on day 50, the last day, the day of Pentecost.

Pentecost is connected to the harvest of the barley and the wheat (the early crop referred to in the Scriptures as the "first fruits") The harvest of the wheat (the first fruits) begins immediately after the "wave sheaf" offering, which is offered the day after the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Let's read Leviticus 23:15

"Ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven Sabbaths (or seven weeks, or better put, seven "churches") shall be "complete".

Verse 16: Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall you number 50 days.

What we want to take note of here is that the count to Pentecost (our feast) starts during the feast of Unleavened Bread but doesn't end until after the completion of seven weeks, on the day of Pentecost. The count to Pentecost pertains to the time allotted to (us) the ecclesia, the members of God's church, to become "ready" for that final Pentecost, when Christ will marry His church.

Remember, after the members of the church have made themselves ready, after Christ returns in the clouds, where He is going to meet His church, He is going to marry His church, His wife: Revelation 19:7

Now the "count" to Pentecost is very significant, there is much "Rich Meaning" in the Hebrew word translated "count" in that verse in Leviticus. Many pulpits don't realize the significance, they seem to think that it only relates to keeping track of the number of days up to Pentecost, but it's much more significant than that.

The word "count" used here means "to score with a mark as a tally or a record." (God keeps a record – a book of life & a book of remembrance.) The word also means: "To count a flock." "To Enumerate" (That means to: "name one by one")

That's what our Creator does with the stars in the sky as they come out at night one by one; He counts them and names them. Those stars in the heavens represent us. This counting is nothing to take lightly. This counting has to do with our "walk" our changing from our old sinful ways and coming out of sin.

The feast of Unleavened Bread lasts seven days.... It pictures us, coming out of sin. It has to do with us becoming like Christ. It starts with the Passover Sacrifice, (The sacrifice of an "unblemished Lamb") Christ dying in our stead, so that we might live.

During the weeklong feast of unleavened bread, we're commanded to de-leaven our houses, a physical lesson with much spiritual meaning, it teaches us to put sin out of our lives.

Now at the end of the seven-day feast of UB, we can go back to eating "leavening" but we can't go back to "sinning." The seven week count to "completion" is just a continuation of what the seven day feast of Unleavened Bread is all about,

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coming out of Egypt, coming out of sin, changing our ways, changing our walk, changing our natures.

Now the offering of the “wave loaves” takes place on day fifty, the day after the wheat harvest is complete. We can see this very clearly in Leviticus 23:15-16. (And it is important for all in God’s church to understand this.)

The counting has to do with our calling; it has to do with coming out of sin; with being cleaned up and scrubbed down, purified and made white, unblemished and unspotted, just like our Chief Corner Stone (Yeshua Hamashia) Jesus the Christ.

Leviticus 23:15 “*And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath* (High Holy day Sabbath, 1st day of Unleavened Bread) *from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths* (seven weeks – seven churches is what its talking about here) *shall be complete*. And brethren, don’t be fooled or led astray by those who say that the word “Sabbath” here in this verse can only mean the “weekly Sabbath”, and not “week”. That word translated “Sabbath” here can also mean “week”. The same word is used in Scripture “both” ways, sometimes “Sabbath” and sometimes “week”. Just check out Matthew 28:1. Where this word of Hebrew origin (7676) (i.e. Shabbath) is used twice in the same verse, once as “Sabbath” and once as “week”.

Brethren, many have been led astray by false teachers. (Even with this false teaching that the word “Sabbath” in Leviticus 23:15 means the “weekly Sabbath”) That has caused the count to Pentecost to commence on the wrong day.

Moving on: Leviticus 23:16 *Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath* (seventh “week”) *shall ye number fifty days*.

(Remember, we are talking about the feast of “weeks” here, the feast of “first-fruits” not the feast of “weekly Sabbath days”.)

You may also want to note in verse 15 of Leviticus 23 that the word “complete” is the same word that normally refers to Christ Himself. It’s the same word used in Exodus 12:5 translated “*without blemish*” or in numbers 19:2 translated “*without spot*”. Yes, this word usually refers to Christ. But here in Leviticus 23:15 it refers to us (Christ’s church). This also shows that we are not talking about the “weekly Sabbath” concerning the count to Pentecost. The Scripture is not saying that seven “weekly Sabbaths” shall be without spot or unblemished. No, it’s talking about “us” (God’s church) being “unblemished”, “unspotted” before day 50, the day of Pentecost. Now the completion of the wheat harvest and the offering of the “wave loaves” is very important to us, **because we are the wheat in those wave loaves which was planted from the very seed of God the Father Himself.**

(Those wave loaves represent us, God’s church.)

Now let’s understand something, our God is a creator, and He is good at it! Just look at the night sky, with all of its beautiful twinkling stars, magnificent planets, the constellations, the moon..... How awesome a sight it is.

But you know, as magnificent, as majestic, as superb and breathtaking as the heavens are, that’s not God’s masterpiece. His masterpiece is man. Yes, God’s masterpiece, His most important and treasured creation, is man, whom He created in His very own image.

Like it says in the book of Genesis; “*So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.*”

Now it didn’t take God very long to “physically” create man. He formed Adam out of the dust of the ground (red clay or dirt.)

God is so good at creating (and so powerful) that He’s quite quick at creating things, even the entire universe was created by Him very quickly, by just speaking a Word.

But it is important for us to realize something, it is important for us to realize that God’s masterpiece, His gem, His jewel, His master creation (man) was not completed back in Eden.

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Our Creator is still in the process of completing what He started back then; He's still in the process of completing the creation of man whom He created in His very own image & likeness.

O, we're complete physically, we have fully developed arms & legs, lungs to breathe, physical eyes to see, and physical ears to hear... But our nature, our mind, our character, was not fully developed when He formed man back in Eden.

On the contrary, the mind that our creator wants to form and develop in each and every one of us, the character that He wants all of us to have and to cherish for eternity, is His character, His “Holy Righteous Character” And His “Holy Righteous Character” is something so awesome, so dynamic, and so spectacular, that even God Himself could not create it instantaneously in us.

Holy Righteous Character, His Character, is something that was going to have to be developed in mankind. Man was going to have to go through a process. A process of growing, changing, and overcoming, and it was going to take time for that process to be completed, because we come into this world as sinners, sinning. That time, that process, is represented by the “count” to Pentecost, our feast, the day when His firstfruits will be changed into spirit being, and enter into the Kingdom of God.

From Genesis to Revelation, we are told to stop sinning, that the soul that sinneth shall surely die; (once saved always saved is a false teaching and a false belief) the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Those who continue to practice sin shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. We have to stop sinning and put sin out of our lives, just like we put leaven out during the Feast of UB.

Now of and by ourselves, we cannot stop sinning. (Of and by ourselves we can't do anything.) But we are not by ourselves, if the Spirit of God dwells in us.

Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread teaches us not only to put sin out of our lives, but it also teaches us to put Christ into our lives; that's why we are commanded to not only put leaven out during the feast of Unleavened Bread, but also to put unleavened bread in (which represents Christ).

We are told in Exodus 12:18: “*Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.*” That unleavened bread represents Christ, the one we need to be putting into our lives.

Our Heavenly Father, who created us in His image, wants us to become just like Him. He wants us to have the same Holy Righteous Character that He has (character with outgoing concern for others.) One who loves his neighbor as himself. And He wants us (actually He demands us) to develop that Holy Righteous Character “before” He will bring us into His Kingdom to marry His Son Jesus Christ. The Father wants us to become Holy first; He wants us to become perfect first. We can see this in the book of 1st Kings, when they were building the physical Temple.

(God always gives us the physical, which we understand quite well, so we can better understand the spiritual, which we don't understand all that well.)

1 Kings 6:7 “*And the house (God's house that is, His Spiritual Temple, His church) when it was in building, was built of stone (that's us, we are the stones) made ready (complete – perfect – whole) When? Before it was brought thither (to the other side.)*”

When Solomon's temple was built, all the stones were cut, shaped, and perfected, down at the quarry. Then they were brought “thither” to be erected.

“Thither” means “the other side” Thither will happen on day 50, the day of Pentecost, when the church will be resurrected and changed into spirit beings in the Kingdom of God. But first we have to be “made ready” “complete” “whole.” First we have to develop the Holy Righteous Character of God the Father Himself.

The stones were cut and shaped perfectly down at the quarry, and then when they were brought over to the other side to be erected, there was no need for any mortar, because the stones fit perfectly into place with one another.

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Our physical life on this earth is what the “quarry” represents. The trials and tribulations we all go through in life is the cutting and shaping that God is performing in us to make us whole, to make us perfect, the way He wants us. We can read about the “spiritual” side of this in numerous places, like John 14:2 where it says: “*In my Fathers house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you.*” (And He’s not just preparing A PLACE FOR US, He’s also preparing us for that place) (Like we read in Romans, concerning the potter and His clay.)

