

“BEHOLD, I HAVE TOLD YOU IN ADVANCE.”

By
Zerubbabel ben Emunah

www.onetorahforall.org

The title of this book comes from the words of Yeshua as recorded in Matthew 24:25, as He warned His disciples of the things to come.

All Scripture quotations are modified from the King James Version, unless otherwise noted. Yeshua is re-inserted in place of “Jesus,” as it is the actual name of Messiah. And YHWH is re-inserted in place of “LORD,” as it is the actual name of the Creator. And the word “God” is not used in reference to our Creator and Redeemer; rather I have used the Hebrew transliterated word “Elohim” or, in some cases, “El.”

Copyright 1994, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2005, 2007, 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

=====

	page
PREFACE	3
I. How to Study the Scripture	5
Chapter 1	
Scripture Never Contradicts Itself	6
Chapter 2	
Scripture Must Be Taken as a Whole	7
Chapter 3	
The Holy Spirit is The Teacher of Truth	8
Chapter 4	
Scripture is Not for Private Interpretation	10
Chapter 5	
You Must Be Obedient to Scripture	12
Chapter 6	
Beware of False Teachers	14
II. How to Live Now	16
Chapter 7	
What Yeshua Did!	17
Chapter 8	
Where do I Fit?	25
Chapter 9	
Empowered For Service	32
III. What is the Blessed Hope?	40
Chapter 10	
The Person	41
Chapter 11	
The Lesson of the First Advent	43
Chapter 12	
The Imminence of the Second Advent	45
Chapter 13	
The Rapture	50
Chapter 14	
The Second Coming	57
IV. What Can I Do to Get Ready?	63
Chapter 15	
Mental Preparedness	64
Chapter 16	
Spiritual Preparedness	67
Chapter 17	
Social Preparedness	74
Chapter 18	
Physical Preparedness	75
Chapter 19	
What Should I Do Now?	78
Appendix A: Come Out of Babylon	83
Appendix B: Personal Testimony	86
Appendix C: Plan of Salvation	87
Appendix D: The Reapers	90
Bibliography	91

PREFACE

=====

It is where the unrighteous becomes the righteous; it is where weakness becomes strength; it is where the unholy becomes the holy; it is where the unclean becomes the clean; where the impure becomes the pure; where the tumultuous becomes the peaceful; the unworthy the worthy; the unsaved the saved; the unsanctified the sanctified; it is here where YHWH dwells: in the heart of man. It is at this very point of tension in one's life that YHWH places the burden of the soul. It is here where one must labor at the task YHWH has set before him, realizing that he is not worthy, nor capable, of accomplishing that which YHWH has set before him. And yet, "he must!" lest he perish. It is from this place that this book has come forth.

This is not the ordinary book on Scriptural prophecy. This writer has chosen not to delve into a lot of the specific items that are seen by some as fulfillments of their respective prophecies as recorded in the Scripture. Rather, we will look at how prophecy affects us in our everyday living. One aspect of the Second Advent that we are particularly interested in, is the "rapture" and what the implications are for us today. In particular, this book will go through the Scriptures and present a study to the reader in which it will be proven beyond a doubt, that all true disciples are going to go through the entirety of the tribulation (unless they become martyrs).

Furthermore, it is hoped that this will begin an earnest discussion of what to do to get ready for the rise of the Anti-Messiah. For, if this is ignored, then that "man of sin" will catch the elect sleeping and many will pay for it with their lives. This is not necessary, nor is it the best that YHWH has for His people. His desire is for His people to be ready. After all, He has warned us in advance. Let us each choose to heed that warning.

To the writer of this book, it seems that many of the current books on prophecy miss some of the most important questions in dealing with this subject. This writer has chosen to deal with this subject in a manner that will, hopefully, enhance the readers' understanding. It is the purpose of this book to bring into the discussion of the return of Messiah (understanding when He will return is crucial to living a life that is totally pleasing to YHWH) and the events of the last days, the issue of being prepared to face the Anti-Messiah and the tribulation. For it seems that the Church is guilty of not only not teaching this material, but also of not preparing its people to be ready to face, and teaching them how to face, the Anti-Messiah. And regardless of in what order these events occur, the person reading and studying the Scriptures referred to in this book will be equipped to "endure to the end," and to gain eternal life as his final state of being.

Just what has YHWH warned His children about? Has He not warned about the coming Anti-Messiah?¹ Has He not warned about the severe persecution (making war upon) of those who believe in Yeshua² by the Anti-Messiah? Has He not warned about the coming inability to buy or sell? Has He not warned that one needs to be ready to flee when the Anti-Messiah appears in the holy place? When one considers all these warnings YHWH has given to the body of Messiah, one would think that His disciples would be actively preparing for these warnings to come to fruition. Are these warnings being seriously heeded? One wonders! If one cannot depend upon the Church to get itself ready for what is to come, then what can one do to ready oneself in light of these warnings that YHWH has given?

To help the reader in his study of this subject, the first area to be examined, although briefly, will be "How to Study the Scripture." The purpose of this section is to help the reader in his own study of Scripture, and in particular, in his study of prophecy concerning the return of Messiah.

If one is to have any hope of understanding this subject, then he must have a good grasp of how the Scripture teaches one to live in this present life. This is one of the most overlooked keys in understanding the

¹In the context of this book, the word "Anti-Messiah" (with a capital "A") denotes the one world ruler who is controlled by Satan, and the word "anti-Messiah" (with a lower case "a") denotes anyone who is "anti-" (against) the Kingdom of Heaven. "For there are many anti-Messiahs..."

²This name "Yeshua" is used, as it was the actual written and spoken name of Messiah. "Jesus" is not used, because in large part, it does not recognize, nor celebrate, the Jewishness of our Savior. In addition to this, there are many cults today which follow a different "Jesus," which has nothing to do with the Biblical Person. And so the name "Yeshua" is preferred to make a marked distinction between the true and the false. When quoting Scripture, if the name "Jesus" appears, then the Name "Yeshua" will be re-established in the verse.

prophecies of the second coming. Once a person begins to understand these things he will be ready to dig into the prophecies of Messiah's second coming.

What is the "Blessed Hope"? The Scripture has much to say about this Person! An honest look at these Scriptures will be needed in order to see that the Blessed Hope is a **Person**, not an event. Coming to grips with this essential truth of the true faith will enable one to "endure" anything that life brings his way.

The book will then take a practical look at some things the reader can do to get ready for the coming of the end of the age. This is a concern of many, yet one not easily discussed.

It is the utmost desire of this author that the reader not see only the words of these pages, but rather, that he would be propelled into the depths of the Holy Scripture. It is from YHWH's word that one will find what it is that one so desperately needs. As the reader no doubt will be challenged by the Scriptures presented in this work, he must depend upon YHWH to reveal and open the hidden treasures that they contain. Let Him move freely, to touch anything necessary in your life; then you will become free yourself to answer the call of YHWH in your life. Many will hear, but few will answer the call. Pick up your duty as a watchman. Cry out the warning! It is from here that these pages have come forth. It is here where one senses the urgency of the Spirit to call out the warning before the night has fallen when no man shall work.

Section 1

=====

How to Study the Scripture

The importance of this section probably cannot be overstated, as it is imperative that one use proper and acceptable means in investigating what the Scripture says for today. It is always best to allow the Scripture to interpret itself. The chapters of this section will look at the basic guidelines in studying Scripture. The purpose of these chapters, while brief, will be to help the reader follow the writer in the later chapters. It will be these chapters that deal specifically with the second coming of Messiah. The principles contained within these first chapters, if followed by the student of Scripture, will help not only to safeguard him, but also to prepare him for the coming of Yeshua.

One of the concerns of the writer in placing this section first, was that it would be skipped over for the seemingly more pertinent parts by the reader. It is hoped that the brevity of this section will preclude that from happening. For in this post-Christian era there are few who actually study their Scriptures regularly. And if this is done, so often it is done in the search for a “proof-text.” This section will help the student of the Scripture to see the importance of allowing the Scripture to speak for itself.

Chapter 1

=====

Scripture Never Contradicts Itself

While this principle may be on the elementary side, it is of the utmost importance that one come to the realization that the Scripture is the written word of YHWH, and, as such, cannot contradict itself.

Without much thought, anyone probably could think of verses that seem to say opposing truths. However, one must come to the conclusion that they do not present opposing truths, but rather it is one's lack of total understanding that does not enable one to harmonize the verses in question. Also understand, that each of these alleged difficulties and discrepancies are capable of a fair and reasonable solution.³ So, if it were possible to increase one's understanding of these verses, then one would come to know that the verses were teaching complimentary truths, rather than opposing truths.

One verse that teaches this wonderful truth can be found in Psalm 119.

Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endures for ever.

Psalm 119:160

It would be a spiritual impossibility for every one of the ordinances of YHWH to be everlasting if any one of them contradicted another one. Since they are all everlasting as YHWH Himself is, then one can know that they are all complementary of one another.

Within this next verse, it can be shown that the word which YHWH spoke or delivered through angels, has proven to be steadfast or unalterable.

For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast,

Hebrews 2:2a

If the Scripture is to be accepted as the word of YHWH, then one cannot pick and choose which part to believe and which part to discard. Since YHWH is the one who inspired it to be written, and if it is unalterable from His perspective, then it is the duty of the student of Scripture to work diligently at discovering the unifying truth.

Finally, one must come to the conclusion that the Word of YHWH is a direct reflection of who He is; and therefore, one can discover truths about the Scripture by also knowing who YHWH is.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

James 1:17

It can be shown in this verse that there is no variation in YHWH. This is a very comforting truth that also can be applied to the Holy Scriptures. This is not to say that the Scripture is divine or to be worshipped, but rather that the Scripture is inspired by YHWH, and as such, is a reflection of His divine nature.

Therefore, if one seeks hard enough and long enough, the truth of the Scripture can be discovered. What it then comes to, is one's own willingness to be honest with oneself, the Scripture, and what it says, and how much effort one wants to put forth to discover the truths contained therein.

³John W. Haley, *Alleged Discrepancies*, Pub. by Whitaker House, pg. 1.

Chapter 2

=====

Scripture Must Be Taken As a Whole

This chapter is closely related to the previous chapter.

Upon further examination of “How to Study the Scripture,” it is imperative that one keeps the unity of the Scriptures intact. To go into the Scriptures and pull out proof-texts is a sure way to get oneself into theological trouble. To prevent this calamity from occurring, one must make a concerted effort to keep the Scriptures whole. In so doing, there is a built-in safeguard that will allow one to understand the Scriptures more fully, as well as helping to keep one in a right relationship with YHWH; besides it being a commandment of YHWH, as well:

Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of YHWH your Elohim which I command you.

Deuteronomy 4:2

This verse teaches that it would be difficult for one to keep the commandments of YHWH if one adds to or takes away from them.

A similar admonition is found in the Book of Revelation:

For I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, YHWH shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, YHWH shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Revelation 22:18,19

While these verses in Revelation are speaking specifically about the book in which they are written, there is a basic Biblical principle that can and must be gleaned from this passage, namely: the need of keeping the Scripture whole and intact. If, in fact, these are the “last days,” then this passage speaks directly to us today.

One other Scripture passage needs to be addressed in this chapter. This is a parenthetical thought that Yeshua inserts as He is teaching the religious leaders of that time.

“And the scripture cannot be broken.”

John 10:35b

Yeshua is teaching two truths in this short but clear thought. First, that if it is within the Written Word, then it will be fulfilled (come to pass). Second, all YHWH’s word is true and is to be believed. Thus, Yeshua gives a very strong admonition to keep the Scripture whole.

Chapter 3

=====

The Holy Spirit is The Teacher of Truth

The previous two chapters would be entirely meaningless if a person does not have the Holy Spirit to guide and teach him. The Scripture is a unique book in that it is a spiritual book, the Word of YHWH. Because it was not written by man in the normal sense, but inspired by YHWH, His help is needed to understand what is being read. One such passage that teaches this principle is:

But YHWH has revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of YHWH. For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of YHWH knows no man, but the Spirit of YHWH. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of YHWH; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of YHWH. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of YHWH: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

1 Corinthians 2:10-14

And again:

“And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows him: but you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you.” “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

John 14:16,17,26

If one wants to be able to understand what the Scripture says, then one needs to have the Holy Spirit. The Spirit comes into a person's life when that person gives his life to Messiah by repenting and asking for forgiveness of his sins. Then, as these verses teach, he will have the Helper to teach him. Since the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, He will teach true disciples what the Scripture is truly saying.

In order for this to be accomplished, a learner's heart is needed. Openness and honesty are virtues that are very essential to learning truth. This cannot be done partially or half-heartedly.

Blessed are they that keep His testimonies and that seek him with the whole heart.

Psalm 119:2

I entreated Your favor with my whole heart:

Psalm 119:58a

As seen in these verses, seeking the truth of YHWH should be done with all of one's heart. The implication is, that if it is tried with only a half-hearted attitude or an attitude that is not pure, then what will be gained is something less than the whole truth. While as finite imperfect humans in this life it is not possible to gain the entirety of truth, one can and must *seek* it with his whole being. How this works out in the life of the disciple, is that when a new truth is encountered, it is tried and tested; and once proven to be the truth, it is then accepted and incorporated into the life of the disciple. Thus, the new truth replaces the false doctrine that was once a part of the disciple and error is rejected, thus showing us that there is constant growth and change in one's spiritual understanding.

Purity of heart is another qualification in knowing and understanding Scripture. The implication of this can be clearly seen in the following verse.

Truly YHWH is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.

Psalm 73:1

Each person has preconceived ideas, assumptions, and prejudices⁴ that hinder one's search for understanding of the Scripture. These are impurities within one's heart which need to be dealt with. The Holy Spirit knows and is aware of these in a person's life. One just needs to ask that these be revealed. He will not only reveal them but also help one to overcome them.

For the word of YHWH is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

The Scripture is reasonable and logical as well. The Holy Spirit can show this to anyone who asks that this be revealed. Two of the verses that reveal this principle are:

Come now, and let us reason together, saith YHWH,

Isaiah 1:18a

And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures,

Acts 17:2

There are three things a person needs to ask for if Scripture is to be understood, as examined in this chapter. First, a learner's heart should be asked for. A person who has a learner's heart is a person who can objectively listen to another person's ideas without feeling threatened. He will also be able to judge the soundness of that idea using the Scripture as the rule of measure. Furthermore, he is willing to learn the lessons YHWH is trying to teach to him through his life's situations. Second, any misconceptions, preconceived ideas, assumptions, or prejudices that would hinder one's understanding the truth of Scripture, need to be revealed by the Holy Spirit. Then these need to be dealt with in such a manner as to enable one to see what Scripture is teaching. Third, Scripture is reasonable and logical, but this may not be seen unless one asks the Holy Spirit to reveal it. These three things are needed, along with the realization that it is the Holy Spirit who is the teacher of truth, not this author or any other person, or any particular denomination, or organization. Then one will be well on his way to being able to grasp the truth of the Scripture. And in this particular context, to be able to grasp and understand the prophecies concerning the return of Yeshua Messiah contained within the Holy Scripture.

⁴Some of these will take the form of denominational dogma in which the individual has been indoctrinated. This type of prejudice is especially difficult to overcome. So, Scripture student – beware!

Chapter 4

=====

Scripture is Not For Private Interpretation

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.
2 Peter 1:20

In this chapter, a Biblical principle will be presented that is a safeguard to keep oneself from becoming heretical in his beliefs. Two sides of this truth will be examined. This principle is succinctly stated in the verse just quoted above.

The duty of interpreting what Scripture says and what it means, belongs solely to the Assembly of Yisrael (Israel), which is filled with the Holy Spirit to accomplish this task, among other tasks. Yisrael is the body of Messiah⁵ on earth, as it is still involved directly in the daily spiritual battles of this present life. The responsibility of interpreting Scripture rests, and is built upon, the experience of Yisrael as a whole (this includes both Houses). This is a continual process that will not be completed until the return of Messiah. It is within the body of Messiah that this function is to take place. No one person is to be the sole interpreter or authority of YHWH's word.

This means that the person who hears the word of YHWH preached or taught is under obligation to investigate the Scripture regularly to see whether these things are so. This goes for reading various authors also, the present one included. If each person in the body of Messiah does this under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, then the body will stay true to her Master and Savior, Yeshua Messiah.

The more a person respects a particular preacher, pastor, or teacher, the more susceptible that person is to believing everything the teacher says. Each member of the body of Messiah must guard against placing too much emphasis upon the teachings of only one individual. By so doing, the body will safeguard itself from tragedies like Jonestown, Africa, in which most of the followers of Jim Jones lost their lives by following him in death by suicide. There are many lesser tragedies that go unnoticed; e.g., when a member of the body of Messiah suffers spiritual shipwreck because of his faith in a particular Scripture teacher who has drifted away from YHWH.⁶

The Scriptures were given to train and instruct each person who would follow YHWH. One so desiring to follow YHWH, must allow YHWH's Written Word to penetrate his life and continually change him.

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Romans 15:4

As was shown in the previous chapter, the Holy Spirit is the teacher. As such, He teaches what the truth of the Scriptures are, and then applies it to the disciple's life. It is not the disciple in Messiah that does the interpreting of His Holy Word. The tendency in today's world is to take one's own experience and use that as a rule and measure for interpreting YHWH's word. This will only lead a person into false doctrine. However, what must be done, is to allow YHWH's word to interpret one's own spiritual experiences. Thus, this ensures that the false is weeded out, and only the true and good is kept.

⁵The reader will do well to remember that the Scriptures teach that there is but one body. This includes all disciples, both Jew and Gentile; both those who lived before Yeshua's time, and those who lived after. Many splinter groups try to make more than one body, but this is contrary to YHWH's word. This is usually done in the attempt to make that particular group "spiritual Israel" (this is what Hitler did, thus justifying the murder of the Jewish people). This is quite dangerous, as Scripture also teaches that there is neither Jew nor Greek (Gentile) in the spiritual realm.

⁶ Many times what will happen, is that a spiritual leader or teacher will fall into sin temporarily and cause others to fall away. The leader may then repent of his sin, but what becomes of those who fell away before he repented?

All scripture is given by inspiration of YHWH, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of YHWH may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

While YHWH many times uses a person as His agent to deal with another person and to teach him, that person is still only an agent of YHWH. The One who is doing the actual dealing is, of course, the Holy Spirit, using His Written Word in the life of the disciple.

Each individual must continually strive to keep his eyes, even his life, focused upon and following Yeshua, not something or someone else. Doing so will help him to properly interpret and understand what the Scripture says.

Chapter 5

=====

YOU Must Be Obedient To Scripture

In examining the principles of Biblical interpretation, this one is the key to each of the others. It is also the most overlooked and underrated.

While it is true that a person could leave out one of the other principles and still make some progress (except probably the principle of having the Holy Spirit as his teacher), it is doubtful that it is true of this one: obedience. Since the Scripture is spiritual in nature, if one is without the willingness to be obedient to the truth discovered while reading and studying it, it is not possible to gain any real knowledge of the truth found in it without being obedient to the truth found therein.

This is the only real requirement of YHWH's kingdom. Grasping the importance of loving obedience to Messiah in a person's life is essential to understanding the Scripture, and what YHWH desires of His most precious creation: man. For if a man is to enter the Kingdom of YHWH, then he must be obedient. It is YHWH's will that each person be saved. It is YHWH's will that each person repent. It is YHWH's will that each person be sanctified. It is YHWH's will that each person have eternal life. (Each of these areas can and do apply to each reader.) If one is to have any of the things that are YHWH's will, then it stands that one must be obedient to Him. The obedience being referred to, is not to the legalistic keeping of the letter of the Law, for this is physically impossible for man to do; but rather, obedience to the Spirit of the Law -- the Spirit of Messiah who dwells in the disciple, or obedience to the Law of Grace. (There is actually no difference between the Law of Grace, and Torah. The Law of Grace is keeping Torah with, in, and by, the heart of a person.)

It should be recognized that the obedience itself does not save a person, nor give him eternal life. Look at an example of a man drowning. The drowning man is calling out for help. He knows there is a lifeguard. He wants the lifeguard to help him. Is there anything that the drowning man can do or "will" to make the lifeguard save him? No! As much as the drowning man wants to be saved, as much as he repents, as much as he obeys, there is nothing that he does or wills that will save him. It is solely the will and actions of the lifeguard. It is the will of the lifeguard which propels the lifeguard into life-saving action towards the drowning man. So it is with YHWH. It is His will and His actions which save the individual and give eternal life. One only needs to have the desire to be saved. He must call out for help. This is essentially what repentance is: a calling out for help.

If it is the desire of one's heart to be obedient (and YHWH knows whether it is or not), then he will know whether the teaching he is hearing is from YHWH or elsewhere.

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of YHWH, or whether I speak of myself.

John 7:17

The implication in this Scripture, is that if one is not trying to be obedient to YHWH and His word, then he will not be able to discern the truth from untruth.⁷ This can have serious effects in the life of the disciple, if he is unwilling to follow YHWH in full obedience.

This is especially true when it deals with the area of Biblical prophecy. One can read all kinds of books upon the subject and gain only a surface knowledge of the return of Yeshua, but in reality it will only be by rote. Furthermore, a person will not know whether or not it is in harmony with the Scripture. Thus, he would be led astray because he was not willing to walk in obedience to the Holy Spirit.

Even Yeshua, being YHWH, humbled himself in obedience, even obedience to death on a cross (Philippians 2:5-8). This attitude of obedience, which Yeshua had and exhibited, is the same attitude of obedience

⁷Please note Matthew 5:19, in which Yeshua teaches the importance of keeping and observing the commandments found in the Law and the Prophets (YHWH's word).

the disciple in Messiah must display. If one is not willing to be obedient in all things, the small as well as the great, then one will find great difficulty in understanding what is read and heard from the Scripture. This includes those passages dealing with His return.

The adversary, the Devil, will come and snatch away any truth if a person does not act upon what the Holy Spirit is teaching him.

When any one hears the word of the kingdom, and understands it not, then comes the wicked one, and catches away that which was sown in his heart.

Matthew 13:19a

The Greek word which is translated as “understand,” has within it the thought of action or acting upon that which is known. Here is the element of obedience which is present here in this passage.

In order for the disciple to keep from being deluded by himself and others, he must prove himself to be a “doer of the word” (James 1:22, 25). It is the doer of the word of YHWH who will have the blessing of YHWH upon His life, and who will be able to understand His word to the fullest possible extent.

Chapter 6

Beware of False Teachers

And Yeshua answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Messiah; and shall deceive many.

Matthew 24:4, 5

Yeshua not only warned His disciples that they would have to beware of false teachers and false messiahs, but He was also warning them (and all of us today) not to be a false teacher. Verse four can also be translated as saying, “See to it that you mislead no one,” and thus become a false teacher (prophet). Is it any wonder that Scripture teaches that those who teach will have more accountability before Him?

His concern for His followers being led astray can be seen in Matthew 24, as He warns His disciples (then and now) three times in a short period of time (in this one short discourse on His return); in the time it takes to speak 18 sentences.

And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

Matthew 24:11

For there shall arise false messiahs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you in advance.⁸

Matthew 24:24, 25

The previous chapter examined the importance of obedience in the life of the disciple. That truth is closely related to the subject of this chapter. Obedience to YHWH will enable the disciple to determine a false teacher from a teacher of YHWH’s truth.

One characteristic of a false teacher, is a lack of obedience to Holy Scripture. If a person is willing to be honest, there will be enough evidence to show anyone who is willing to see, that this is a false teacher.

Another characteristic of a false teacher is the fruit that he bears. Yeshua teaches this to His disciples in the Sermon on the Mount.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. You shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them.

Matthew 7:15-20

While it takes time for a tree to produce its fruit, it will produce fruit. If the disciple will be patient, then, in time, the false prophet will reveal himself by the fruit that he bears. According to the above passage, one of those fruits, is that the false teacher is like a ravening wolf. This simply means that he consumes those around him and spends his resources upon himself. The Holy Spirit teaches and reveals to each member of the body of Messiah who these false teachers are, if the disciple will only listen to the Spirit of truth.

In this review, the basics of how to study the Scripture were looked into briefly. These included the

⁸The title of this book was taken from this verse, from the New American Standard translation of YHWH’s Holy Word: “Behold, I have told you in advance.” Matthew 24:25

following principles:

- ✓ Scripture never contradicts itself,
- ✓ Scripture must be taken as a whole,
- ✓ the Holy Spirit is the Teacher of truth,
- ✓ Scripture is not for private interpretation,
- ✓ you must be obedient to Scripture, and
- ✓ you should beware of false teachers.

Equipped with these tools, a person can grasp the truth found within the pages of the Scripture, without straying into dangerous territory. Having laid a common foundation for mutual understanding to take place, let us now proceed on into the prophecies of the return of Messiah.

Section II

=====

How to Live Now

The relationship of Yeshua to the Old Covenant and the New Covenant has a direct bearing on the life of the disciple in this present life. Where does the individual fit into the scheme of things, and what should he be doing? How should a person be living his life in Messiah? These are the questions that will be addressed in this section of this study of the return of Messiah.

Again, let it be stated, that this is a most critical area in understanding, and that it needs to be practiced on a daily basis in order to have a true understanding of what the Scriptures are teaching about the return of Yeshua.

Chapter 7

=====

What Yeshua Did!

Yeshua accomplished many things in the short time of His earthly ministry. Not the least of these was the salvation of mankind which He purchased with His own Blood. The importance of that accomplished task as it fills up the Old Covenant, and is supplemented with the New Covenant, will be examined. Also, we will answer the question: “Is there any real difference between the old and new covenants?”

Old Covenant

The Law (Torah) establishing the Old Covenant was given to the children of Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai after YHWH led them to freedom from the slavery of Egypt. The Torah was very explicit in its duties, responsibilities, and requirements made upon the Hebrew people. This Law brought about their death, as it revealed to them their own sinfulness. Even though the Law provided sacrifices for sins which had been committed, these sacrifices could not take away their sins.

For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.
Hebrews 10:4

Will YHWH be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has showed you, man, what is good; and what does YHWH require of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your Elohim?

Micah 6:7-8

Furthermore, YHWH did not even desire these sacrifices and offerings.

Wherefore when He comes into the world, he says, “Sacrifice and offering thou would not, but a body hast thou prepared me”

Hebrews 10:5

And Samuel said, “Has YHWH as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the Voice of YHWH? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”

1 Samuel 15:22

What YHWH wanted from His people, was for them to express their love for Him in obedience to the Law (Torah) given on Mount Sinai (see Exodus 15:26). Instead, they only attempted to obey His Law outwardly. In their hearts they went astray. In addition to this, He was getting His people ready for the coming of Messiah.

This brings to light the weakness of this Covenant and the need for a second. For since a second covenant has been established, the ineffectiveness of the first has come to be known. The student of Scripture will do well to take note which came first, the Old Covenant or the New Covenant. This will be discussed more, shortly.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, YHWH sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

Romans 8:3

And again:

Then said he, Behold, I come to do thy will, YHWH. He takes away the first, that he may establish the second.

Hebrews 10:9

Yeshua said that He came not to do away with the Law (Torah), but to carry out the will of the Father, which has been expressed in the Torah and the Prophets.

“Don’t think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete.”

Matthew 5:17 (Jewish New Testament)

Luke records the occurrence of Zacharias being filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesying, saying,

“Blessed be YHWH Elohim of Israel, for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people.”

Luke 1:68 (New American Standard)

The redemption that had been promised since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden is now a reality. This “New” Covenant is based upon promises which were made *before* the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai.

New Covenant

The New Covenant was established at the shedding of Yeshua’s Blood upon the cross of Calvary. Even though this is when it was established, it was promised long before this event. It is because of His shed Blood, that anyone who believes can have forgiveness of his sins.

And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

Hebrews 10:17, 18

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but **by his own Blood** he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Hebrews 9:12

Under the Old Covenant, there were priests who were priests under that Law. This priesthood was perpetuated by virtue of birth. One had to be born a Levite in order to be a priest. However, Yeshua was not a Levite.⁹ He was of the tribe of Judah. The book of Hebrews addresses this issue precisely when it says;

For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

Hebrews 7:12

Yeshua is a priest, not after the Levitical order, but a priest after the order of Melchizedek. Melchizedek was a kingly priest who had no beginning, nor end of days. Yeshua is a kingly priest after this same order, one without beginning or end. This came about in order that the New Covenant might be established. A new and better covenant has now been brought into being.