Now God’s spiritual Temple (His church, us) will also be erected “thither” (on the other side) (That hasn’t taken place yet) But it will when the final day of Pentecost arrives.

It’s important for us to realize that The Kingdom of God that is soon to come to this earth **has not been established yet.**

That’s right, the Kingdom of God that is soon to come to this earth (and take full charge of this earth) has not yet been established or set up. How could it be when most of the people who will be given those positions of ruler ship are still in the grave awaiting the resurrection?

Not established yet, but going to be established soon; and up in heaven, not down here on this earth, but up in Heaven. And the setting up (or establishing) of that Kingdom, cannot even begin, until the final day of Pentecost. We can see this very clearly in the book of Daniel. But before we turn there, let us understand something concerning the “wave sheaf” and the “wave loaves” offering.

If you had been there at the Temple on the 16th day of the first month and witnessed with your own eyes the “wave sheaf” offering, you would have seen the priest **raise up** that “sheaf” high over his head as he waved it. (Same with the wave loaves on Pentecost) they were raised high up over the priest’s head because it represented something that was going to take place up in heaven, not down here on this earth.

The “wave sheaf” and the “wave loaves” represents the “first fruits” (us, God’s church) that God the Father Himself has placed directly into the hands of Christ, to build, to embolden, to clean up and to scrub down, to purify, to sanctify. Yes, to make ready to meet Christ in the air at His return.

The church has taught that the “wave sheaf” that was offered during the feast of Unleavened Bread represented Christ, but is that correct? Please hear me out here and check out what I am saying. Let the Scriptures give us the truth, not any preconceived ideas or teachings of men. Remember, all of our beliefs have to be supported with Scripture.

The “Wave-Sheaf” was an omer, a “sheaf” that was pre-selected from a field of grain, and put through a rather lengthily process of beating & sifting, until a portion yes, only a portion (an important fact to comprehend) of the grain was purified to a point where all of its lumps & all of its imperfections were removed.

That portion, that omer represents God’s elect, the ones who are changing their ways, and coming out of sin, completely out of sin, and walking along the narrow path, after passing through the strait gate that leads to life.

Remember, sinners, transgressors, will NOT inherit the Kingdom of God. (1st Corinthians 6:9-10 & Galatians 5:19-21.

The wide gate, the broad way, is the way that leads to destruction. Matthew 7:13-14

Not everyone in God’s church is going to inherit eternal life. Not everyone in God’s church is going to meet Christ in the air, in the clouds on the final day of Pentecost, only those who “overcome” “conquer” come out of sin and walk this earth upright. And remember, God is no respecter of persons.

Earlier, I questioned whether or not the wave sheaf offering actually represented Christ in the first place, or if the offering of the wave sheaf could possibly represent more, or something else.

The Hebrew word translated “sheaf” is “Omer” and that Hebrew word “Omer” doesn’t describe anything singular (denoting one person or thing) but the word actually means: “a heap” or “a handful.”

The ingredients of the “Omer” or “Sheaf” that was waved came from a previously selected plot of Barley that was cut

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down and put through a rather lengthily process.

(You can study this and get the facts from places like: “The Temple - Its Ministry & Service”, written by “Alfred Ed-er-sheim” considered the greatest Jewish-Christian Scholar of the 19th Century.)

In Ed-er-sheim’s book, He elaborates on the ingredients of the “wave sheaf” the “omer” and how it was prepared. Stating that the ears of grain (after being cut down) were first brought into the court of the Temple, and thrashed out with canes & stalks, as not to injure the corn.

Then the grain was parched on a pan that was perforated with holes, so that each grain might be touched by the fire, and finally exposed to the wind.

He went on to tell how the corn was then ground in a barley-mill, which left the hulls whole. Then he states that the flour was sifted through thirteen sieves, each closer than the other.

(Yes, the grain went through quite a lengthy process.)

(And there is something quite interesting to note here :)

Although one ephah, (measuring ten omers) of barley was originally cut down and began the process, only ONE “Omer” actually completed the process, and was offered as the wave sheaf offering. And it’s important to realize, that the one “Omer” that was waved, didn’t consist of only “one” grain, or the grain from only “one” plant, but the “wave sheaf omer” that was “waved” consisted of many plants, many grains.

Yes, there were multiple thousands of grains that “qualified” (if you will) and made up the “Wave Sheaf” or “Omer” that was waved. (It didn’t just represent only one thing, or one person.)

Let’s note here what a grain symbolizes according to the Scriptures. We read in Amos 9:9 where it says: “For low, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among the Nations, like a corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth”.

The “grain” seems to represent Israel! And this “wave sheaf” (or omer) represents the “firstfruits” of Israel.

(The Israel of God, that is, which according to Gal 6:16 - is the church.)

Rev 14 speaking of those “firstfruits” says this: And, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with Him a hundred forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth, having His Father’s name written in their foreheads.

These were redeemed from among men, being the “firstfruits” unto God and to the lamb.

Brethren, I believe the “wave sheaf” represents the church, the firstfruits.

God’s “little flock” the ones that Christ said: “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

Yes, His “very elect”, “Pre selected” – “Called” by the Father Himself, and then put through a lengthily process of “cleaned up” & “scrubbed down” and sifted, repeatedly sifted (just like fine flour is sifted) until all the lumps & all the imperfections are removed. Yes, unblemished, unspotted, complete like it says in Leviticus 23:15.

And we must always remember that God gives us the physical, so we can better understand the Spiritual. Here’s the physical: Although one ephah, (measuring ten omers) of barley was originally cut down and began the process, only ONE “Omer” actually completed the process, and was offered as the wave sheaf offering.

We can compare that to the sobering verse in Matthew 22 that states: “Many are called, but few chosen. Many began this process at baptism & hands, but how many are still completing the process? How many are “proving all things”? Still

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studying to show themselves approved, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of Truth”? We have to be pure to qualify.

Let me mention one more thing here. Many believe that the wave sheaf only represents Christ and have been falsely taught that Christ couldn't be touched the morning He was resurrected, that Mary Magdalene could not touch our Lord that morning at the tomb until He ascended to the Father to have His sacrifice accepted, and to be glorified. NOT true.

The King James mistranslates Christ's words as “Touch Me Not” John 20:17. So some reason just as the physical wave sheaf of barley was not to be touched until after it was waved, same here with Christ. But, if that were so, then no one would have touched Christ on the morning of His resurrection. But they DID touch Him, check the Greek out concerning that verse “touch me not” and you will find a different picture.

When Mary first saw Christ, she DID touch Him, fact is she embraced him so tightly, He had to tell her to let go. Check other Gospel accounts on that and you will see that “many” were touching and embracing Him that morning (Also look at Mat 28:8-10.)

Christ didn't have to wait for days after His crucifixion and death to finally ascend to the Father's throne to have His sacrifice accepted. The Father accepted Christ's sacrifice immediately when He died on that tree. There sure is plenty of proof of that with the Vail being torn top to bottom, doors swinging open, dead rising out of their graves etc.

Also check out how the KJV is mistranslated where it states Christ saying that He is going to the Father. That's not exactly what He said. He didn't leave the earth and ascend to the Father until He was taken up into the clouds after talking to his disciples on the Mount of Olives when the two angels in white apparel were standing there with them.

The feast of Pentecost is the feast of the firstfruits, those who will have their part in the first resurrection. That final Pentecost is rapidly approaching brethren. That first resurrection of the saints will take place well before Christ returns with His feet touching down on the Mount of Olives. (Revelation 15:1-2 gives us the timeline of the first resurrection.) The saints will be up in the clouds standing on the Sea of Glass with Christ even before the 7 last plagues are poured out on this earth.

The events that the Feast of Pentecost pictures will be transpiring on a Global Stage and during a time that many other events will be taking place simultaneously all around this World, events that will be directly affecting every person on the face of the entire earth.

We are approaching the time brethren when all the current forms of Government from around this world, all the Dictatorships and all the different Monarchies and Democracies and all the different Rulers around this world, are going to be replaced, yes, they're going to be replaced by another form of Government.

They're going to be replaced by the Government or Kingdom of God.

We are approaching the time when all the false religions teachers and all the deceived and misguided rulers and instructors and administrators from around this World, are going to be replaced by others. Others who will be placed into positions of leadership and ruler ship all over this Earth, by Jesus Christ Himself.

We are approaching the time when Jesus the Christ, the one who was born to be a King, will be establishing His Kingdom up in heaven with His saints.

Yes, establishing, setting up His Kingdom up in heaven with His saints, His called, and chosen and faithful servants, and He will be preparing them to return to this Earth with Him, to reign over this world and rule it with Him for a thousand years.

We are living at the very end of this age brethren, the time that the Scriptures refer to and speak about throughout both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, as the “**Latter Days**”, sometimes referred to as the “**Latter Times**”.

Make no mistake about it; we are living at that time. It's the time that our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ warned us

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over and over, to **watch** for, and to be **ready** and **prepared** for.

Brethren, **Extraordinary** and **Gigantic** changes are approaching mankind. We are approaching the time that the most **Colossal** events in the history of man, are going to take place. This **evil** and **untoward** World is coming to a close.

This dying, suffering, and polluted evil age that we are presently living in, is coming to an end and about to be replaced by the coming **utopia** of **The Kingdom Of God**.

It's not this world that is coming to an end, but this age. **This evil age** of Satan's is coming to a close. And that is a good thing! All the suffering and heartache that the majority in this world are experiencing (and on a daily basis) will soon end.

The Glorification of the saints of God, and the time that Jesus Christ Himself, will be handing out their rewards, (which will be given to every man according as his works,) is rapidly approaching.

When Pilate asked Jesus If He was a King, He did not deny that He was a king; in fact He told Pilate: "**To this end He was born, To be a king.**"

But He also told Pilate something else concerning **His Kingdom**.

*Jn: 18:36: Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: **but now is my kingdom not from hence.***

That word "hence" means = here, or of this side. The Hebrew equivalent is "hither". The opposite is "thither" or "The other side".

Jesus told Pilate that His Kingdom was **not** of this world. (KOSMOS) and that Greek word includes the entire physical universe. Jesus told Pilate that the Kingdom that He was born to be King over, was **not** of this world.

Yes, the Kingdom of God was not ready to be established here on earth when Christ was there with Pilate. Fact is, the Kingdom of God has not even been established yet.

It's a little hard to establish something when the majority of those who will be placed into positions of leadership and ruler ship, are still asleep in their graves.

Let's go to Daniel 2:44 and see when Christ will establish (or set up) the Kingdom of God. He is going to do it up in Heaven on the sea of glass, at the first resurrection, when the final day of Pentecost comes.

That Kingdom is not established yet. How can it be when many of the ones that will be placed into positions, into office are still asleep (dead) in their graves, like King David, the Apostles etc.

The kingdom will be established after the saints who are dead and still in their graves will be resurrected, and those saints who are still alive are changed in the twinkling of an eye.

Daniel 2:44 says the Kingdom of God will be established soon, during the time that the coming beast power will be ruling this earth. The beast power will rule for a short time (and in the near future.) During the rule of the coming 10 Kings who will give their power to the beast, is when Christ will establish His Kingdom.

Daniel 2:44 "*And in the days of these Kings (the 10 kings of Revelation 17:12 which will soon have power from Satan) shall the God of Heaven **set up (establish) a Kingdom.***

Brethren, we are still living in the church age. Jesus is still busy building His church, building His house.

The remainder of the stones (**us**) are still being cut and shaped and fashioned, down at the quarry, down here on this **earth**, "hither" **down here on this side.**

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But that time is almost over, that work is almost completed. The church age is coming to a close. Are we ready for the return of our Lord & Savior? Will we be hearing Him say: “*Well done my good & faithful servant!*”? Or are we worried that He might say “*I never knew you!*”?

That choice is ours to make brethren. Are we doers of The Word, or hearers only? Are we amongst the “Wise” virgins? Or are we part of the “Foolish” virgins?

Is our calling on the front burner of our minds? Or is our calling (our High Calling) Choked, by the “ways” and “cares” of this world?

Brethren, we are **NOT** living at the time when Jesus began to build His church. We are living at the time when He is going to complete it.

The final Pentecost is almost here.

The Kingdom of God is soon to be established up in heaven on the sea of glass (Revelation 15 1-2) and then after it is established in heaven, it will come to this earth. Jesus Christ is going to reign on this earth for 1,000 years. We in the church know this quite well because His Feast of Tabernacles, which we keep every year, pictures that time.

But Jesus will not be returning to this earth alone, He will be returning to take charge of this earth and to rule it with his saints. (Revelation 17:14.)

The word “saint” means = Pure, blameless, unspotted. That’s who Christ will be returning to this earth with, His saints. That’s who will be meeting Him in the air on the final Pentecost. That’s who we need to be now, “saints” “pure”.

Jude the Lords half brother spoke in Jude 1:14 of how Enoch the seventh from Adam also knew this when he prophesied that the Lord would be coming with ten thousands of His saints.

Does that include all of us Brethren? Will we be there to meet Christ in the air, and to stand on that “Sea of Glass”?

Revelation 15: 1 “*And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them is filled the wrath of God. 2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and **them that had gotten the victory** (those six words come from only one Greek word – “Conqueror”) *over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.**

That’s His elect up there brethren, the ones who were “victorious” “Conquerors of sin. And they’re up there during the time that the wrath of God is being poured out... They are “raised up” “there” to that “sea of glass” on the last day, the last day of the count, the day of Pentecost. (Let’s see that, and conclude in John 6:37 – 54)

³⁷*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*

³⁸*For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*

³⁹*And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should **raise it up again at the last day.***

(We were raised up the first time when we were pre-selected by the Father Himself and given to Christ to be molded) (Represented by the “Wave Sheaf Offering.)

⁴⁰*And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up **(When) at the last day.***

⁴¹*The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.*

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⁴² *And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?*

⁴³ *Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.*

⁴⁴ *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

⁴⁵ *It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*

⁴⁶ *Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.*

⁴⁷ *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.*

⁴⁸ *I am that bread of life.*

⁴⁹ *Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.*

⁵⁰ *This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.*

⁵¹ *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.*

⁵² *The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?*

⁵³ *Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*

⁵⁴ *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up (WHEN) at the last day.*

Brethren, that “Last day” is rapidly approaching. I pray that all of us will be “ready” and “prepared” to meet our Lord and Savior in the air.

One final Scripture which tells us (all of us) what we need to be doing now, in order to qualify to meet Christ in the air, on the Sea of Glass:

1st John 3:3 “*And every man that has this hope in him* (what hope? The hope to be there in God’s Kingdom, to meet Christ in the air) ***purifieth himself*** (how pure?) ***as pure as He*** (Christ) ***is pure***.

Happy Feast of Pentecost Brethren.

Scriptures from the KJV

See William P. Goff’s other articles at:
[Goff, William P. – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

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Did Early Christians Celebrate Birthdays?

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It does not seem that the celebration of birthdays became common among those that professed the Messiah until the fourth century. Birthdays apparently originated in magic and mythology. They were traditionally also celebrated by followers of Mithra. Although birthdays were to some degree acknowledged, the celebration of birthdays was not something that original Christians did -- and should not be done by true Christians today. Nor did Jews anciently celebrate birthdays. Nor does the Bible ever give the precise date with either a lunar or solar calendar of any persons' birth.

Although many who profess the Messiah celebrate birthdays, did you know that birthdays were simply not celebrated by those in the early church? Interestingly, there is no hint in the Bible or early writings that Yeshua, the apostles, or any true Christians ever celebrated birthdays.

This article will begin with an introduction on the origin of birthdays, discuss some ancient and modern Judaic views of birthdays, discuss the Bible and early Gentile views of birthdays, and discuss how birthdays came to be celebrated amongst those that profess Christianity.

Early Origins of Birthdays

So, what is the origin of birthdays? Where did the idea of birthday celebrations come from?

"Originally the idea [of birthday greetings and wishes for happiness] was rooted in magic. The working of spells for good and evil is the chief usage of witchcraft. One is especially susceptible to such spells on his birthday, as one's personal spirits are about at that time. Dreams dreamed on the birthday eve should be remembered, for they are predictions of the future brought by the guardian spirits which hover over one's bed on the birthday eve. Birthday greetings have power for good or ill because one is closer to the spirit world on this day. Good wishes bring good fortune, but the reverse is also true, so one should avoid enemies on one's birthday and be surrounded only by well-wishers. 'Happy birthday' and 'Many happy returns of the day' are the traditional greetings" (*The Lore of Birthdays*, Linton, p. 20) ...

The giving of birthday gifts is a custom associated with the offering of sacrifices to pagan gods on their birthdays. Certainly, the custom was linked with the same superstitions that formed the background for birthday greetings. "The exchange of presents...is associated with the importance of ingratiating good and evil fairies...on their or our birthdays" (*ibid.*).