By so much was Yeshua made a surety of a better testament.

Hebrews 7:22

⁹It should be noted that John the Baptist was a Levite; his father Zacharias was in the Holy of Holies (temple) when he was told of John’s coming birth. And it can be known from Scripture that John and Yeshua were cousins. So Yeshua actually was of the Levitical tribe (apparently through His mother’s side), but not enough for Him to be a priest; although John could have been, as he could have followed in his father’s footsteps.

But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

Hebrews 8:6

And again;

And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Hebrews 9:15

This new covenant that has been established by the Blood of Yeshua, is based upon the promise that YHWH gave to Abraham. This was over 400 years *before* the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai (Galatians 3:17).

And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My Voice.

Genesis 22:18

YHWH here is speaking to Abraham after he had just finished offering up his son¹⁰ Isaac to YHWH on the altar of burnt offering. He did this by grace through faith¹¹. And this was what the new covenant is based upon, faith in Yeshua. Abraham had this faith as well as did all the saints of the Old Testament as recorded in Hebrews, chapter 11.

By faith Abraham, when he was tested offered up Isaac.

Hebrews 11:17 (NAS)

For not only did YHWH give Abraham this promise, He also backed it up with an oath.

Wherein YHWH, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath

Hebrews 6:17

Those who enter into the new covenant, do so through faith. This makes them an heir to the promise which was given to Abraham, and this through Isaac. For all true disciples are children of the free woman, not of the bondwoman.

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

Galatians 4:28, 31

This new covenant that has now been established in the Blood of Yeshua is done so on the promise given to Abraham, for Yeshua is the Seed that YHWH was speaking of to Abraham.

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He says not, "and to seeds," as of many; but as of one, "and to thy seed, which is Messiah."

Galatians 3:16

For the inheritance of the disciple is based upon the promise, not upon the law. If it were based upon the

¹⁰It should be noted that Abraham had another son (who was actually older) at this time, who was a son of his flesh. But YHWH asked for his only son, the son of the promise, the son of both Abraham and Sarah.

¹¹If the reader will, please note that in the context of this book, when faith is spoken of, it is done so in the manner which is "by grace through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of YHWH" (Ephesians 2:8). A person cannot create his own faith anymore than he can create his own salvation. So when faith is spoken of, it is done so with the understanding that it is a gift from YHWH, and this by grace, as Yeshua is the Author and Perfecter of our faith (See Hebrews 12:2).

law, it would not be by faith. But rather, it is by faith, for it is based upon the promise, namely the promise given to Abraham. So it can be seen, that in reality, the promise of the new covenant was actually before the old covenant. Well then, why was the law given at Mount Sinai, one may ask?

Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

Galatians 3:19

This new covenant is based upon the promise given to Abraham and is based solely on faith. It is only those persons who choose to believe through faith who are the children of the promise and who have eternal life. This aspect of the new covenant cannot be overstated. It is an eternal covenant and can never be set aside.

Now the Elohim of peace, that brought again from the dead our Master Yeshua, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting covenant,

Hebrews 13:20; see also Heb. 9:12

Because the new covenant which has now been established is an eternal covenant, it is the last and only hope for the redemption of mankind. When this truth is understood, one can begin to grasp the magnitude of what the writer to the Hebrews says under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins,

Hebrews 10:26

And the writer continues;

Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of YHWH, and hath counted the Blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Hebrews 10:29

When one follows the giving of each new covenant throughout Scripture, each subsequent covenant is added onto and upon the previous covenant. Thus, the “Old Covenant” (Torah) was given after the “New Covenant” (salvation by faith), showing that one is saved first, and then one comes to obedience, or the keeping of Torah.

Because the covenant that is now in effect is an eternal covenant, the disciple in Messiah can be sure of his eternal life, since the covenant that has verified this will never be put aside. Thus, the disciple’s hope has been made more sure.

31 Behold, the days come, says YHWH, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, says YHWH.

33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says YHWH: I will put My law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their Elohim, and they shall be My people:

Jeremiah 31:31-33

This new covenant that YHWH is going to make, is actually a renewed covenant. What YHWH is going to do, according to this passage, is that He is going to take what we know and refer to as the Old Covenant and write it upon the hearts of His people (both Houses) so that we will be keeping His covenant (commandments) from the inside, from our heart. He begins to do this when He fills a person with His Spirit. It is the infilling, indwelling presence of His Spirit that writes His commandments upon our hearts.

Where is Yeshua now?

The Word of YHWH speaks directly to the question of the present location of Yeshua, after He ascended into heaven, having been raised from the dead. One issue that is central to understanding where Yeshua is now, is that of His present office, and what He is doing in the interim before His return. It may not be possible to know everything that He is presently doing, nor is it really necessary to know at the present time. However, the Scripture tells enough that the disciple can be strengthened in his spiritual life.

The following references will show that Yeshua has now entered into the Holy Place of heaven, the very Dwelling Place of YHWH (if indeed He dwells in one place only?).

But Messiah being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own Blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Hebrews 9:11, 12

And again;

For Messiah is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of YHWH for us:

Hebrews 9:24

Note that Messiah has now entered the Holy Place in heaven. Here He will enter only one time, and this one time will be for all of mankind. Such is the perfection of His sacrifice.

In these next verses there is the picture of Messiah seated at the right hand of YHWH. His “being seated” is symbolic of His having finished His work of redeeming mankind.

When he had by himself purged our sins, **sat down** on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Hebrews 1:3b

And again;

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who **is set** on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

Hebrews 8:1

And again;

So then after YHWH had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and **sat** on the right hand of YHWH.

Mark 16:19

Yeshua now having entered into the Holy Place of heaven, and taken His place at the right hand of YHWH, will remain there until the consummation of the ages. This will be at His return. Note the when of this next passage in which YHWH is speaking to the Son.

But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

Hebrews 1:13

Is the Anti-Messiah not an enemy of Yeshua? Of a certainty he is; therefore, it must be inferred that Yeshua will remain seated until the time at which He returns to put an end to the Anti-Messiah, and sin, as well. This will be dealt with more fully in a later chapter.

Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, seeing there are those who offer the gifts according to the law;

If Yeshua was upon earth, He would not be a priest, for He is not of the tribe of Levi. The Levitical tribe was a foreshadowing of the priesthood of Messiah. The ministrations of Messiah are not upon earth, rather the ministrations of Messiah are in the heavenly sanctuary. Understanding this Scriptural truth is essential to understanding His current office as Priest.

What is the Law (Torah)?

One Torah shall be to him that is home born, and to the stranger that sojourns among you.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:49

One Torah for everyone? But isn't there one set of instructions for the Jewish people (the Old Testament or Covenant) and another set of instructions for the Christians (the New Testament or Covenant)?

Literally, "Torah" means "instruction" or "direction." The word "Torah" comes from a root word meaning "to throw, cast or shoot - to hit the mark." Are you hitting the mark? Do you even know where the mark is? Do you know what the mark is?

Most people will understand that the TaNaK (Old Testament) and the Brit HaChadashah (New Testament) are Scripture, or YHWH's instructions to His people. But are these the only instructions that He gives to His people?

What will be shown in the remainder of this chapter, is that the Written Scripture is not a complete understanding of what comprises Torah. And if a talmid (disciple) of Yeshua is to walk in complete obedience to YHWH, then that Talmid had better have a proper understanding of just exactly what Torah is.

Torah is Eternal!

Forever, YHWH, Your Word stands firm in Heaven.

Tehillim [Psalm] 119:89

That which makes up Torah, YHWH has firmly established in the heavenly abode of YHWH, forever. What this shows us is that Torah is Eternal.

And it came about, when Moshe finished writing the words of this Torah in a book until they were complete...

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 31:24

Note the close intimate link between the word (Hebrew - *davar*) and the Torah. They are actually inseparable.

Also, please note that this passage of Scripture teaches us that Moshe wrote down the entire Torah; i.e., the Torah Moshe is complete.

The sum of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.

Tehillim [Psalm] 119:160

Truth is everlasting. Truth never ceases to be. Every commandment and ordinance of YHWH, as a vital part of Torah, is eternal.

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our Elohim stands forever.

Yeshayah [Isaiah] 40:8

The things in the physical realm may wither and pass into oblivion, but YHWH's word, commandments, instructions, and ordinances will forever stand.

Basically, what we have shown in these verses, is that His Torah is eternal; i.e., His Torah is a part of who He is and what He is; and therefore, His Torah has always been and shall always be. It will not pass away!

In the temporal physical world in which we exist, where everything is passing away, having something Eternal to grasp onto can be comforting. But how do you really take hold of this Torah?

Torah is Set-apart!

So then, the Torah is set-apart, and the commandment is set-apart and righteous and good.

Romans 7:12

The Torah was and is, good and righteous. It is set-apart (holy) because He is set-apart.

When a person acts like the Torah (Law) has been done away with, that person is saying that Torah is not eternal, that it is not set-apart. That person, in essence, is calling Scripture wrong and a lie, thus calling YHWH a liar. What does your life say about His Torah?

Torah cannot pass away, because Torah is eternal. YHWH made the Torah flesh and He dwelt among us.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and Elohim was the Word.

Yochanan [John] 1:1

Here we see that the Word (the Davar of YHWH, which is synonymous for Torah) is actually just an extension of YHWH as Elohim.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Yochanan [John] 1:14

The difference between the Written Torah and Yeshua as the Torah made flesh, is more academic than actual. To claim that Torah (The Law) has been done away with, is not only foreign to Scripture, but it cannot stand up to reason. Since Yeshua is our only true Hope of Salvation, if He has been done away with (because He is Torah [in the flesh]), what hope would we have of any salvation?

However, we know from Scripture that He has not been done away with, for as we have already shown from Scripture, Torah is eternal. Therefore, our salvation is secure in Him, the Torah made flesh.

Torah is the Voice of YHWH

When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days, you will return to YHWH your Elohim and listen to His Voice.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 4:30

It would do the reader well to read the above passage several times. Did you? Perhaps you should commit this passage to memory, so that it truly sinks into the depths of your spirit.

If you read the context of this passage, you will find that Yisrael (Israel) will be taken into captivity due to not heeding (obeying) the Voice of YHWH. Furthermore, it will not be until the latter days (that's now), that we as a nation will truly heed and obey His Voice.

And if that is now, and it is, then how can we obey His Voice if we cannot hear His Voice? When was the last time you heard His Voice? Do you know what His Voice sounds like?

If we always surround ourselves with the noise of this present darkness (TV, radio, secular music, etc.), then how is it that we will be able to hear His Voice? Do you want to hear His Voice?

1 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber.

2 "But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep.

3 "To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out.

4 "When he puts forth all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

5 "And a stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."

Yochanan [John] 10:1-5

Whose voice do you hear? Whose voice do you obey? Are you following the voice of a stranger and a robber? Or can you hear the Voice of the Master and obey Him?

So, as we can see, the Law or Torah is valid today because Yeshua is the Torah made flesh, and we want our salvation and redemption to be valid. So, we need to be listening to His Voice which goes forth today, and obeying it!

Chapter 8

=====

Where Do I Fit?

Where does the disciple fit into the family of YHWH?

For the disciple in Messiah to keep his relationship with Yeshua vital, he needs to know where he fits into the family of YHWH. There are several ways that this can be done. The method used to find one's place is not nearly as important, as that it be done.¹²

The Body of Messiah

The word of YHWH has much to say on this subject. To give the reader a good grasp of this aspect of the righteous life, only a few verses will be looked at.

To become a part of the body of Messiah, the first requirement is that a person confess Yeshua as YHWH. This is done by repenting of the sins in his life. When a person does this, YHWH imparts forgiveness of sins and salvation to him (remember the illustration of the drowning man given earlier). Salvation bestows the ability to live a holy and righteous life in the here and now.

For whosoever shall call upon the name of YHWH shall be saved.

Romans 10:13

Salvation is by the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the disciple, who applies the Blood of Messiah, forgiving, justifying, regenerating, and adopting. This then enables the person receiving Yeshua to call Him "Master."

Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of YHWH calls Yeshua accursed: and that no man can say that Yeshua is YHWH, but by the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:3

It must be pointed out here, that it is only by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, that a person can say that Yeshua is YHWH. The truth becomes more pointed when dealing with the popular teaching mentioned earlier, that at some time in the future, the world will come under the Old Covenant again and people will be saved under that system. Since within that popular thought the Holy Spirit is removed from the earth at that time, no person would be able to be saved. Those teaching this position seem not to understand that even those living under the old covenant (before Messiah), were also saved by the grace of YHWH through faith.

That teaching discounts the reality of this verse. The truth of the matter is, that even under the old system of Law, the Holy Spirit was present and active in the lives of YHWH's people. Even under the Law, salvation was through faith, not by works. If the Holy Spirit would be removed from the earth and could not minister in a person's life, it would then become a spiritual and physical impossibility for a person to be saved.

After a person has received the gift of eternal life, he then becomes a part of YHWH's family. YHWH now has a special place for him, although this new life in Messiah does not guarantee that everything in his life will now be good and perfect.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which

¹²Most pastors and Bible teachers have access to a spiritual gifts test. These are also available at most Bible book stores. It would do the reader well to take one of these tests to discover what spiritual gifts YHWH has given to him for the edification of the Body of Messiah. This should be done in a prayerful manner, depending upon the Holy Spirit to lead, guide, and reveal what gifts you have, realizing that the test is only a tool to be used by the Holy Spirit. It is not the test which is doing the revealing.

shall be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18

However, YHWH has a place for those who endure¹³ to the end that will far surpass any hardship, suffering, or unpleasantness that he is called to endure in this life. Furthermore, that glory He has reserved for those who call upon the name of Yeshua unto salvation, far surpasses any glory, magnificence, or pleasure one can find and partake of in this life.

Presently, YHWH has a unique place for each and every person. He has designed His kingdom in such a way that each person has a special place YHWH made just for him or her.

But all these work that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.

1 Corinthians 12:11

But now has YHWH set the members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased Him.

1 Corinthians 12:18

The plan that YHWH has for each individual is very specific. It is also for His purpose, which is the building of the Kingdom of Heaven. While it may be true that the general ministry YHWH has for each person may be done by someone else if he fails to accomplish that which YHWH has called him to do, it is not true that someone else can reach and minister to each and every person that is in that person's circle of influence. However, YHWH is still sovereign and He will see to it that the message is brought by someone else. In fact, He will have to delegate to many other people, the ministry of the person who does not walk in the fullness of YHWH's will. This is pointed out, not to put one under bondage, but rather, to point out the importance of walking in the fullness of the Spirit.

Paul, speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, teaches about the need to stay close to YHWH by obeying Him. One's continual obedience to the Holy Spirit ensures his continued relationship with the family of YHWH.

Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: For if YHWH spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not you. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of YHWH: on them which fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness: otherwise you also shall be cut off.

Romans 11:20-22¹⁴

It is imperative that each disciple understand that, while there are choices, eternal choices which one makes every day, it is YHWH who reserves the right to determine the consequences of those eternal choices that each person makes.

As the Children of Israel discovered at Kadesh Barnea, as they came up to the Promised Land, it was because of their disobedience and unbelief, that YHWH would not allow them to enter His promised land. (See Hebrews 3:16-19; 4:6.) They were still His children, as He still led them in and through the wilderness. He led them by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. What they received was some very severe discipline from YHWH as a result of their disobedience. But they were still His people. What they failed to do, was to walk in His grace through faith. They tried to do it by sight. This resulted in unbelief and disobedience. To avoid this type of discipline, obedience to YHWH is required. This is not to say that a person earns, or can earn, his way into

¹³As the writer to the Hebrews puts it, "...what you have need of is endurance." (Hebrews 10:36). James (1:4), Paul (Romans 5:3), and Peter (2 Peter 1:6), all speak of the need for endurance (perseverance) and the importance it has in the life of the follower of Yeshua.

¹⁴The context of this passage is dealing with the tame olive branches (the house of Judah) and the wild olive branches (the house of Ephraim). He is writing to those descendants of the wild olive branch, because they were separated from the tree and were being grafted back in. Paul is warning his readers to stay true to Elohim, or else He will break them off again, just as their fathers before them were broken off. The implication of being "cut off," is that there will be severe pruning by YHWH, perhaps even unto death.

eternal life, but that YHWH will do whatever is necessary to ensure that those who belong to Him, will be in eternity with Him.¹⁵

This promise is further addressed in Romans 8.

Who shall separate us from the love of Messiah? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of YHWH, which is in Messiah Yeshua our YHWH.

Romans 8:35-39

In this passage, there are several things listed which deal with what or who might try to separate the follower of Yeshua from His love. The first question deals with “who.” The next question deals with circumstances. In all of these things, disciples don’t just conquer, but *overwhelmingly* conquer. That’s some good news! It is possible to live a victorious life in the here and now!

The list that follows in the above passage, deals with all the things with which His disciples deal, and which affect them daily. Beginning with the physical (“death, nor life”), the passage of Scripture continues with the spiritual (“angels, nor principalities”), then the time given to them (“things present, nor things to come”), then the authority they have or the authority over them (“powers”), then the spatial reality they live in (“height, nor depth”); and then he concludes with a very profound truth. “Any other creature” (created thing) implies at least two principles. The first, is that the previously mentioned items that cannot separate His followers from the love of Messiah are all created things. Upon examination of that list, it is found to be true. Secondly, anything absent from that list which is created, cannot separate a person from the love of Messiah.

Sin is what separated man from YHWH in the first place and brought about the necessity of a Savior. Sin is what separates men from YHWH now, and it is the only thing that can separate men from YHWH. Sin is not created, rather it is rebellion against YHWH; thus, its absence from the list in the above verse. Furthermore, left unconfessed and unrepented of, it will always separate man from YHWH. If a sinner is unrepentant, then separation, final and eternal, will occur. However, the sacrifice which Yeshua paid for the sins of mankind is more than sufficient to deliver each and every person from sin. Sin is no longer one’s master, rather Yeshua is now one’s Master. That is, with the understanding that, that person has repented of his or her sins, believed on Him, and is now keeping His commandments.

The Marriage of the Lamb

The misunderstandings surrounding the Biblical concept of the marriage of the Lamb are many. In this section the true meaning and doctrine of Scripture will be examined.

The first Scripture is found in all three synoptic Gospels.

For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.

Mark 12:25

Also Matthew 22:30; Luke 20:35

One of the plain truths of Scripture, is that Yeshua (Messiah) taught, that after a person is resurrected, they neither marry nor are they given in marriage. In that culture, at that time, it was the man who was married and the woman who was given in marriage. And how this applies to the marriage of the Lamb, is that once those who have repented of their sins are resurrected, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage. This must certainly include not only to each other, but also to the Lamb Himself (who was the one speaking at this moment).

¹⁵There seem to be those cases in which a person is a child of YHWH, but because of his disobedience, YHWH disciplines him; and in some cases, that discipline is even unto death. This may be the only way by which YHWH can preserve that individual’s eternal life. But this is, of course, not to suggest that every person will be saved, or that every person who dies is saved, or that a person that seems to die early dies because YHWH is disciplining him. This is only dealing with those who actually have repented of their sins and have been “sealed unto the day of redemption.”

Then in John 2 (verses 1,2,11) we find this recorded for our edification.

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Yeshua was there: And both Yeshua was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

John 2: 1, 2

This beginning of miracles did Yeshua in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

John 2:11

In verse 11, we find that this was the “beginning of miracles,” or literally, the “beginning of signs.” And what is a sign? Look at the “sign of Jonah” as an example of a sign. This was a historical fact that was used to teach a future truth. A sign is something that has happened in the physical world and will happen again in a spiritual context.

This is the “beginning” of those signs (John lists seven signs in his Gospel.). It was the third day on which this wedding took place. It was the third day¹⁶ on which Messiah arose from the grave. And who were “called” to the wedding? Verse two says that it was Yeshua (Messiah) and His disciples. So also, it was Yeshua and His disciples who were wed on the third day, the very moment at which He arose from the dead.

What is seen in these verses, is that the wedding had already taken place when Messiah arose, and all His disciples were called to the wedding.

Please note, that the actual celebration of this union does not happen until later, when all people will be gathered together, on the “third day,” (in the third millennium). Right now, we are at the very beginning of the third millennium.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

Revelation 19:7

One important note here, is the use of the word “wife” instead of the word “bride,” indicating that the Lamb and the “wife” are already wed at the time of the marriage supper of the Lamb.

To answer the question of why this must be, one only needs to look into the book of Ruth and learn the story of redemption. Ruth’s husband had died and Naomi, Ruth’s widowed mother-in-law, and Ruth went back to Israel. Naomi instructed Ruth to go and glean from a certain field which belonged to one of her nearest kinsman (of her late husband). She did so, and as a result, she met Boaz. He did not have the first right of redemption, but he secured it legally in the gate of the city. Boaz then redeemed Ruth. This meant that they were married. In this context, “to be married” and “to be redeemed” mean the same thing.

So also, it means the same thing in the context of a person repenting of his sins, and then believing and accepting Yeshua as his personal Savior. When Yeshua redeems a person, he is then wed to Him at that moment. Redemption and salvation, while not exactly the same thing in Scripture, are very close.

The Creator intended that the union of a man and a woman produce offspring in abundance. But this was to be done in the context and confines of the marriage relationship. Otherwise, any offspring would be illegitimate and ineligible to enter the assembly of the congregation (see Deut. 23:2).

And how does this affect “when” the wedding took place? If it has not already taken place, then the spiritual offspring of YHWH and the bride are illegitimate. But they are not! Please take note of the following verses.

My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Messiah be formed in you.

Galatians 4:19

Notice that Paul, a man, is in travail as a woman. This is so, because all of redeemed mankind is likened unto that of a woman (wife/bride of the Lamb) in the spiritual realm, because they are wed to the Lamb. (See also 2 Thess. 3:8.) This does not make all disciples women; it is only a comparison, teaching us a truth that seems to be seldom understood.

Furthermore, in Ephesians 5:31,32, we find that this union has taken place, and that Messiah and the body

¹⁶ It will be the third day on which Yeshua returns for His Bride (Wife).

have become “one flesh.”

Also, Messiah indicates in John 16:20-22, that this concept applies to all disciples, and that they are in travail, and will be so engaged until He returns, at which time they will be past the “childbearing” years.

One quick note: there is a difference between a wedding feast, which takes place at the time of the actual wedding ceremony, and a marriage supper, which can be at any time after the wedding. In fact, today in our society, we would call a marriage supper, an anniversary celebration. It is a time of commemorating a lifetime together and looking forward to more good years. So when we find in Scripture these words: And he saith unto me, “Write, ‘Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” And he saith unto me, “These are the true sayings of YHWH.” (Rev. 19:9 KJV), we know that it is referring to a celebration of something that already exists, namely, a relationship between Yeshua and His bride.

So the conclusion is this: The wedding has already taken place, but the marriage supper is still future tense.

The Bride of Messiah

The body (Yisrael) is the bride (wife) of Messiah. It will be at His return that Yisrael will be called forth to take her place at the side of Yeshua.

And at midnight there was a cry made, “Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.”

Matthew 25:6

Who: There are certain character traits which should be cultivated in this life. The first of these, which is mentioned in this passage, is that of being watchful.

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Matthew 25:13

Since it is not known what day Yeshua is to return, one needs to be ready always. It is important that one live his life in such a manner that it will always be edifying to others and glorifying to YHWH.

Yeshua admonishes His disciples earlier in this discourse, that it is the person who lives his life all the way to the end of the tribulation who shall be saved. This is the end of the age, at which time Messiah returns. However, since one does not know when this tribulation time will begin, it is important to have the attitude of enduring at all times.

But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Matthew 24:13

The endurance of the disciple during the tribulation hinges upon his ability to fix his eyes upon Yeshua, by faith; not allowing all the many distractions of this world to draw his attention away from the race, which is set before him.

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Yeshua the author and finisher of our faith;

Hebrews 12:1,2a

Closely tied to these characteristics, are the two about which Yeshua teaches in the parable of the talents. The two mentioned here seem to go together and complement one another.

His master said unto him, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy master.”

Matthew 25:21, (23)

While the prominent characteristic displayed by the slave is that of faithfulness, this would not be to the slave’s advantage unless he was a good slave. It is possible to be faithful in things that are not righteous. Therefore, the need to be good and faithful becomes evident.

Yeshua teaches His disciples, then and now, that it is the one who loves Him, who keeps His

commandments (keeps Torah) (John 14:15, 21). His disciples prove their love for YHWH by obeying Him. Without this obedience in their lives, there is nothing for them to show that they truly love YHWH.

The opposite of the obedience in the life of a disciple, is the disobedience in the life of the “non-disciple.” Disobedience has very serious implications. When Yeshua returns, one thing that He will do, is to pay to those who do not know YHWH, and to those who do not obey YHWH, their just rewards for the evils they have done.

In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not YHWH, and that obey not the gospel of our Master Yeshua Messiah: 2 Thessalonians 1:8

The consequence of disobedience manifests itself by disqualifying a person from participating in the marriage supper of the Lamb, since one who disobeys is punished and not rewarded.

A disciple who is watchful, patient (endures), keeps his eyes on Yeshua, is good, faithful, and obedient, will be able to live as an overcomer, and his love for Yeshua will remain the first love of his life. If the love for Yeshua does not keep its prominent position of being first, then he will be like the five foolish virgins (Matthew 25) who took no oil with them, thus they could not enter.

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Revelation 2:4, 5

Here is found the only remedy for sin. In order to be redeemed into that state of grace, that person must repent of his sins and call upon Yeshua.

Where: There are certain things that can be known about the bride (wife) of Messiah. One of these, is that after Messiah returns for those who belong to Him, they shall be where He is.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

John 14:3

One of the common assumptions made concerning this passage of Scripture, is that this will be in heaven. But Yeshua did not say that. If He would have meant that, having spoken of heaven on other occasions, He probably would have used the term “heaven.” Since Yeshua will be on earth¹⁷ when He returns, it may be more correct to say that His disciples will be there at His side. The significant aspect of what He is teaching His disciples here, is that wherever He is, that is where they shall be (i.e., on earth).

It is in this life that a person will accept or reject Yeshua as his personal Savior. If a person accepts Yeshua Messiah by repenting of his sins and asking His forgiveness, then He comes and makes His abode with him. He comes and resides in the heart of the penitent. Yeshua is with them. This will continue into the next life. It is in the heart of man, particularly a disciple, wherein is the eternal residence of an Almighty YHWH. Yes, there is a heaven, but when Yeshua returns to earth, He will not be in heaven. The important point here is not so much the exact location of the Bridegroom or the bride, but rather that they are together.

Yeshua answered and said unto him, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

John 14:23

Notice that this is spoken in the present tense. This is what will happen to a disciple when he repents and lives for Yeshua. Not at some vague future time, but right now, He will be with us.

When: The Bridegroom must come for His bride before the marriage supper can take place. It will be upon the return of Messiah that the bride is received unto the Bridegroom, and goes into the marriage supper.

¹⁷Read and study Acts 1:9-11 and Zechariah 14:4, both of which teach that His return will be to the Mount of Olives.

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

Matthew 25:10

Those who are ready to enter the marriage supper when Yeshua returns, will be able to receive the promise of eternal life. Those outside the marriage supper when the door is closed, will be forever lost.

Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, "Master, master, open to us." But he answered and said, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

Matthew 25:11, 12

It is important to note when discussing the "when" of Yeshua's return, the placement of this event in the book of Revelation. It is in chapter 19 when He returns and His wife (bride) is complete.

Chapter 9

=====

Empowered for Service

“What is the purpose of life?” This is probably the most universally asked question by mankind. Disciples pose the question thus, “What is YHWH’s will for me?” Within His word are some principles that apply to every person. This chapter will look at some of those principles.

The Great Commission

The Great Commission is found in all three synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) as well as the book of Acts (chapter 1). All three places in which this is recorded are basically the same, with only minor differences. This chapter will look at the one found in Matthew.