The traditional birthday cake and candles also have their origin in ancient pagan idol worship. The ancients believed that the fire of candles had magical properties. They offered prayers and made wishes to be carried to the gods on the flames of the candles. Thus, we still have the widely practiced birthday custom of making a wish, then blowing out the candles. The Greeks celebrated the birthday of their moon goddess, Artemis, with cakes adorned with lighted candles...

"The Egyptians...discovered to which of the gods each month and day is sacred; and found out from the day of a man's birth, what he will meet with in the course of his life, and how he will end his days, and what sort of man he will be" (Herodotus, *Persian Wars*, Book II, ch. 82)

Since it was believed that the positions of the stars at the time of birth influenced a child's future, astrological horoscopes came into being, purporting to foretell the future, based on the time of birth. "Birthdays are intimately linked with the stars, since without the calendar, no one could tell when to celebrate his birthday. They are also indebted to the stars in another way, for in early days the chief importance of birthday records was to enable the astrologers to chart horoscopes" (*The Lore of Birthdays*, p. 53). Rawlinson's translation of *Herodotus* includes the following footnote: "Horoscopes were of very early use in Egypt...and Cicero speaks of the Egyptians and Chaldees predicting...a man's destiny at his birth"...

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When we examine the principles of God's law closely, as they relate to birthday celebrations, we can understand why **neither Christ, nor His Apostles, nor their true followers, observed their birthdays**. As noted earlier, the practice has its origin in idolatry and the worship of the sun, moon and stars...Some may view birthday customs as purely secular, lacking any religious significance. Yet we need to be aware of the broader perspective of their origins, and the religious significance they have had -- and still have -- for vast multitudes of people. (Reynolds, Rod. ***Should Christians Celebrate Birthdays?*** Living Church News, May-June 2002. pp.16-18).

Furthermore, the book ***The Lore of Birthdays*** (New York, 1952) by Ralph and Adelin Linton, on pages 8, 18-20 had this to say:

The Greeks believed that everyone had a protective spirit or daemon who attended his birth and watched over him in life. This spirit had a mystic relation with the god on whose birthday the individual was born. The Romans also subscribed to this idea....This notion was carried down in human belief and is reflected in the guardian angel, the fairy godmother and the patron saint....The custom of lighted candles on the cakes started with the Greeks....Honey cakes round as the moon and lit with tapers were placed on the temple altars of [Artemis]....Birthday candles, in folk belief, are endowed with special magic for granting wishes....Lighted tapers and sacrificial fires have had a special mystic significance ever since man first set up altars to his gods. The birthday candles are thus an honor and tribute to the birthday child and bring good fortune...

Thus, it appears that birthdays had their origin in mythology and magic, with horoscopes also probably playing a role.

Jews, Jewish Christians, and Old Testament Birthdays

But what were early Jewish practices?

The first century Jewish historian Josephus noted that Jewish families did not celebrate birthdays:

Nay, indeed, the law does not permit us to make festivals at the birth of our children, and thereby afford occasion of drinking to excess (Josephus. Translated by W. Whiston. ***Against Apion***, Book II, Chapter 26. Extracted from Josephus Complete Works, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids (MI), 14th printing, 1977, p. 632).

Now although there is no specific command against the celebration of birthdays in the Bible, the Jewish custom in those days was apparently based on the negative occurrences in the Bible surrounding birthdays, as well as the astrological implications of the celebration of birthdays (pagan practices, like astrology, were specifically prohibited in the law).

Since nearly all of the first Christians were Jewish, this may partially explain why the celebration of the Messiah's birth would not be consistent with that early custom.

In their essay titled "Birthdays, Jewishly," Lisa Farber Miller and Sandra Widener point out that the ***Encyclopedia Judaica*** is very blunt on this topic:

"The celebration of birthdays is unknown in traditional Jewish ritual."

Here are some passages in the Old Testament that the Jews probably looked at to come to their conclusion about birthdays:

Now it came to pass on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. Then he restored the chief butler to his butlership again, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. But he hanged the chief baker (Genesis 40:20-22).

There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD (Deuteronomy 18:10-12).

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You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, And the monthly prognosticators Stand up and save you From what shall come upon you. Behold, they shall be as stubble, The fire shall burn them; They shall not deliver themselves From the power of the flame (Isaiah 47:13-14).

After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. And Job spoke, and said:

"May the day perish on which I was born, And the night in which it was said, 'A male child is conceived.' May that day be darkness; May God above not seek it, Nor the light shine upon it. May darkness and the shadow of death claim it; May a cloud settle on it; May the blackness of the day terrify it (Job 3:1-5).

Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, when the Sabeans raided them and took them away--indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"...If your sons have sinned against Him, He has cast them away for their transgression (Job 1:13-15; 8:4).

Although, I have heard some say that the "day" referred to in Job 1:13 was a birthday celebration, the passage in Job is not explicit and Job himself indicates he was more concerned with what his sons might have said, than done, in their other celebrations (Job 1:4-5). However, it should be noted that there are no positive statements in the Old Testament related to birthdays.

The prophet Jeremiah wrote:

14 Cursed be the day in which I was born! Let the day not be blessed in which my mother bore me! **15** Let the man be cursed Who brought news to my father, saying, "A male child has been born to you!" Making him very glad. **16** And let that man be like the cities Which the LORD overthrew and did not relent; Let him hear the cry in the morning And the shouting at noon, **17** Because he did not kill me from the womb, That my mother might have been my grave, And her womb always enlarged with me. **18** Why did I come forth from the womb to see labor and sorrow, That my days should be consumed with shame? (Jeremiah 20:14-18)

The Hebrew calendar itself makes the celebration of birthdays somewhat difficult when one attempts to superimpose it on our modern (essentially Roman-derived) calendars. And the reason for this is that it is about 11 days shorter than the annual orbit around the sun, and hence it adds a thirteenth month seven times in every nineteen-year cycle. Thus, one's "birthday" on a modern calendar will vary 11 or so days from year to year -- and the positions of the constellations in the sky would always to some degree be different. Therefore, from an astrological perspective, one's alleged "sign" would often be different. If YEHOVAH God wanted birthdays celebrated, He probably would have given the children of Israel the type of calendar which would have made it possible for the "birthday" to fall on the same solar calendar day each year -- instead that basically cannot happen but a relatively few times in a life.

It *may* also be that *one* of the reasons for circumcising males at eight days (see Genesis 17:12), as opposed to the day of birth (which is what tends to often happen in modern societies who circumcise), would be to change the emphasis from the date of birth to other events as important.

Of course, it should be noted that since the ages of many people in the Hebrew Bible are recorded, some type of acknowledgement of when people were born apparently did take place.

Acknowledgement of years to some degree had to take place as the Old Testament categorizes various people at various times based upon age (e.g. Leviticus 27:3-7; Numbers 4:2-3). But there is no recorded example of the Hebrews actually celebrating their dates of birth.

If you search the scriptures, you will notice that many people are mentioned being born, but that the precise date (either with a lunar or solar calendar reference) is not given. If YEHOVAH wanted birthdays to be celebrated, then perhaps He would have given specific birth dates in the Bible -- but He did not.

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Modern Judaism and Birthdays

While many modern rabbis still do not endorse the celebration of birthdays, some do. However, it appears that some believe that there is stronger support in both their traditions and writings to not celebrate them.

Notice the following from a Jewish writer:

In Jewish theology, much importance is attached to the day upon which one dies, one's yahrtzeit, but little is mentioned about one's birthday. Some Torah authorities, such as the Satmar Rebbe, Rabbi Yoelish Teitelbaum (1887-1979)[1] are opposed to any sort of celebration of one's birthday, while other authorities, such as the Lubavitcher Rebbe[2], Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902-1994)[3] and the Rebbe from Piaczezna, Rabbi Kalonymos Kalman Shapiro[4], permit and encourage such celebration on one's birthday as means of inspiring self-reflection and introspection[5]. Rabbi Matis Blum explains[6] that the rationale of those who oppose birthday celebrations is based on a statement of King Solomon, who said, "A good name is better than good oil, and the day of death [is better] than the day of birth.[7]" He also explains this opposition is seemingly supported by the Talmud which determined[8] that it is better that man not have been born than man having been born. A third reason for opposing birthday parties is simply the fact that the Torah only mentioned such a party in conjunction with the Pharaoh celebrating his own birthday. This implies that only such morally degenerated people as the sovereign of Egypt would celebrate a birthday, but not Torah True Jews...

Cursing one's birthday is an expression of one's dissatisfaction in one's situation. The Midrash says[41] that two people cursed the day on which they were born. Job cursed the day he was born[42] as a reaction to all the suffering to which he was subjected. Jeremiah also cursed the day of his birth[43] as a means of conveying the message of his bitterness in having to foretell the destruction of the Holy Temple, and worse, his knowing that prophecy was destined to be fulfilled. (**Happy Birthday!** Reb Chaim HaQoton, April 17, 2007. <http://rchaimqoton.blogspot.com/2007/04/happy-birthday.html> verified 7/12/07).