And Yeshua came and spoke unto them, saying, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, behold, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Matthew 28:18-20

Yeshua gave this commission to all believing disciples, His body. The body is commanded to teach everything that Messiah taught them. They are to teach all nations these truths so that they may become His disciples as well. This making of disciples is to continue to the “end of the age”¹⁸ by the body. Yeshua promised that He would be with the body all the way to the “end.” Yeshua made no allowance for the body to stop the disciple-making process before the “end of the age.” The “end of the age” is at the return of Messiah.¹⁹

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit in the life of the disciple is his guarantee of eternal life. Without this presence in the life of the disciple would be impossible to enter into eternal life. The Spirit is the one who enables the disciple to live according to the will of YHWH. Even though it is the Holy Spirit that gives gifts to be used to further the kingdom of YHWH, He is still the one who is ministering, not the disciple.

¹⁸ The end of the age is the end of the millennium. Compare Matthew 13 with Revelation 20. Yeshua taught that there was to be NO separation between the disciples and non-disciples until the end of the age. Revelation 20 gives us a description of this separation at the end of the millennium.

¹⁹ The end of the disciple-making process is not seven years before He returns. It is not three and one-half years before He returns. It is not one day before He returns at the end of the age. It is all the way to the end of the age. This is a clear indication that His disciples will be present all the way through the tribulation making disciples. No other group has been given this task. There are those who teach that this task has been given to the 144,000 Israelites who evangelize the world during the tribulation. But in those two places in the book of Revelation (7:1-8; 14:1-5) the only activity attributed to them by the Scripture is the act of worship, and that before the throne of YHWH. No place in Scripture does one find them evangelizing the world. In addition to this, the passage found in chapter seven, also includes people from every tribe in the world. The first word of verse 9 in the Greek, is a primary preposition denoting accompaniment. So what we see, is that there is a great multitude which no man could count, which includes the 144,000 Israelites. The number 144,000 is itself very symbolic, for it consists of: 12 x 12 x 1000. The number twelve is the number of eternal perfection (twelve tribes), and in this case it is squared (the New Jerusalem is “squared” and has twelve gates) giving the number greater significance. Also, it should be noted that the number 12 is the product of the numbers 3 x 4. The number 3 is the number of houses within the Nation of Yisrael (Y’hudah, Ephrayim, and Levi) and the number 4 is the number of the world (four seasons, four compass points, four elements). Then multiplied to that is the number 1000, which is the number for a millennium (or eternity itself). So, the symbolism of this number is saying that every person who can possibly get saved, will, in fact, get saved. None will be lost that could have been saved. That is the symbolic meaning of the number 144,000.

For it is YHWH which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.
Philippians 2:13

The Holy Spirit is ministering in the life of the disciple. It is the Spirit of truth that teaches those who have been adopted into the family of YHWH. The Spirit even teaches one what he ought to say.

For the Holy Spirit shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.
Luke 12:12

Not only is the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the disciple, but this ministry is also through the disciple. This ministry of the Holy Spirit through the life of the disciple is to other disciples and to those who have not yet accepted Messiah as their personal Savior.

Now YHWH of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope,
through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Messiah has accomplished **through me**, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed.

Romans 15:18 (NAS)

In another place, the Holy Spirit speaks through the apostle Paul about the body of Messiah (the disciples).

One Elohim and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.
Ephesians 4:6

Yeshua tells His disciples that He will send the Holy Spirit upon them; all they have to do is to wait for it before they do anything.

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

Luke 24:49

Once they have received the Holy Spirit, then the commission which Yeshua gave to them is to be carried out. They now have the power to do what Yeshua has sent them to do. Without the Holy Spirit it would be impossible to be an effective witness for Yeshua.

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 1:8

In order to grasp the full significance of the following section of this chapter, one must understand that it is YHWH, in the form of the Holy Spirit (or more correctly, the Spirit of the Holy One), who is now in control of the life of the disciple. This, of course, is completely voluntary on the part of the disciple, and the disciple can retake control of his own life at any time (why some do this is completely beyond my understanding). However, once this has been brought to light in one's heart and mind, then one can see the real possibility of being able to live a life as Yeshua lived.

Like Messiah

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is not only to empower for service (witnessing is included in this), but also to enable the disciple of Yeshua to live as He did, empowered for life and service. The holy life of Yeshua is duplicated in the life of each of His followers, as they walk the straight and narrow way.

Righteousness is the key to understanding the prophecies concerning His return. As will be shown, the

word of YHWH teaches those who believe on YHWH/Yeshua, to be like Him in word and deed. Yeshua stated that those who believed in Him would do the same works that He was doing, and not only these, but greater works as well (John 14:12). This means “greater” in quantity rather than quality, for there are many disciples, but only one Yeshua. This can only become a reality if a person is filled with the Spirit of Messiah (Holy Spirit). Once filled with the Holy Spirit, a person then begins a lifelong maturation process. Philippians 4:13 states, “I can do all things through Him [Messiah] who strengthens me.” This knowledge does not necessarily come to the new person in Messiah. More likely, it comes to him who has walked in obedient love to Yeshua and is continually making Him, YHWH, Master of his life. As a result, he will continually become more and more like Yeshua as the days of his life are lived for Him.

YHWH’s love: YHWH has given His disciples a Helper, the Holy Spirit. He gives His own Spirit because of His love and care for those who have received the forgiveness of sins that Yeshua provided, through His death and resurrection, for all men (not that all shall be saved, but that all have the possibility to be saved). This Helper, Yeshua has asked from the Father, on behalf of all disciples, that they might know those things that are freely given to them.

And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever;

John 14:16

Not only has He given His own Spirit, but He has given the Spirit to His disciples forever. So even into eternity, they will still have this Helper, the Holy Spirit.

YHWH cares for His children so much, that He even has the hairs on his head numbered.

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Matthew 10:30

This means, that not only does YHWH know how many hairs are upon your head, but also that He knows hair number 43 from hair number 578 (if one has that many hairs on his head). He knows one hair from another! If indeed, YHWH cares for those who are created in His own image, so much so that He has all the hairs numbered on his head, then certainly it must be realized that He loved and cared for the same, so as to die in their place.

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Messiah died for the unrighteous.

Romans 5:6

Since Adam’s race was not able to help itself, YHWH did what man could not: He paid the penalty for sin (death), and provided the means for life (eternal life). Mankind was helpless. Now, however, a member of Adam’s race who receives this new life which Messiah has purchased upon the cross, is no longer helpless, but rather, helped by the Helper.

One of the things that is of concern to Yeshua, is the deception foisted upon those who belong to Him, by those who are His enemies. So Yeshua told His disciples ahead of time, that there would be anti-Messiahs and the Anti-Messiah.

“For false messiahs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance.”

Matthew 24:24, 25 (NAS)

Not only did He tell His disciples in advance, but He also gave them the Holy Spirit, who will teach them who the Anti-Messiah is.

Little children, it is the last time: and as you have heard that anti-Messiahs shall come, even now are there many anti-Messiahs; whereby we know that it is the last time. But you have an unction from the Holy One, and you know all things. But the anointing which you have received of Him abides in you, and you need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teaches you of all things, and is

truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, you shall abide in Him.

1 John 2:18, 20, 27

The significance of this ministry of the Holy Spirit has been seen repeatedly in history as many anti-Messiahs have arisen and deceived many. However, the true body of Messiah has not been deceived. So it shall be in the last days just prior to the return of Yeshua; He shall teach His own who the Anti-Messiah is, so His followers might not be deceived.

To help His children in discerning who is from YHWH and who is of the enemy, they are directed to test the spirits.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of YHWH: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

1 John 4:1

To recognize the effectiveness of this principle, one must understand that this truth is from YHWH. He is the one who commanded His followers to do the testing. One cannot, and will not, offend YHWH or hurt His feelings if one tests a spirit and finds it to be from YHWH. But if one tests a spirit and finds it to be from the enemy, the Devil, then that one has been spared hurt and heartache in his own life because of his obedience to YHWH's word. But when one tests a spirit and that spirit is not from YHWH, the common reaction from that spirit will be one of indignation, sometimes even hostility, and occasionally, a verbal or physical attack. A verbal onslaught may take on the form of, "How dare you test the Spirit of YHWH!" But he is lying, for he is about to be found out, and is trying to manipulate the person into backing down from the test, in order that the deception may continue.

YHWH's love and concern is finally expressed by teaching that, when He does return, no one will need to tell another that He has come back. Each person will know it. Saved or unsaved! To those who are saved, He says,

Then if any man shall say unto you, behold, here is Messiah, or there; believe it not.

Matthew 24:23

Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Matthew 24:26, 27

As is recorded here by Matthew, Yeshua taught that His disciples should not believe anyone who said that Yeshua was in any particular place other than where Scripture says He is. Furthermore, Yeshua taught the type of return His would be. To assure that there would be no misunderstandings, He used the analogy of lightning. Here He is **not** referring to the quickness of His return. He is referring to the universal visibility of it. When lightning flashes, no one needs to tell you that the lightning flashed, even though you may be indoors, with the door shut and the curtains drawn. For one of the phenomenon that always occurs with a lightning strike, is thunder. And the closer the lightning strike, the louder the thunder. So also, when Yeshua returns, no one will need to tell another individual that it is Yeshua coming. Like the lightning, all will know that it is Yeshua. It will be that plain, visible to **all**, disciples and unbelievers alike. Just as the lightning flashes upon disciple and unbeliever, and makes no distinction between them, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.

One of the current popular teachings is the belief in a secret coming of Yeshua, in which He comes for the disciples only. But, in addition to the previous verse discussed, does not Yeshua teach in these verses that He will not come secretly (inner rooms), but rather, openly and visibly? What is one's reaction to be towards those who say, "He is in inner rooms?" The "inner rooms"²⁰ spoken of here, were rooms which usually had no exterior walls, in the typical Hebrew home. Furthermore, only those of that home knew where the entrance to that room was located and how to go into it. Yeshua says that He is not there, but rather, out in the open for all to have access to. He is not coming to "inner rooms," of which only those of the household of faith will know. No, He is teaching that His

²⁰In Matthew 6:6 in the Sermon on the Mount, Yeshua in teaching His disciples uses the phrase "inner room" to describe a place of "secret" prayer. This is consistent with what is found in Matthew 24:26; "inner room" signifying secrecy.

coming will be open, visible to all. He says that His people are not to believe those who teach that He is coming secretly.

To all of creation YHWH says,

That at the name of Yeshua every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Yeshua Messiah is YHWH, to the glory of YHWH the Father.

Philippians 2:10, 11

There is a day coming, in which every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess Yeshua as YHWH. Some will receive eternal life, because they have chosen to make Him Elohim now; and some will receive eternal damnation, because they have chosen not to make Him Elohim of their lives now.

YHWH's will: Since this subject can take up an entire book, only a limited aspect will be seen here as it relates to living a righteous life in the context of the last days. The Holy Spirit admonishes today, to listen to and heed the word of YHWH.

Wherefore (as the Holy Spirit says), Today if you will hear His Voice,
Hebrews 3:7

If one is to have any hope of a victorious life at all, he must listen to and obey the Holy Spirit, who has been given to him as his Helper. And this must be from the heart. It cannot be only outwardly. If a person begins to refuse to listen to and to heed His Voice, then the cycle of a hardening of the heart begins to take place. If this cycle is not broken by repentance and obedience, then the final state will be total apostasy for those who do not know YHWH, which will result in eternal damnation. And for those who have truly repented, it will result in severe discipline. Listening to, and obedience of, His Voice, are mandatory requirements for knowing and understanding YHWH's will (Torah).

The second aspect of YHWH's will in living a righteous life, is the sanctification of the disciple. Here again, what we will look at will be brief, as it relates to the last days. The first Scripture deals with sanctification and eternal life.

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to YHWH, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Romans 6:22

The implication in this verse concerning sanctification, is that without it, one will not gain eternal life. A disciple being freed from the power of sin (nature) in his life is the normal life that YHWH has for His children.

For this is the will of YHWH, even your sanctification,

1 Thessalonians 4:3a

This verse states plainly, that it is YHWH's will for one to be sanctified. Of course, refusing YHWH's will is sin, and this will bring the discipline of YHWH. If a disciple follows the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit will lead him into the experience of sanctification, even though that person may not know what to call the experience.

The entirety of the Scripture bears out the desire that YHWH has for His people to be obedient. It is His desire and will for His creation to choose to obey Him.

Wherefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Philippians 2:12

It is the will of YHWH for each person to hear and to obey the Voice of YHWH. Obedience is the key to living a life like Messiah lived. This obedience must be practiced daily if it is to bear the fruit of a holy life. This should not be taken to mean that salvation is by works. However, it is part of the maturing process in the disciple's

life. If this is practiced consistently, then the disciple will be able to discern good and evil.

But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Hebrews 5:14

Consistent obedience will equip the disciple to see what is good and what is evil. Satan deceived Eve into believing that the way to be able to discern good and evil, was by the experiencing of evil; this was a lie then, and is still a lie today, which Satan still uses. One cannot learn to discern evil by doing evil. One can only discern evil by doing what is right and good, by doing YHWH's will, by listening to and obeying His Voice.

The Anti-Messiah, being evil, will then be seen for who and what he is, for the disciple who is obedient to the word of YHWH will be trained to see clearly. This training is not to be a substitute for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the disciple's life, but rather it is to be used in conjunction with it.

YHWH's sons: Having asked for and received the forgiveness YHWH offers through His Son Yeshua, a person is adopted into YHWH's family. He becomes a joint heir with Messiah, one of His children, His son. Adam was the son of YHWH, but lost this position because of his disobedience (sin). He, as one who repents even today, was restored to the place of grace by a blood sacrifice. This restoration does not entitle one to privileges that exceed those of His Son. Even though those who repent and confess are joint heirs; Yeshua is still the Head. As such, they are required to submit to Him.

And has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the body,
Ephesians 1:22

As the Son of the Most High, being the Head of the body, and the Savior, His followers cannot be greater than He is. Since He is the One who has sent His disciples into the world as a witness to it, they are to be like Him if they are to be effective witnesses for Him.

Amein, amein, I say to you, The servant is not greater than his master; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.
John 13:16

The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.
Luke 6:40

In fact, it is enough for a disciple in Messiah to be like Him, not in just a few things, but in all things. This certainly includes being like Him in His sufferings and His death. After a disciple begins to understand his responsibility to practice being like Messiah, with the help of the Holy Spirit, then he will begin to see the plan YHWH has for salvation of the world.