Thus, many Jewish leaders have acknowledged that the celebration of birthdays was not something that was historically endorsed (though many Jews do celebrate them in modern times).

Gentiles and Birthdays in the New Testament

But the focus of this article is early Christianity -- which while it certainly includes the fact that Jews, including Christian ones, did not celebrate birthdays in the first and second centuries A.D. What were the practices of the non-Jewish (Gentiles) converts to Christianity?

But before getting to later Gentile practices, first perhaps we should look at the teachings of the New Testament itself.

It is interesting to note that while the New Testament is clear about the specific time of certain holy days such as Passover (Matthew 26:17-20) and Pentecost (Acts 2:1), it never mentions the date, nor even the precise month, of the Messiah's birth (see Matthew 1 and Luke 1;2:1-20). Nor does it ever specifically endorse the celebration of birthdays. Nor does it ever give the date (with either a solar or lunar calendar reference) for anyone being born.

Furthermore, there is no recorded instance of any of the apostles or other early Christians celebrating the birth of the Messiah.

There is, however, one birthday celebration mentioned in the New Testament, and it was not a good one. Actually, it was so bad, that the one Yeshua had called the greatest "among those born of women" (Matthew 11:11) was killed because of it:

But when Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod. Therefore he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. So she, having been prompted by her mother, said, "Give me John the Baptist's head here on a platter." And the king was sorry; nevertheless, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he commanded it to be given to her. So he sent and had John beheaded in prison. And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother (Matthew 14:6-11).

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(The same account is also described in Mark 6:21-28).

Originally, even as more and more Gentiles began to profess the Messiah (so much so that they outnumbered those of Jewish heritage that did), the early Gentile leaders also did not endorse the celebration of birthdays. No early church writer endorsed the observance of birthdays by Christians, nor are they ever listed in the early observances of the Christian church.

Therefore, the celebration of birthdays, was clearly not part of:

... the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

No early religious/church writing from the second century that I have seen (and I have read most that are available) seems to endorse (or even suggest) the celebration of birthdays by any who professed the Messiah.

Although he was not part of the true Church of YEHOVAH God, the writings of the early third century Catholic theologian Origen of Alexandria show that, even that late, Orthodox Catholics were against the celebration of birthdays. **The Catholic Encyclopedia** states:

Origen, glancing perhaps at the discreditable imperial Natalitia, asserts (in Lev. Hom. viii in Migne, P.G., XII, 495) that in the Scriptures sinners alone, not saints, celebrate their birthday (Martindale C. Christmas, 1908).

Here is some of what Origen wrote:

...of all the holy people in the Scriptures, no one is recorded to have kept a feast or held a great banquet on his birthday. It is only sinners (like Pharaoh and Herod) who make great rejoicings over the day on which they were born into this world below (Origen, *in Levit., Hom. VIII*, in Migne P.G., XII, 495) (Thurston H. Natal Day. Transcribed by Thomas M. Barrett. Dedicated to Margaret Johanna Albertina Behling Barrett. The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume X. Copyright © 1911 by Robert Appleton Company. Online Edition Copyright © 2003 by K. Knight. Nihil Obstat, October 1, 1911. Remy Lafort, S.T.D., Censor. Imprimatur. +John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York).

The writings of the late third century Catholic theologian Arnobius show that, even that late, Catholics objected to the celebration of birthdays as he wrote:

...you worship with couches, altars, temples, and other services, and by celebrating their games and birthdays, those whom it was fitting that you should assail with keenest hatred. (Arnobius. Against the Heathen (Book I), Chapter 64. Excerpted from **Ante-Nicene Fathers**, Volume 6. Edited by Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson. American Edition, 1886. Online Edition Copyright © 2005 by K. Knight).

Thus, birthday celebrations, even of gods and leaders, were condemned as far as the late third century by even Roman Catholic leaders.

How Birthdays Ended Up Being Observed

It does not seem that the celebration of birthdays became common among those that professed the Messiah until the fourth century. During that century, infant baptism started to become customary and the celebration of Christmas became standard practices for the majority that professed the Messiah. Also, the fact that Roman emperors tended to celebrate their birthdays was undoubtedly another factor as it was in the fourth century that Roman emperors began to accept some form of Christianity.

Wikipedia notes:

History of celebration of birthdays in the West It is thought that the large-scale celebration of birthdays in Europe began with the cult of Mithras, which originated in Persia but was spread by soldiers throughout the Roman Empire. Before this, such celebrations were not common; and, hence, practices from other contexts such as the Saturnalia were adapted for birthdays. Because many Roman soldiers took to Mithraism, it had a wide

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distribution and influence throughout the empire until it was supplanted by Christianity (Wikipedia. *Birthdays*. July 12, 2007 version).

Christmas is also relevant because December 25th was the day of celebration of the birthday of the sun-god Mithra. Perhaps it should also be mentioned that one of the key features of Mithraism was Sunday observance. The reason that this seems to be relevant is that the Roman Emperor Constantine, the first Roman Emperor who many assume made a profession of the Messiah, was also the first Emperor to make Sunday laws -- which he began to do on March 7, 321. Also, a few years later, the Council of Nicea that Constantine convened in 325 A.D. declared Sunday to be the "Christian day" of worship.

According to the fourth century historian Epiphanius, some who observed Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, claimed that Emperor Constantine mandated a Sunday observance of it in the Council of Nicea in 325 in order to somehow honor his birthday:

"You changed the Passover to Constantine's birthday" (Epiphanius. *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, Books II and III (Sects 47-80), *De Fide*). Section VI, Verse 9,4. Translated by Frank Williams. EJ Brill, New York, 1994, pp. 410-411).

The World Book Encyclopedia notes,

Christmas...In 354 A.D., Bishop Liberius of Rome **ordered the people to celebrate** on December 25. He probably chose this date because the people of Rome already observed it as the Feast of Saturn, **celebrating the birthday of the sun** (Sechrist E.H. Christmas. *World Book Encyclopedia*, Volume 3. Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, Chicago, 1966, pp. 408-417).

Hence, it would seem to follow that since those who professed the Messiah as late as the third century did not celebrate birthdays, that it was not until after a Roman Emperor implemented Sunday, that perhaps he and others were amenable to adopting other practices of Mithraism -- one of which was birthday celebrations. This is apparently how birthdays came to be celebrated amongst those that professed Christianity. A celebration for the date of the Messiah's birth in Rome probably began near this time, but was mandated no later than 354 A.D.

Thus, it appears that the "birthday of the sun" festivities were a major factor in the date chosen for followers of Greco-Roman Christianity to celebrate. And once those that professed the Messiah began to widely celebrate that "birthday", other birthday celebrations became more common.

The Satanic Bible and Birthdays

Back in 1969 Anton Lavey wrote *The Satanic Bible*.

On page 96 on the 1976 version, it mentions birthdays:

THE highest of all holidays in the Satanic religion is the date of one's own birth. This is in direct contradiction to the holy of holy days of other religions, which deify a particular god who has been created in an anthropomorphic form of their own image, thereby showing that the ego is not really buried.

The Satanist feels: "Why not really be honest and if you are going to create a god in your image, why not create that god as yourself." Every man is a god if he chooses to recognize himself as one. So, the Satanist celebrates his own birthday as the most important holiday of the year. After all, aren't you happier about the fact that you were born than you are about the birth of someone you have never even met? Or for that matter, aside from religious holidays, why pay higher tribute to the birthday of a president or to a date in history than we do to the day we were brought into this greatest of all worlds?

Despite the fact that some of us may not have been wanted, or at least were not particularly planned, we're glad, even if no one else is, that we're here! You should give yourself a pat on the back, buy yourself whatever you want, treat yourself like the king (or god) that you are, and generally celebrate your birthday with as much pomp and ceremony as possible.

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After one's own birthday, the two major Satanic holidays are Walpurgisnacht and Halloween (or All Hallows' Eve).

(Lavey A, Gilmore P. *The Satanic Bible*. Avon, September 1, 1976, p. 96--note it is on page 53 of an online version I found also).

It is interesting that birthdays are considered the most important holiday to these Satan worshipers (the founding of their "church" (Walpurgisnacht) and Halloween are the other ones of importance to them). This comes as no surprise.

Concluding Comments

Although birthdays were to some degree acknowledged, the celebration of birthdays was not something that original Christians did and should not be done by true Christians today. Nor did Jews anciently celebrate birthdays. Nor does the Bible ever give the precise date with either a lunar or solar calendar of any persons' birth.