YHWH's plan: YHWH has made known to His disciples, His unique plan for mankind. That plan includes the salvation of man. It is within YHWH's plan that a person can be at peace with Him now. The requirement for that peace to be a reality in a person's life, is for that person to ask for and receive His forgiveness.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 14:27

The peace which Yeshua gives, is a peace which the world does not know, and cannot take away from the disciple. However, this peace which YHWH gives, puts one at odds with the world. Therefore, one cannot be at peace with the world and be at peace with YHWH simultaneously.

If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love his own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

John 15:18, 19

Understanding the difference in the peace that one receives from YHWH (as opposed to peace with the world) is paramount to grasping one's relation to YHWH and his relation in and to the world. The following was written by this author while attending Bible College.

Worldly peace is directly linked to self-interest,
Which in itself brings conflict.
This in turn is self-defeating,
And the final end is no peace at all.

However, heavenly peace is directly linked to interest in others,
Which, in YHWH, vanquishes conflict.
This in turn is self-denial,
And the final end is peace with all!

Because a person cannot be at peace with both YHWH and the world, he will suffer certain things if he is at peace with YHWH. Yeshua even goes so far, as to tell those who believe in Him what to expect in advance, so they will not be surprised and caught off guard. One of the things His disciples can expect is persecution.

Remember the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his Master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also.
John 15:20

Yeshua warns us that, because He is the Head and His disciples are under Him, because they are to be like Him in all things, because the world hated Yeshua, because the world persecuted Him, then anyone who takes the name of Yeshua will be treated as He was, and that person will experience many of the same things as Yeshua experienced. The disciple should even *expect* these things to happen to him.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.
John 16:33

One of the truths about tribulation that is often overlooked, is its purpose. It has built into its very nature, the attribute of separating, and in this case, separating the unrighteous from the righteous. The Romans used a device called a "tribulum" in the threshing of grain. Its sole purpose was to separate the chaff from the grain. It was a thick plank with a seat for the driver. This was pulled by a mule or ox over the grain. As the plank was pulled over the grain, it applied pressure upon it and would knock the chaff loose. This was repeated until all the chaff was knocked loose.²¹ This reveals the nature of tribulation, which comes from the Latin, "tribulum." So it is, during those final years before the return of Yeshua, pressure shall be applied in such a way as to cause each person to make his own choice in regards to whom he shall serve. This is the purpose of tribulation - to separate the false from the true.

In this next passage we find a truth which is closely related to the previous one.

I have given them thy word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.
John 17:14-16

²¹"Everyday Life in Babylon and Assyria," by Georges Contenau, pub. W. W. Norton & Co., 1966, page 52.

Yeshua prays for those who believe in Him, and He says that they shall be hated because they have received the word of YHWH (obeyed). Yeshua also asks the Father not to take them out of the world. Rather, Yeshua asks the Father to “keep” them. The Greek word here is TEREO, which means “to preserve,” as translated in 1 Thessalonians 5:23. Literally, it means “to guard from loss by keeping an eye upon.”

What Yeshua is praying for His disciples, is that they would not be removed from the world, as they are His witnesses to the world; but rather, that the Father would protect them in the persecution and tribulation that they will have to endure. Notice that there are no provisions for a particular tribulation,²² including the “Great Tribulation.” His disciples who are living just prior to the time of His return must not think that they will be spared some suffering in this world. Any suffering that a disciple is called upon to endure, no matter how acute, will not compare to the suffering that Yeshua did upon the cross. This includes the suffering of those in the great tribulation. To think one will be spared suffering, is to elevate oneself above the Master, considering the suffering He went through. Since it is enough for the slave (disciple) to be like the master (Yeshua), one should expect to suffer tribulation and persecution as Yeshua did, even to the point of death.

²²There are three different contexts in Scripture in which the word “tribulation” is used. In the broadest sense it is used as that time from the foundation of the Body until Yeshua returns. So every person who has believed on the name of Yeshua has gone through tribulation. (See Matthew 13:21; John 16:33; Acts 14:22 and many others). The next context is also known as Daniel’s “seventieth week” (also known as “Jacob’s trouble,” Jeremiah 30:7) or the last seven years before Yeshua returns. The third context is known as the “great tribulation,” which is the last three and one-half years before Yeshua returns. This is mentioned only twice in Scripture (Matthew 24:21 and Revelation 9:14), with that particular phrase, “great tribulation.”

Section III

=====

What Is The Blessed Hope?

The answer to the question which the title to this section asks, will in large part determine how one views the return of Messiah. Those who believe and teach a pre-tribulation, pre-millennial rapture, generally hold that the “Blessed Hope” of the body, is the event of Messiah’s return. However, taking a good, honest look at the following Scriptures, one will begin to understand that the only Hope of the body of Messiah, the only Hope of the individual disciple, can only be in Yeshua Messiah Himself, as a person, not an event. The first chapter of this section will deal with that question specifically. The chapters that follow will then build upon that foundation. Keeping an open and honest mind is the key to understanding the truths that follow.

Chapter 10

The Person

[I pray that] the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,
Ephesians 1:18

What we will show in this chapter, is that the “blessed hope” of His body is a person, not an event. That person is Yeshua Messiah, the Son Incarnate.

The condition prayed for in the above verse, is that they might know the hope in which they are called, by the enlightenment of their hearts. This enlightenment comes from and through the Holy Spirit in their lives. The implication of this verse is, that without the enlightenment spoken of, it is not possible to know what is the “hope of His calling.” Upon further examination of the enlightenment spoken of in the above verse, the apostle John (1:9) records that Yeshua, the true light, “enlightens every man.” The difference between those who have and know this Hope and those who don't, is the acceptance or rejection of Yeshua as Master and Savior.

It is YHWH who has chosen to make this hope known to those who believe in Messiah. He has made known this mystery. It is the indwelling, abiding presence of the Spirit of Messiah, which gives to the disciple his hope. He gives hope of a glorious eternal life with the One in whom he has believed. One's hope consists of Messiah in him. This clearly shows that the disciple's hope is present tense, not future tense.

To whom YHWH would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Messiah in you, the hope of glory:

Colossians 1:27

The hope of all disciples is the same Person who died for their sins. He is the one who gives hope. Yeshua is the one who ensures life with Him in glory (eternity). Without this Person, there can be, and is, no hope. It is by placing one's life in His hands, that he can obtain hope.

The Scripture below confirms that our hope is the Person, Yeshua Messiah.

Paul, an apostle of Yeshua Messiah by the commandment of YHWH our Savior, and YHWH Yeshua Messiah, who is our hope;

1 Timothy 1:1

The apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, says that it is Yeshua Messiah who is our hope! This should be comforting to the disciple; since one's hope is also his Savior, and He is the Son, YHWH incarnate, then certainly his hope must be sure. It can be found wherever Yeshua is. Where is Yeshua? This question was dealt with in chapter 7. He is in the throne room of heaven, behind the veil. (He is also, in a very real sense, if a person believes in Him, in his heart or with him.) This veil, the veil found in the heavenly throne room, should not be confused with the veil of the earthly temple which was torn from top to bottom at the time of the crucifixion of Yeshua.

We might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Yeshua.

Hebrews 6:18b-20a

As is shown in this passage of Scripture, one's hope is both sure and steadfast. Why? Simply because one's hope is the Person of Yeshua Messiah. Would a person's hope be sure and steadfast if it were anything other than this Person? It could not be. YHWH is the only true sureness in all creation. Also, it can be seen, that this hope has gone into the veil. This is where Yeshua is. The hope of all disciples is there, and they may enter through the veil by faith, without fear of condemnation. YHWH will accept them, not on their merits, but because of who their Hope is.

This then, brings one again to the reality of who Yeshua is. As the Incarnate YHWH (Isaiah 9:6), He is divine. Yeshua is YHWH. Here is the sureness of our Hope. YHWH is always faithful. Yeshua²³ is always faithful.

Who by him do believe in Yeshua, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in Yeshua.

1 Peter 1:21

A person who has accepted the sin offering of Yeshua in his life, must then remain true to the hope which he now has been given.

And every man that has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure.

1 John 3:3

And finally, the one verse in all the Scripture that refers to the "blessed hope."²⁴

Looking for that blessed hope, **and** the glorious appearing of the great YHWH and our Savior Yeshua Messiah;

Titus 2:13

This verse clearly states, that the true followers of Yeshua are to be looking for two separate things: 1) their blessed hope; **and** 2) the appearing of Yeshua Messiah, who is their Hope. These two items are so closely related, that it is difficult to distinguish between the two. But we must distinguish between them. This hope is not the event of His appearing. If this is the hope of the body, then all those who died before His appearing have not seen this hope. However, if the hope of the body is Yeshua Himself, and it is, then they have not died in vain, nor without hope. But in Hope, they have died in Messiah.

The Greek word that is translated as appearing in this verse is EPIPHANEIA. This word is quite significant, as it means "brightness" or "shining forth." What Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is saying then, is that the true followers of Yeshua are to be looking for Him. And they are to be looking for His visible and glorious coming. Not one which is secret!

As Yeshua breaks in upon the time continuum one final time, and all of humanity will see Him in all His glory, His bride/wife will see Him whom she has hoped in, while the wicked will try to flee and hide from His presence.

²³Yeshua simply means – "YHWH saves," which further shows the importance of knowing His true Name.

²⁴ Since the phrase "blessed hope" occurs only in this one verse, the reader and student of Scripture would do well to remember, that it is not wise to build doctrine on only one verse.

Chapter 11

=====

The Lesson of the First Advent

There are lessons in the first advent of Messiah that shine as a beacon of light into today, to caution those who would listen.

If a person does not comprehend the significance of, and the warnings of, the first coming of Yeshua, it is doubtful that one can avoid the pitfalls into which so many fell during that time.

The first lesson one needs to understand, is the timing of the first coming. When Yeshua came the first time, it was at exactly the right moment in time. It was not too soon; nor was it too late.

But when the fullness of the time was come, YHWH sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law,
Galatians 4:4

And again;

In due time Messiah died for the unrighteous.

Romans 5:6b

Since Yeshua came the first time at just the right moment in history, He will once again invade the time continuum, when He returns, at just the right time. It will not be too late, nor will it be too soon, but at the right time. It will be those who have fixed their hope on Him, who will not be disappointed.

One noteworthy comparison of the first coming with the second coming is that, as with the first coming, many were looking for the coming of Messiah. Most notably among these were the Pharisees (the religious leaders). Many of them had spent their lives searching the Scriptures, looking for clues about the coming of Messiah.

And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Messiah should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

Matthew 2:4, 5

When the Pharisees were asked about a particular prophecy concerning the coming of Messiah they knew the answer. They pretty much had it all figured out. At least they thought so.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Matthew 3:7

Search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

John 5:39

The Pharisees, priests, scribes, and Sadducees, spent a lot of time examining the Scriptures. They were very knowledgeable about the events surrounding the coming of Messiah. They had it all figured out! But as Yeshua chastises them in John 5, they completely missed the focus of the Scripture. It is not primarily to tell about future events, but rather it tells about the Savior. Because they missed this, they missed His coming. They were not well enough acquainted with who was coming, as they were that Messiah was coming in this particular manner, and that His coming would follow this particular course of events. Most of their conjectures were wrong. This is why these students of the Scripture missed the coming of Messiah: because they were focused upon the event of His

coming and not upon the Person who was coming. This further illustrates the truth that the “blessed hope” is a person, not an event. This lesson must be applied to today. The question must be asked, “Am I so focused upon an event; e.g., the event of the “rapture,” that I have shut my eyes to the person of Yeshua?”

It is true that many of the Pharisees came to know Yeshua after the resurrection and ascension (Acts 6:7). But the first coming of Messiah, is in reference to salvation. The second coming, will be in reference to judgment (Hebrews 9:28). A person who misses the second coming, will not have another chance to accept Yeshua as his personal Savior.

If a person has his eyes and his hope fixed upon Yeshua, then it will not matter in what order the phenomena surrounding the Second Advent occur, for one will be ready, because he personally knows the Person who is coming. The true disciple already has his life focused upon Yeshua and lives for Him daily, so that, when He appears, he is already looking toward Him.

Chapter 12

=====

The Imminence of the Second Advent

“How imminent is the return of Yeshua?” This question was something that even the disciples of Yeshua’s day were concerned about. Yeshua deals with this question, teaching them with parables about His second coming. This chapter will look into this area of concern that the disciples brought to Him, and His answer to disciples of all ages.

Personal Imminence

Regardless of the immediacy of Messiah’s return at the end of the age to all mankind, He may return for the individual at any moment. He taught this principle to His disciples. He wanted them to live in such a way, that if He were to come for them individually, they would be ready.

And He spoke a parable unto them, saying, “The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?’ And he said, ‘This will I do; I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry.”’ But YHWH said unto him, ‘You fool, this night your soul shall be required of you; then whose shall those things be, which you have provided?’”

Luke 12:16-20

Being a member of the human race, one must be realistic that the length of one’s life is very uncertain. There are many things that can enter into the life of a person that would shorten, or even bring to an end, one’s life. Facing the reality of death in an affluent society, is contradictory to the materialistic world in which one lives. The disciple should learn to live his life, not in fear, but in expectation, that Yeshua may take him home at any moment.

Universal Imminence

An honest approach to the following Scriptures will help a person in understanding the full impact of what the Scripture teaches. One must look at what these say, without reasoning them away to fit what one already believes and/or has been taught, but instead, allow the Scriptures to say what they say. It is important when examining these Scriptures, to keep in mind the context in which they are found.

Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Why then does it have tares?’ He said unto them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said unto him, ‘Do you want us then to go and gather them up?’ But he said, ‘Nay; lest while you gather up the tares, you root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

Matthew 13:24-30

In this parable, Yeshua teaches about the kingdom of heaven. In it, there are several truths that need to be understood. The first is that the sower of good seed is Yeshua. This is learned in His explanation of this parable (vs.37). One needs to understand the principles of sowing and reaping as well. Time is needed after the sowing

takes place before harvest comes. Reaping comes later, after the seed has grown, matured, and produced its fruit. It does not, nor cannot, follow immediately after sowing. This is a physical impossibility in YHWH's creation.

Matthew 24

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso reads, let him understand:)

Verse 15

For **then** shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Verse 21

Immediately **after** the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

Verse 29

And **then** shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and **then** shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Verse 30

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Verse 31

Yeshua teaches, that before He will return, there are several things that will happen. Notice that Yeshua places His return in verse 30. Before this is the coming of the Anti-Messiah (abomination of desolation). The great tribulation will have begun (vs.21) and will be witnessed by His disciples (the "you" in verse 15), and run its course to its conclusion (vs.29). The tribulation has been concluded, for He says that it will be "immediately after" the tribulation that He returns. There shall be signs and wonders in the sky.

It will be after these things take place that He returns. At His return, all the tribes of the earth will witness this coming (see also vs.26, 27). Notice where Yeshua places the gathering of His elect (vs. 31); it is after all these things.

Yeshua tells His followers the illustration of the two servants (Matthew 24:45-51). One servant is good. The other servant is wicked. Time is the determining element. Time allows the nature of the servants to be displayed. In time, every servant will display his true nature.

Again, Yeshua teaches His disciples that they should expect His return after a period of time.

While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

Matthew 25:5

The KJV uses the word "tarried." Whatever the word used, the idea that Yeshua is portraying, is a length of time. It must be recognized that Yeshua was telling them in advance, that when He went away, He would not immediately come back again.

Yeshua gives another kingdom parable in this same chapter.

For the kingdom of heaven is as a man **traveling into a far country**, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

Matthew 25:14

After a long time the master of those servants comes, and reckons with them.

Matthew 25:19

In this parable, Yeshua teaches once again, that there will be a long period of time between His departure and His return. He says that the kingdom of heaven is like a man going to a far country. In today's society, one may fail to grasp the full significance of this statement with all the different means of rapid transportation available.

A person today can travel anywhere in the world in a short period of time. This was not so then. The common means of travel was walking, or perhaps in a caravan. Both methods were very slow. To go into a “far country” would have taken a very long time to go, conduct one’s business, and then to return.

Yeshua says later in the parable, that it was “after a long time” that the master returned. They were not to expect His return soon. Time was needed for traveling to the far country, and time was needed to return from the far country. Time was also needed for the servants to display their true spirits, as in the previous illustration that Yeshua gave.

After Yeshua had been crucified, and after His resurrection, but before He ascended to the Father, when He gave them their commission, they were to teach “all nations.” This, of course, would take a long time to accomplish.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,

Matthew 28:19a

And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 1:8b

Even after the disciples had received the Holy Spirit, it would take them a long time to evangelize the world. They had no means of mass communication. They had to spread the Gospel by word of mouth. The disciples are still working on carrying out the task Yeshua gave to His disciples almost 2000 years ago.

And as they heard these things, he added and spoke a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because **they thought that the kingdom of YHWH should immediately appear**. He said therefore, “A certain nobleman went into a **far country** to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.”

Luke 19:11, 12

It is recorded here the disciples’ concern and their question to Yeshua, about the appearance of the kingdom of YHWH, for they thought it to be immediate (imminent). In response, Yeshua wanted them to understand clearly, that the kingdom of YHWH was not going to appear immediately. They believed this to include the crowning of Yeshua to the throne of David. However, Yeshua explains to them that this was not to be the case. The parable that He gives again teaches that there will be a length of time before He returns, as was the case with this nobleman who went into a “far country.” The disciples are to conduct the business of the kingdom of YHWH until He returns. Also, time is needed for the true nature of the servants to be displayed.

And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Luke 21:24

One of the things that must be included in the “times of the Gentiles” being fulfilled, is that those who answer the call, must come out of the nations. Those who were not a people, shall become a people once again; i.e., the nation of Ephraim. (One reference of importance is Hosea 14; also see Ezekiel 37.)

And **then** shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

Luke 21:27

Yeshua gives another clue here to the immediacy of His return. Jerusalem was under the control of Gentiles when Yeshua spoke this prophecy. It has remained under their control until 1967. That was the first time since before the time of Messiah, that Jerusalem was under the control of the Hebrew people. Until the Jewish people regained control of this city, it would not have been possible for Messiah to return.

Yeshua also tells Peter by what kind of death he would glorify YHWH. Peter was to grow old. He would be arrested (bound), and taken where he did not want to go. He would die before Yeshua returned.

“Amein, Amein, I say unto you, When you were young, you girded yourself, and walked wherever you would; but when you shall be old, you shall stretch forth your hands, and another shall gird you, and carry you where you would not go.” This spoke he, signifying by what death he should glorify YHWH.

John 21:18, 19a

As stated earlier, Yeshua has entered into heaven, and is at the right hand of YHWH. Scripture also teaches, that He is to remain there until the restoration of all things.

And he shall send Yeshua Messiah, which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of **all** things, which YHWH has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

Acts 3:20, 21

Yeshua is not to leave heaven until **all** things are restored. One cannot rectify His coming at the beginning of the tribulation (millennium), with this restoration of all things, because the restoration does not take place until all His enemies are put into subjection under His feet. Certainly, He will have enemies during the tribulation period (and during the Millennium). Also, all things will not be restored until after the tribulation. Yisrael needs to be restored. He cannot return until Yisrael (all twelve tribes), is present and active in the Land as one nation.

Paul gives two other clues that are supported by what Yeshua taught His followers. These deal with the coming Anti-Messiah and the apostasy.

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the **coming of our Master Yeshua Messiah, and by our gathering together unto him**, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Messiah is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: **for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed**, the son of perdition;

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

First, it must be pointed out, that this letter is written to disciples. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul gives some pertinent truth about the coming of Yeshua **and** the gathering together of disciples to Him. He very clearly states, that this will not happen until two things take place first. The apostasy comes, which implies that over a period of time, the body has been built, and then for some reason, many of those within the body fall away. Those who fall away are in the description “having a form of righteousness, but deny the power thereof.” And what is the “power” of the Gospel? It is to save a person from his sins.

Also, the man of lawlessness must be revealed, the Anti-Messiah. The picture of this person given here, is correlated to the one that can be found in Daniel (7:25). Then in verse 8, the Holy Spirit teaches that Yeshua will slay the Anti-Messiah at His return. It is not possible to rectify Yeshua coming before the tribulation, which is before the rise of the Anti-Messiah, with Yeshua slaying him at His return. How could Yeshua slay the Anti-Messiah before the tribulation even begins? No, rather, Yeshua returns at the end of the age just as the Scripture so clearly teaches. It is after all these things take place, that the disciples are gathered together to Yeshua.

Finally, in looking at whether or not the return and general revelation of Yeshua is imminent, Paul expected death, not rapture. He did not believe that Yeshua might come, and that he would be spared the persecution and suffering that he was enduring.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

2 Timothy 4:6

To sum up this chapter, it has been shown, that there will be a length of time between when Yeshua was received into heaven, and when He will return to earth. Several things must take place before the return of Messiah can take place. To list them, they would be: 1) Peter will die; 2) Paul will die; 3) the seed of the Gospel that Yeshua planted will grow and mature; 4) servants will display their true spirits; 5) Anti-Messiah will come; 6) there will be a great tribulation; 7) there will be signs and wonders in the sky; 8) Jerusalem will no longer be controlled by the Gentiles; 9) Ephraim will become a nation again; and 10) the apostasy will come.

Yeshua said that He would journey to a far country, and after a long time, return. If a person is to accept

the Scripture as true, then he must listen to these teachings, and realize that the imminent return of Messiah is not possible until all these other things take place (and there are actually many more that are too numerous to mention). Yeshua can return for the individual at any time, as was discussed earlier in this chapter. However, there could not be a universal return, until His word has been fulfilled in all points, many of which could be fulfilled after He returns.

This does not mean that the body can take her ease. To the contrary, it shows how much more diligent one must be in following his Master. It shows how much more work there is to do before He returns. We must hasten the day! (2 Peter 3:12)

Chapter 13

=====

The Rapture

The questions that surround the “catching up” of the body of Messiah, deal with when this event will take place in relation to the return of Messiah, at the end of the age.

One of the greatest concerns of this writer, is the teaching of the “pre-tribulation rapture” and the effect that it has upon the disciple. One thing that it seems to do, is to lull one into a false sense of security; namely, trusting in this escape from reality, when Yeshua taught His disciples again and again, that this would not happen; but rather, that He, via the Holy Spirit, would help them (and all disciples) to go through any difficulty that might come into the life of the disciple. This is especially so when suffering or persecution or tribulation happens because one has taken the Name of Messiah. It also seems to give to those who hold to this teaching, the idea that if I don't make it in the rapture then I still have a chance, even though I may have to die for it. With the mindset and attitude of, “I can live how I want now, and I will get right then!” reeks of self-centeredness, and will lead one right straight into hell. This teaching also seems to give the idea, that one won't be around when the Anti-Messiah shows up. This may be one of the more deadly concepts of a pre-tribulation rapture. Believing that one will not witness the rise of the Anti-Messiah, but then seeing him come into power, will cause many to say and believe that, since the disciples are still here, this surely cannot be the Anti-Messiah.²⁵ Therefore, it is OK to go along with what he says. After all, YHWH knows I still love Him. And He knows I still need to eat.

As one can see, the rationalizations that will be quite common when the Anti-Messiah arises, can get one into spiritual hot water rather quickly if he is not walking in the Spirit, and does not have a close personal relationship with Yeshua. It will also help one to know the Scriptures that deal with the second coming of Messiah. The truth of the matter is, that YHWH has warned His followers that they cannot, under any condition, swear allegiance to the Anti-Messiah, for example, by taking a mark. The penalty for doing so, is to be cast into the lake of fire for all eternity. There will be no exceptions and no excuses.

One aspect of the rapture that is rarely dealt with, is the “why.” Why does the rapture occur? What is its purpose? The answer to this question, will help one to discover “when” it occurs. It is the popular belief today, that the rapture and the resurrection are in close proximity to one another. And in some cases, the rapture is even placed before the resurrection. But this is categorically against what the Scripture teaches. Furthermore, there may be a space of time between the first resurrection²⁶ and the “changing,” when the disciples receive their glorified bodies, specifically, one thousand years. That happens at the close of the millennial reign. It will be at this time, that the disciples will be “changed” into their glorified bodies. Why? It will be at this time, that the earth is destroyed by fire. It will be re-formed through this baptism of fire, into the new heavens and new earth. This is why the saints are “raptured.” And this event takes place at the end of the millennium.

One of the difficult aspects of the rapture teaching is dealing with the many suppositions that accompany this teaching. Two of the most prominent teachings of the rapture are: 1) the catching up of the saints, and 2) at that time, it is believed, they will be given their glorified bodies. It will be shown, that these two events do not happen at the same time. In fact, there is approximately one thousand years between them. The catching up is at the beginning of the millennium, while the changing of the temporal into the eternal, will be at the conclusion of the millennium.

To be caught up does not necessarily mean that one will be changed; i.e., given a glorified body. Look at the life of Philip when he was witnessing to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40). At the conclusion of the baptism

²⁵On watching a very prominent Bible prophecy teacher on TV late one night, this writer was appalled to hear this man make the statement, that if any leader rose up and took control of the world's systems, then it would **not** be the Anti-Messiah if the Church was still here, and that it would be OK to follow this man, even to the point of taking his mark; thus showing the true nature of the deception of a pre-tribulation rapture teaching.

²⁶The first resurrection actually seems to be the resurrection of the nation of Ephraim.

of the eunuch, Philip was “snatched” away. This is the Greek word HARPADZO, which is the same Greek word used in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, when the disciples are “caught up” to be with Yeshua. Philip did not receive his glorified body when this happened. So, to be caught up does not necessarily mean that one is changed, as spoken of in 1 Corinthians 15:52. So the word “rapture” attempts to place two Biblical truths together that do not belong together. So the terms “caught up” (“gathering”) and “changed” are to be preferred over the use of the term “rapture”; the former occurring at the end of the tribulation, and the latter occurring at the end of the millennium. The “catching up” does not imply or mean that it has to be by supernatural means. This may actually be a reference to the next great exodus (Jeremiah 23:7-8; Ezekiel 39:27-28).

As the following passages are examined, keep in mind the context of the paragraph, and of the book, and of the Scripture. Doing so, will help to further one’s understanding of when the coming of Messiah will be, for His own.

When does this event occur?

One passage that is quite astounding in regards to when this event will occur, is found in the book of Matthew. It is a parable that Yeshua gave to His disciples. It is also one of the few for which an interpretation is recorded. Here are both.

Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where did the tares come from then?’ He said unto them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said unto him, ‘Do you want us to go and gather them up?’ But he said, ‘Nay; lest while you gather up the tares, you root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, “Gather together **first** the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.”’”

Matthew 13:24-30

Then Yeshua sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, “Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, “He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. **Then** shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

Matthew 13:36-43

This is a kingdom parable. That means, that Yeshua is teaching a truth about His Kingdom (Yisrael). As the disciples and unbelievers are both present in this parable, as represented by the wheat and the tares, respectively, taking note of their relationship to each other and to the end of the age is helpful. The servants of the landowner ask the landowner if they should separate the wheat and the tares. Yeshua answers, as represented by the landowner, that they were not to separate them, but they were to allow both the wheat and the tares to grow together until the harvest, which is the end of the age. The end of the age is at the conclusion of the tribulation. The tribulation is part of the present age. There is to be no separation before the end of the age. At the time of the harvest, it will be the reapers (angels) who are the ones doing the separating.

Notice who Yeshua says will be gathered first. He says that in the time of the harvest, He will say to the reapers, “First, gather up the tares.”²⁷ Yeshua makes it very clear that it is not the wheat which is gathered first, as taught by a pre-tribulation rapture theory. No, the first to be gathered are the sons of the evil one (tares). **Then** He says the righteous will shine forth.

The harvest at the end of the age, is at the end of the tribulation. And there is to be no separation between

²⁷For a further explanation of the reapers see Appendix D.

the wheat and the tares until then. There will be no separation between the disciples and the unbelievers. Both will go through the tribulation together. The truth of this passage is clear: there will be no separation until then. And when the separation finally does occur, it will be the tares, the unbelievers, who are gathered first and removed from His Kingdom.