Birthdays apparently originated in magic and mythology. They were traditionally also celebrated by followers of Mithra. After a sun-worshipping emperor supposedly made a profession of the Messiah and passed the first Sunday law, he and/or apparently his followers probably did not consider that there were problems with celebratory aspects of Mithraism/Saturnalia as long as the Messiah and believers, and not Mithra, were the focus of celebrations.

But should we be following the example of the Romans who mixed practices of Mithraism into their religion or of those who first accepted the Messiah? Recall that Christians are advised to:

...contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

See HOIM Staff's other articles at:

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Be My Valentine?

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Sam Cooke sang those words back in 1961, and "oldies" radio stations still play the song on occasion. Oddly enough, Sam Cooke was killed at the relatively young age of 29, gunned down by a jealous girlfriend at a Hollywood motel. Evidently, Cupid's arrow spawned only a fatal attraction.

This song came from a more innocent time, and before conversion, many of us probably sang along, totally ignorant of its deeper, pagan meaning. Now people sing of graphic sexual acts with no subtlety or imagery involved. Advertisers and merchandisers discovered early on that sex sells.

Satan, sexless and childless, with no hope of becoming part of a family, has seen to it from the beginning that man has misused sex. The term "sex" here not only means the sex act itself but related areas such as pornography, sex shops, prostitution, perversions, etc. Satan has always found willing victims among mankind because we always want the easy way. Is it any wonder that prostitution is known as "the world's oldest profession"?

Rather than working on a relationship, growing, and overcoming with one's wife or husband, humans have always sought immediate pleasure for themselves with no thought of others. David saw Bathsheba, as she possibly had planned, and he wanted her (II Samuel 11:1-4). With no thought of the pain it would cause, they both sought their own pleasure. Satan has succeeded in seducing not only individuals like David and Bathsheba but also cities (Sodom and Gomorrah; see

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Genesis 19) and nations (Israel; see Numbers 25; I Kings 14:24, II Kings 23:7).

Christ is returning to marry His church, a chaste virgin, dressed in white, without spot or blemish (Ephesians 5:27; Revelation 19:7-8). On the other hand, Satan is behind Babylon, symbolized as the whore and mother of harlots (Revelation 17:1-6). Quite a contrast.



Cupid, draw back your bow
And let your arrow go
Straight to my lover's heart
For me. . .

Valentine's Day

What does all this have to do with Sam Cooke and Cupid? Well, nothing with Mr. Cooke directly, but plenty with Cupid!

February 14 is Valentine's Day, a day when Cupid supposedly does his thing. It is sometimes lost in the afterglow of Christmas' glitter and the awakening of Easter's false hope. Yet, it is a day emblematic of the Devil's whole approach. It is a holiday worth knowing more about so that we can be more fully armed and better able to withstand Satan and his wiles (Ephesians 6:11).

To most people, Valentine's Day would seem to be nothing more than kids exchanging Valentine's cards and adults giving chocolates or flowers. But it is harmless only in the eyes of those who do not know any better or want to know better. As with most worldly festivals with religious overtones, its origins go back long before Christ. And, as we have come to recognize, the Roman Catholic Church "Christianized" it, assimilating pagan beliefs into its own.

Any good encyclopedia or reference material will state where Valentine's Day originated. *The American Book of Days* by Jan M. Hatch (3rd edition) reads, ". . . association [of Valentine's Day] with lovers is a survival, in Christianized form, of a practice that occurred on February 14, the day before the ancient Roman feast of the Lupercalia. . ." (p. 178).

Holidays and Anniversaries of the World by Laurence Vrdang and Christie N. Donohue, in the article "Valentine's Day," says, "[Valentine's Day is] also believed to be a continuation of the Roman festival of Lupercalia."

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The New Standard Encyclopedia, under the article "Valentine," states:

Saint Valentine was an obscure, possibly legendary, martyr who by tradition was put to death by the Romans on February 14, about [AD] 269. This day was made a feast day by the Roman Catholic Church. The date of his death almost coincided with that of the Roman feast of the Lupercalia. . . . The celebration of the two occasions merged.

So, Valentine's Day is nothing more than a continuation of Lupercalia.

Luper-who? Or, is it Luper-what?

There is nothing mysterious or secret about this pagan observance, as most of these reference works also have information about Lupercalia. *The Encyclopedia Americana*, 1996, from the article "Lupercalia," says:

. . . an ancient Roman rite held each February 15 for the fertility god Lupercus. Goats and a dog were sacrificed, and goats' blood was smeared on the foreheads of two young men and wiped off with wool dipped in milk. Young men, wearing only goatskin about their loins, ran around the base of the Palatine hill, striking with goatskin strips any women they met. This was to ease labor for pregnant women and to make the others fertile.

Well, how thoughtful!

The American Heritage Dictionary, under "Lupercalia," reads, "a fertility festival in ancient Rome, celebrated February 15 in honor of the pastoral god Lupercus." Even the month of February gets its name from this pagan ceremony. The Latin *februaue* means "to purify" after this so-called "Feast of Purification." Some sources say that the thongs from the skins of sacrificed animals—which the priests used on the evening of February 14 to whip women—were called *februa*.

Nimrod—Again

Who was Lupercus anyway? Lupercus was a hunter of wolves (Latin *lupus* is "wolf"), associated with the Roman god Faunus, god of agriculture and fertility. Since Rome took its gods from those it conquered, we can trace Faunus to its Greek equivalent, Pan, god of woods, fields, and flocks. The ancients pictured both of these mythological beings as having a human torso but the legs, horns, and ears of goats. This fits nicely with the fact that they sacrificed goats and used thongs from their skin to whip women during this "feast." The Bible often compares God's people to sheep while frequently linking Satan with goats.

Pan can be traced to the Phoenician sun god Baal (also a god of fertility and nature). We can make a strong case that Baal is none other than Nimrod. In Genesis 10:9, Moses describes Nimrod as a "mighty hunter." In the days after the Flood, animals multiplied rapidly and caused fear among the people. Nimrod grew powerful because of his ability to fight the wild animals. Tradition says that he roamed as far as Italy to hunt wolves.

"Valentine" comes into play here. The word derives from the Latin *valens*, meaning "strong, powerful, mighty." Our word *valiant*, "courageous, heroic," also comes from this root. These are apt descriptions of Nimrod. In a sense, he was the people's valentine!

Even the heart, a ubiquitous symbol of this day, is a symbol for Nimrod. The Romans acquired the heart symbol from the Babylonians, who spoke the Chaldean tongue. In this language, the word for "heart" was *bal* or *bel*. Due to its similarity in sound to "Baal," it became an emblem for Nimrod.

There is even a link with Cupid. What equipment does Cupid always carry? He is always pictured with a bow and arrows, as a hunter would have! In mythology, Cupid, also known as Nin or Ninus, "the Son," was the son of Venus. Ninus was Nimrod.

Venus is the Roman equivalent of the Greek goddess Aphrodite (Ceres) and the "mother goddess," Semiramis (the biblical Ashtoreth). These pagan goddesses, usually depicted with multiple breasts or breasts extremely out of proportion to their bodies, symbolized fertility. The thread between Lupercus-Faunus-Pan-Baal-Nimrod-Cupid and Venus-Aphrodite-Ceres-Semiramis-Ashtoreth is fertility or, in today's vernacular, just plain sex. The celebration of the Lupercalia

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was just an excuse to lower people's morals and inhibitions under the guise of religion. A "church-sponsored" orgy if you will!

Why February 14?

How did the date get moved back from February 15 to the 14th? There are two possible reasons. In ancient times, days were often counted beginning at sunset, so the "festivities" of the Lupercalia began on the evening of the 14th. As the Roman calendar took precedence, it was no great matter to move the holiday up a few hours.

The other reason for the change to the 14th is that Pope Gelasius simply ordered it changed in AD 496. As mentioned earlier, Catholic legend speaks of an obscure martyr named Valentine, who was put to death on February 14, AD 269, and the Roman church made this day a feast day. There is nothing "festive" about a martyr's death. More than likely, the Catholic Church was doing what we call "spin control," trying to put a better face on a licentious occasion.

Why did the Romans observe the Lupercalia on the 15th in the first place? Nimrod was supposedly born at the winter solstice. In the 21st century BC, the solstice occurred on January 6. As time progressed, however, this date moved earlier every four hundred years or so. In Roman times, Julius Caesar ordered it fixed on December 25. (Today, it falls on December 21.)

In antiquity, the mother of a male child customarily presented herself before her god for purification on the 40th day after giving birth. Remember, the Lupercalia was a "Feast of Purification." Forty days from January 6 is February 15!

Two other Valentine's Day traditions may be of interest. During Lupercalia, the names of young women were put into a box and drawn out by men as chance directed. Exchanging Valentines grew out of this name drawing.

Why is the color red associated with Valentine's Day? Isaiah writes that "sins are like scarlet, . . . red like crimson" (Isaiah 1:18). Adultery is known as the "scarlet sin" (recall the classic book by Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*). Prostitution is practiced in the "red-light district." The Bible describes certain princes of Babylon dressed in vermilion (Ezekiel 23:14-15). Babylon herself is a harlot dressed in scarlet (Revelation 17:4). The highest-ranking priests of the Catholic church, cardinals, wear red.

When we tally our list of the merits of Valentine's Day, this pagan holiday shows not one redeeming value! Valentine's Day is as worldly as they come. It is indeed a product of Babylon, and the love of God does not rest on those who become enmeshed by the ways of this world (I John 2:15).

Those who continue to insist that participation in it is harmless have refused to recognize the rank paganism inherent in this holiday. God warns in Revelation 18:4 that if we remain within the gates of Babylon, we will suffer its fate. Valentine's Day is just another reason why God says to us, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues."

See Mike Ford's other articles at:

[Ford, Mike – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

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Thank You Everyone!

What Must I Do to Be Saved

(Copyright 1998) by Kenneth M. Hoeck (Woodstock, Illinois)

Hebrews 12:29 For our God *is* a consuming fire.

"The Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."-2 Peter 3:9

The right column of the following table is comprised of scriptures that reflect the basic premise or understanding on the left. We have purposefully made this page this way so God's Word would have precedent comprising the bulk of the text. If you are not yet 'saved' by knowing the Savior Jesus Christ (in Greek *Iesous Kristos* and in Hebrew *Yeshua Masciach*) we encourage you ask God the Father and His Son to open your eyes to be able to see as you study the table below. If you have questions or seek counseling please contact us at totw@truthontheweb.org. Also see our page on [Repentance and Baptism](#).

1).	Believe God's word	<p>Mark 1:15 "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and <u>believe the gospel.</u>"</p> <p>2Chronicles 20:20 "... <u>Believe in the LORD your God,</u> so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper."</p> <p>Mark 9:23 "Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, <u>all things are possible to him that believeth.</u>";</p> <p>John 1:12 "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"</p>
2).	Realize that sin is the transgression of God's laws.	<p>1John 3:4 "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for <u>sin is the transgression of the law.</u> ";</p> <p>Psalms 119:172 "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness."</p> <p>Deuteronomy 5:29 "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and <u>keep all my commandments always,</u> that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!";</p> <p>Romans 6:23 "<u>For the wages of sin is death;</u> but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."</p>
3.)	Understand and come to realize that you are a sinner	<p>Romans 3:23 "For <u>all have sinned and</u> come short of the glory of God".</p> <p>1John 1:10 "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.";</p> <p>Psalms 32:5 "<u>I acknowledged my sin unto thee</u> and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will <u>confess my transgressions unto the LORD;</u> and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.";</p>

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		<p>Psalm 51:3 "<u>For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.</u>";</p> <p>Psalm 41:4 "I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee."</p>
4.)	<p>Repent (turn from your sinful ways) and be Baptized.</p>	<p>Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, <u>Repent, and be baptized</u> every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ <u>for the remission of sins</u>, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.;"</p> <p>Jer 26:13 "Therefore now <u>amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; ..</u>";</p> <p>Ezekiel 18:30 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. <u>Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions;</u> so iniquity shall not be your ruin."</p> <p>Mark 1:4 'John did <u>baptize</u> in the wilderness, and preach the <u>baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.</u>";</p> <p>Acts 3:19 "<u>Repent ye therefore, and be converted</u>, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;" YOU ARE ONE OF GOD'S CHILDREN AFTER BAPTISM! YOU ARE A NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST.</p>
5.)	<p>Live by setting a good example</p>	<p>Matthew 3:8 "<u>Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.</u>";</p> <p>Matthew 5:16 "<u>Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.</u>"</p> <p>Phillipians 2:14 "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: <u>15 That ye may be blameless and harmless</u>, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom <u>ye shine as lights in the world;</u> "</p> <p>1Timothy 4:12 "Let no man despise thy youth; <u>but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.</u>";</p> <p>1Peter 2:21 "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an <u>example, that ye should follow his steps.</u>";</p> <p>1Peter 5:3 "Neither as being lords over God's heritage but <u>being ensamples to the flock.</u>" (Jesus says why do you call me Lord but not do the things I say?)</p>
6.)	<p>Continue overcoming sin and being obedient to God so you may not lose the gift of eternal life.</p>	<p>Romans 12:21 "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.;"</p> <p>Deuteronomy 11:22" For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, <u>to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;</u> "</p>

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Revelation 2:7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Re 2:11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Re 2:17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

Re 2:26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

Re 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Re 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

Re 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Re 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Salvation happens instantly, continuously and will be fully realized in the future. We have been saved, are being saved, and shall be saved.

See Kenneth M. Hoeck's other articles at:

[Hoeck, Kenneth M. – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

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Special People: Special Rights?
(Copyright 2018) by Richard Frates (Easley, South Carolina)

Ideological Tyranny - LGBT-Nazi Indoctrination: Diversity Training Today Is: Victimization Ideology and LGBT-Indoctrination. Who are the Victimizers and Non-Believers in: Victim and LGBT Advantages and Protections for Special

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People? They all must pay, be attacked by Law, and: Their children Re-Educated. Laws and government policy protecting Special People: Determined by Race, Gender and a strange variety of sexual perversions are tyrannical. Effectively, Law and policy Like “Freedom of sexual orientation” protects Special People from disapproval. And gives them license to disapprove of, hate and attack, Not so Special People, who do not bow down to their insane demands. Who in Congress was the first idiot to utter the imbecilic concept of: “Freedom of sexual orientation”? That is a wide gate into human depravity.

Employees and students forced to take “Diversity and LGBT Indoctrination Training” Why? To appease the Infallible State. Is that freedom? No, it is Ideological Tyranny. Soon to arrive, to appease the State: Political Devils and some business owners, pandering to state leaders - suggesting that their employees, volunteer to wear LGBT support merit badges, in the workplace. If one chooses Not to wear the LGBT merit badge, or take Diversity Training, they will be Marked for Destruction. Additionally, requiring men to take “Sexual Harassment Training” Is: Sexually Harassing Men. Guilty or Innocent by Gender? Ridiculous! Are there any real men in Congress today? No, they all are intimidated by women.

Everyone is Equal? If that is true, then: Do All Laws Protect Everyone Equally? No! Congress and Judges have given, Special People - Special Rights and protections by law to secure their devotion and the approval of the Mad Left Media. Lawmakers are presenting - Special People - as superior, and their Rights more valid than the Rights of others? Ridiculous! The Targets of Diversity Training and LGBT-Nazi Indoctrination are: White Men, all Christians and Jews male or female who believe God and innocent children. Public School Sex Education Is: Nothing but LGBT indoctrination. Effectively: Lawmakers and Judges - are writing the sins of LGBT perverts into Law - and infecting the minds and hearts of young and old with what is vile.

Laws that guarantee Equal Rights: And Repeals Special Rights, is what America really needs. Lawmakers - These 5 following – New suggested Laws will promote Equal Rights. And will eliminate lawmakers and judges from practicing the insanity of *Special Rights* for their: Adopted, *Special People*. And will Stop the Mad Left Media from driving, like a blind mule, the Spineless Devils in Congress.

Law 1. Employers, Employees, Educators and All Students: Keep your personal sexual beliefs and lifestyles Private in the Workplace and Classroom. Employers are not to be compelled to hire someone intent on making a display of their personal sexual beliefs and practices. LGBT-Nazi Indoctrination should be Outlawed in the Workplace and Education. Resulting In: Freedom and Removing Chains of Darkness.

Law 2. Everyone has the right to publicly approve or disapprove of what others believe regarding sexual lifestyles and practices. That’s Freedom!

Law 3. No one will be required to take “Diversity Training” LGBT Indoctrination training or “Sexual Harassment Training” as a condition of employment or Education. That’s Freedom!

Law 4. All are to be Considered the Same Race in Court. Race is never to be used to: Reward or Condemn in court by juries or judges. That’s Equal Rights. Black Rodney King - Resisted Arrest. In court, the White police were found innocent in the arrest. White police tried a Second Time; with “Civil Rights” charges. White police jailed – Black resisting arrest Rewarded Six Million Dollars. Since then more black criminals resist arrest; and The Mad Left Media, presents them as victims. Black leaders, the Mad Left Media and black criminals all: Target white people and Police. Repeal Special Hate Crimes Laws. They are used to condemn based on race; and in Defense of those who shout their sexual perversions from the house top.

Law 5. All charges of rape or sexual assault are to be dismissed if not reported immediately; otherwise no man is safe. God’s Word Declares: If a woman does not “scream for help” (report the rape immediately) she is Participating Sexually and must be punished, Deuteronomy 22:22-24. Women today, who claim to have been raped and did not “scream for help” and report the rape to authorities immediately after it happened are, Vindictive Liars.

Some woman love to play - emotional victim - as an excuse for Not reporting, immediately a consensual sexual encounter, as rape; and as a vindictive opportunity to attack the innocent, at will later. Women are not delicate kittens. True story: Three very young teenage girls stuffed in the front seat of a parked old pick-up-truck talking loudly. One girl pointed

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across the street and said: "That's James, he really likes you". One of the others shouted, "Just because I screwed him, he thinks we should get married; they all laughed loudly. That is the bitter fruit of Public-school education today. LGBT Indoctrinations and how to have sex without consequences is the sex education, objective.

Without these 5 Equal Rights Laws I suggested: Intellectual and Psychological Slavery and Madness Reigns. Purveyors of Folly, and Arrogant, Elitist Lawmakers and Judges will continue: The Madness of writing a variety of - the sexual sins of others - into Law. Creating lawbreakers of the innocent. The use of LGBT, Race or Gender to reward or condemn in court is tyranny. And a License to, Hate the innocent, created by the State.

Religious Leaders, Christians and Jews Repent. You have, Totally Failed, in your duty to God. God requires you to call on Lawmakers and Judges to Repent and Stop Praising the Wicked and honoring what God proclaimed as Evil, Leviticus 20:13.

The day of your Death is: Judgment Day for you; you will not remember being dead. Unless you repent: You will awaken facing Judgment and the Lake of Fire. Banish the Darkness, embrace the true Light of Mankind, Jesus Christ. Our Heavenly Father: Paid our debt of sin by the sacrifice of, His Wonderful Son, Messiah Jesus.

Daniel 12:2 and John 5:28 "A time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out – those who have done good will rise to Live; and those who have done evil will rise to be Condemned."

See Richard Frate's other articles at:
[Frates, Richard – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

God's Divine Judgment
(Copyright 2024) by Dwight Fleming (Oroville, California)

This latest video put out by Jonathan Cahn will show the power of God's Divine Judgment. It involves a man in the Parliament of Turkey pronouncing a curse on Israel. But it backfires. Then the Pope's move to approve of same-sex marriages results in an unusual display of God's anger and power that definitely condemns the Pope's apostasy.

As Israel continues to defeat Hamas, Biden is not happy with Israel's war efforts. A Two-State Solution is being pushed down Israel's throat. Will America bring a curse upon itself for not supporting Israel's efforts to protect itself from any and all enemies? Jonathan forewarns what will happen if America turns away from Israel.

The second video from Janie DuVall covers Mark Biltz's new book, "America At War 2024-2026." Mark sees that the upcoming solar eclipse on April 8th signals a period of war, particularly with Iran. Mark explains how the spirit of Amalek has brought forth enemies against Israel ever since the Exodus.

Be sure to watch these two videos to be prepared for whatever may be ahead for Israel and America which will affect the entire world. In these last days, remember these words from I Thessalonians 5:19-21:

"Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies but examine all things; hold fast to that which is good."

Here are the links:

Jonathan Cahn reveals God's answer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1iCW5Lsd80>

Janie DuVall interviews Mark Biltz: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mf0zgZUDq80>

See Dwight Fleming’s other articles at:
[Fleming, Dwight – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

Gentle Raindrops Upon the Window (Copyright 2006) by Richard Markland (London, Ohio)

Gentle raindrops move slowly down the window pane.
The words contained within each one, carries a message from God.

He understands the pain deep within my heart.
He feels the moments of my loneliness.

He sees my teardrops when I feel I cannot go on.
He holds each one and gently places them in Life’s Ocean of Tears.

I know I will some day see the one I love.
I live for the day when we can walk hand in hand.

The journey I now walk is not easy.
But with each step I take, God’s hand guides the way.

In Memory of Linda: 1950-2005 and for those who have lost a loved one.

See Richard Markland’s other articles at:
[Markland, Richard – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

Iron Sharpening Iron
New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)
As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

In regard to: Is Yayshua God?
Article by James & Patt Steinle
Comments by James Steinle (Swanville, Minnesota)

Avram Yehoshua wrote a fairly long rebuttal to my article on “Is Yayshua God?”. Laura then wrote a rebuttal to Avram’s belief of the Holy Spirit being a third person or Being in the Heavenly family (Trinity). I would just like to refer Avram to another article I wrote titled “The Holy Ghost”. In it I show there were a number of perfect opportunities for the apostles when writing their letters, to show in their greetings how many Beings there were. They only show greetings from the Father and the Son. Since they did not include the Holy or set-apart Spirit I believe I am justified in saying there is no third being, but that it is the power of the Father; similar to electricity. If Avram would like more info, I have an over 10 printed page analysis of a book “The Forgotten Trinity” by James White I could send.

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I also relate that Matthew 28:19 has most likely been messed with as there is no example of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit names or titles being used in any of 5-6 times a baptism is recorded by the apostles; only Yayshua's name.

I did come across another couple of places that relate to the Son and help explain his role, that being Micah 5:1-2, “Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. 2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting (the days of eternity).” (See Revelation 3:14 next paragraph down) (KJV) This prophecy of the Savior in Micah is also found explained in Matthew 2:1-6.

Revelation 3:14 “And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, [see also Rev.1:5 and 22:20] the beginning [S746 ar-khay' or arche – the One who began] of the creation of God;”

Also in Philippians 2:6 “[Christ Jesus] Who, being in the form [S3444 shape, outward appearance] of God [Elohim or Mighty One], thought it not robbery to be equal [S2470 similar, appearance] with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore [the] God [Yehovah] also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus [Yayshua – “He is Salvation”] every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, [S2962 Lord, Master, Owner] to the glory of God [Elohim] the Father.”

Laura and Darwin, thank you for making a place like this available so difficult subjects can be discussed!

In regard to: The Church of God from Judea to Chile

Article by Craig M. White
Comments by Craig M. White (Australia)

I gave the wrong link which is at <https://church-of-god-bismarck.org/article-authors/the-church-of-god-from-judea-to-chile/>

It should be:

[https://www.friendsofsabbath.org/iframe/ABC/Church%20of%20God%20History%20\(WCG\)/Foreign%20Works/History_of_Foreign_Works.html](https://www.friendsofsabbath.org/iframe/ABC/Church%20of%20God%20History%20(WCG)/Foreign%20Works/History_of_Foreign_Works.html)

In regard to: Be My Valentine?

Article by Mike Ford
Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

In the fourth paragraph of this article Mike says the following:

Rather than working on a relationship, growing, and overcoming with one's wife or husband, humans have always sought immediate pleasure for themselves with no thought of others. David saw Bathsheba, as she possibly had planned, and he wanted her (II Samuel 11:1-4). With no thought of the pain it would cause, they both sought their own pleasure. Satan has succeeded in seducing not only individuals like David and Bathsheba ... End Quote

I don't think Bathsheba had anything to say in regard to having sex with David. David was the King, and it wasn't like he asked Bathsheba out on a date knowing full well she was married and giving her a choice whether she would come or

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not.

Notice verse 11:4 where it says, “David sent messengers and took her.” So, it wasn’t consensual and as soon as David let her go, she went back home. If you continue reading Chapter 11, you will see that once Bathsheba told him she was pregnant he went on to cover up his original sin.

2Sa 11:1 And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth *to battle*, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem. 2Sa 11:2 And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. 2Sa 11:3 And David sent and enquired after the woman. And *one* said, *Is* not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? 2Sa 11:4 And **David sent messengers, and took her**; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.

Prayer Requests

Prayer Request from James Steinle (February 26, 2024)

My wife suffered a stroke on February 17th. She is in a hospital but is recovering VERY well. Potential release date is March 12th, and it could happen sooner. Obviously, prayers from many are effective.

Love to all.
James Steinle

Announcements

Announcement from William P. Goff (February 25, 2024)

Greetings Brethren,

February 24, 2024, Kenya Update is now posted at:

<http://www.khofh.org>

Thank You
Bill Goff

Holy Days 2024

Passover – April 23, 2024 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)

Passover/Unleavened Bread – April 23-29, 2024

Pentecost – June 12, 2024

Trumpets - October 3, 2024

Atonement – October 12, 2024

Tabernacles –October 17, 2024, to October 23, 2024

Last Great Day – October 24, 2024

Notes