Another parable of the kingdom, which teaches the same thing, is in the same chapter. This is the parable of the dragnet.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and **sever the wicked from among the just**, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 13:47-50

Again, Yeshua teaches that the separation of the wicked and the righteous will not be until the end of the age. He also tells them again, that it is the wicked who are taken out (severed) from among the righteous. This separation ends in judgment for the wicked, as they are cast into the fire. The righteous, disciples and followers of Yeshua, are left.

The person who will be saved, will be the one who endures to the end (Matthew 24:13). One cannot stop short and hope to be saved. For Yeshua taught, that he who puts his hand to the plow and looks back, is not fit for the kingdom of YHWH (Luke 9:62).

To this teaching, Yeshua later adds a stern warning for His followers. It is for all, but especially to those who would be alive in the last days.

Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Messiah, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Messiahs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Matthew 24:23-27

“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Messiah,’ or ‘There He is,’ do not believe him.” No one will need another to tell him that it is Yeshua, when He returns. Anyone who says that Yeshua is coming to this place or to that place, is not to be believed. Yeshua labels them as false prophets. He is not coming for just a select few, but to all mankind. This is represented by His saying to not believe them if they say He is in the wilderness. He is not coming in secret. This is represented by His saying to not believe them if they say He is in the inner rooms. His coming will be visible to all, as represented by the lightning flashing from the east to the west.

“But immediately after the days of tribulation” (Matthew 24:29) will be the time of the coming of Yeshua. It will be then that “all the tribes of the earth will mourn” (Matthew 24:30), because it is now, that they witness Him “coming on the clouds” (Matthew 24:30) in all His majesty. They had their opportunity to accept Him, but they did not, hence the mourning. Not only do the unbelievers see Him at this time, but also He shall send forth the angels to “gather together His elect” with the call of a “great trumpet” (Matthew 24:31). There is no mention of the disciples being changed. This gathering is not the same as the “catching up,” when the disciples receive their glorified bodies at the end of the millennium. His elect, the body, “endures to the end,” to meet Him as He returns to earth.

Yeshua further says, that his “coming” will be just like the days of Noah. A more complete treatment of this passage will be in a later chapter. One aspect of the “days of Noah” needs to be addressed here in relation to the rapture.

“For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood **they** were eating and drinking, **they** were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and **they** did not understand until the flood came and **took them all away**; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be **taken**, and

one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be **taken** and one will be left. Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your YHWH is coming.”

Matthew 24:37-42 (NAS)

The pronouns “they” and “them” in this passage are referring to the wicked unbelievers. “They” are eating and drinking. “They” are marrying and giving in marriage. “They” did not understand. The flood came and took “them” all away.²⁸ It was the wicked, in the days of Noah, who were swept away. Only righteous Noah (and his family) was left. Yeshua says that, so shall His coming be: one will be taken; one will be left. Who will be taken? As the wicked in the days of Noah were taken, so it shall be with the coming of Yeshua. The wicked will be taken; and the righteous shall be left. And as in the days of Noah, after the flood, it was the righteous who were left to replenish the earth, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.

Another aspect of great importance concerning the days of Noah, is that the unrighteous, the unbelievers, did not understand until it was too late. The only warning that they had, was from righteous Noah. The Scripture refers to Noah as a preacher of righteousness. Noah, as he built the ark, also preached of the coming judgment. There were no cataclysmic events to forewarn the world of the coming judgment. No, the **only** avenue of knowledge afforded to them was through Noah, YHWH’s chosen man.

Likewise, so it will be in the days preceding the coming of Yeshua. The only warning that the world will be afforded, will be through YHWH’s people.²⁹ There will be no cataclysmic event (such as the rapture) that will tell them of the coming return. There will be earthshaking events, to be sure; but these can and will, be explained away as “natural” events. If the world is unwilling to listen to YHWH’s people, His witnesses, then they will reap what they have sown - judgment.

As it was in the days of Noah, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be! To the wicked and the unrighteous, it will be just as a thief in the night, totally and completely unexpected. Does not Yeshua Himself bear out this very truth in the very next verses? Is this not the central truth that Yeshua is trying to teach in these last days?

But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Matthew 24:43-44

What Yeshua is saying is very simple: the people of Noah’s day did not think that what Noah was saying was correct. So, because of their unbelief, they were not ready for the coming judgment. Akin to this, is that Yeshua admonishes His disciples to be ready. The **ONLY** way to be ready for His return, is to believe and accept Him as your personal Savior, and keep His Torah. Please note, that the judgment of the wicked and the salvation of the righteous in the days of Noah were simultaneous. “So shall the coming of the Son of man be.”

When looking at when the rapture will occur in relation to the coming of Messiah, it is helpful to look into the Greek text. This helps to take away any of the ambiguity of the English translation. There are several Greek words that will be helpful to one’s understanding of the unity of the Scripture, particularly in the subject of Scripture prophecy.

One Greek word of interest is found in the following passage.

And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

Matthew 25:6

The English word “meet” is translated from the Greek word APANTESIS. A good picture of the meaning

²⁸ The parallel passage in Luke’s Gospel (17:27) makes this even more clear when it states that “the flood came and destroyed **them** all.” Can there be any doubt who these pronouns are referring to? No! They are referring to the unbelievers, the wicked.

²⁹ Where would YHWH’s justice be, if He removed all of His people and there was no one to tell of Him? There will be no rapture before the tribulation, for YHWH has given the task of witnessing to the world, to the Body (Yisrael). And she shall remain and witness, many times through bloodshed; but then, what is so different about this, as compared to the rest of the history of the true disciples? Nothing.

of this word, may be found in Acts 28:15. Here, the apostle Paul is on his way to Rome for trial. He is under arrest. The disciples in Rome hear of his coming. They go out to “meet” Paul. Those who had come out of Rome, then turn around, and proceed back to Rome with Paul. Paul does not change directions, but continues on to his destination. The word picture of the Greek word, is one of the official welcome of a newly arriving magistrate. The people of the city are watching for the coming of this dignitary; and when they see him in the distance, they go out to “meet” him, then continue on into the city, from which they just came, with the magistrate.

This is the picture of the Bridegroom. The bride is watching for her bridegroom, and when she sees him, she goes out to “meet” him. He is on his way to the wedding, and the bride then accompanies him there. So it will be, when Yeshua returns, disciples will see Him coming again and go out to “meet” Him, and then continue on to earth; His destination: the Mount of Olives. This word is also found in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, speaking of that time when all the disciples will “meet” Yeshua in the air to be with Him always.

In answering when the rapture is, one key word is APOKALUPSIS. This is translated as “revelation.” This is the unveiling of Messiah, when His true identity will be seen openly and by all.

So that you were not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Master Yeshua Messiah, who will confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Master Yeshua Messiah.

1 Corinthians 1:7, 8 (NAS)

The Corinthian disciples were not waiting for the rapture. They were awaiting the “revelation” of Yeshua. This is that moment when Yeshua will come in all His glory for all to see, disciple and unbeliever alike. Yeshua will help His followers to endure to the end. This is when the revelation takes place. The end of the age is the goal of those who believe; and when the mystery of YHWH is no longer a mystery, He will be revealed.

The trumpet that accompanies the rapture of disciples, is another of the keys to placing when it will take place. In this next passage, the Holy Spirit specifically places when the trumpet call will be.

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the **last trump**: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1 Corinthians 15:52

The Greek word that is translated as “last” is ESCHATOS. It means “the furthest, final, or uttermost.” This is the last trumpet. There are no other trumpets that come after this one. This is at the end of the millennium. This is the very last trumpet to sound at the end of the millennium. No other trumpet will sound after this one. The seventh trumpet of the book of Revelation cannot sound after this one. To do so, would make this one to be, one other than the last, making the word of YHWH in error (which it cannot be). During the Millennium, there will be the annual Mo’edim (Feasts) of YHWH that occur in Jerusalem. During these appointed times, there will be the sounding of the shofar and silver trumpets. If the “last” trump were before these, then this could not be the last one. The only way that this can truly be the last trump, is for the one mentioned in this passage, to be sounded at the very end of the millennium.

Notice what is happening at this trumpet sound; there is no mention of any catching up in this verse, or context of this passage. This is dealing with being changed; with both the dead and also the living, receiving their glorified bodies. This brings up the companion verse to this one.

For this we say unto you by the word of YHWH, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of Yeshua shall not prevent them which are asleep. For Yeshua himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of YHWH: and the dead in Messiah shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet Yeshua in the air: and so shall we ever be with Yeshua.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

These are probably the best known verses in relation to the rapture. This is again dealing with a trumpet, the “trumpet of YHWH.” Notice what is happening at this trumpet sound. The dead in Messiah are raised and the living are caught up. (Please take note that the living shall not precede the dead; this will be dealt with more fully, later in this chapter.) The difference between this passage and the previous one, is that here there is the “catching up.” But there is no mention of being changed. This is an indication that these are two different trumpets sounding.

Along with these are three other tangible truths. The first of these, deals with His “coming.” The Greek word is PAROUSIA. The PAROUSIA will be dealt with more fully in the next chapter. Notice that this word appears in the text of 1 Thessalonians 4:15, which was discussed under the trumpet call for the disciples in Yeshua.

Secondly, it is at this time, that disciples (those who have repented of their sins) go to “meet” their Master and Savior, Yeshua. This is the Greek word APANTESIS, which was examined earlier in this chapter. So, along with the resurrection, and the coming of Yeshua, is the “meeting” with Him, or the “gathering” spoken of in Matthew 24:31. (This seems to be a direct reference to Deuteronomy 30:3-4.)

Thirdly, he says that “we who are alive and **remain**,” shall be the ones who are caught up. This word literally means, “those who are left behind” (as perhaps the wicked have already been taken in judgment; see discussion on days of Noah), or possibly, those who survive a war (the Anti-Messiah will “make war” with the disciples). This is an interesting picture, taking into consideration that it is those who “endure to the end,” who will be saved. This makes it sound like there may be something to endure, besides life in general (this will be discussed in a later chapter).

In the previous chapter, it was discussed, that the gathering together of disciples to Yeshua, cannot happen until the apostasy comes and the Anti-Messiah is revealed (2 Thessalonians 2:1- 3). As the Holy Spirit says in this passage, “let no one in any way deceive you.”

There are two passages of Scripture in the book of Revelation that need to be brought into the discussion of the rapture. The first of these is the one in which the seventh trumpet is recorded.

And the seventh angel sounded; and there **were** great voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world are **become** the kingdoms of our YHWH, and of his Messiah; and he shall reign forever and ever.” And the four and twenty elders, which sat before YHWH on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped YHWH, saying, “We give thee thanks, YHWH Elohim Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou **hast taken** to thee thy great power, and **hast reigned**. And the nations **were** angry, and thy wrath is **come**, and the time of the dead, that they should be **judged**, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.” And the temple of YHWH was **opened** in heaven, and there **was seen** in his temple the ark of his testament: and there **were** lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

Revelation 11:15-19

What is happening in this passage, is that at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, Messiah begins to reign. This is important to properly place where and when this trumpet is sounding. The nations that were enraged have been judged. Note the past tense of the verbs in this passage. The sounding of this trumpet, brings about all these things. The judgment, YHWH’s wrath, and the rewards, are things that take place at, or after, the resurrection. The logical conclusion is that the trumpet of YHWH in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and this one are the same trumpet. The trumpet mentioned here, and those in Matthew 24:31 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16, are all referring to the same trumpet sounding.

The last passage to be discussed in relation to the rapture, is dealing specifically with the resurrection.

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

Revelation 20:4-6

As was noted in the discussion of 1 Thessalonians 4:15, those alive in Messiah cannot, and will not, precede the dead in Messiah at His return. In the passage in Thessalonians, it clearly states that the resurrection shall be before the catching up. But it does not say how much before.³⁰ To go on with supporting verses, it says

³⁰There is a principle of Biblical studies that is little discussed or dealt with. It is found in 2 Timothy 2:15, which states: “Study

here, that those who have been slain (beheaded) in the name of Yeshua, those who have not worshipped the beast (Anti-Messiah), those who have not received the mark of the beast, all take part in the first resurrection. Now if the rapture were to be before the tribulation, then those living who were changed at that time, would go before those disciples in Yeshua against whom the Anti-Messiah will make war and kill. This is not possible, for the Scripture says that the living in Messiah, shall “not precede” the dead in Messiah. Surely, those who die in the name of Yeshua, whether that is before or during the great tribulation, must be considered “the dead in Messiah.”

All those who have a place in the first resurrection will reign with Messiah. Those who die because of the testimony of Yeshua in their life, those who refuse to worship the beast or take his mark, will have a part in the first resurrection, reign with Messiah, and not be preceded by the living in Messiah. So, all the tribulation saints will be included in the first resurrection. This means that the rapture (catching up) of the living disciples, must be after the end of the tribulation. And no amount of fancy manipulation of YHWH’s word can change this truth.

What has been shown thus far, is that the trumpet of YHWH will sound, the dead will be raised (resurrection), and the living will be “gathered” together. Then after the Millennium, the changing will take place, in which all living disciples will be “changed” in order for the earth to be destroyed (baptized!?) by fire, and a new heavens and new earth are made.

to shew thyself approved unto YHWH, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing** the word of truth.” To illustrate this principle the reader is referred to the life of Yeshua. Yeshua is in synagogue and is given the book of Isaiah to read. He reads the following passage. Luke 4:18-19

“18 The Spirit of YHWH is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of YHWH.” The important thing to take note of, is the passage He is reading from in Isaiah 61:1-2. Verse two reads as follows: “To proclaim the acceptable year of YHWH, **and** the day of vengeance of our YHWH; to comfort all that mourn;” The reader will do well to note that Yeshua stopped in the middle of the sentence, and declared that what He had just read has been fulfilled in their hearing (Luke 4:21). Had He read the whole sentence, He could not have truthfully made this statement. What this illustrates for us, is that, just because there are several items or events listed in one sentence, does not force them to be fulfilled at the same time. Likewise, in the passage we are dealing with, the resurrection and the rapture (catching up and changing) need not be fulfilled simultaneously, as we must “rightly divide” the word of Truth.

Chapter 14

=====

The Second Coming

Just how will the second coming of Yeshua affect mankind? This event will bring to a conclusion this present age. And it will be the beginning of ATID LAVO (Hebrew meaning: the Age to Come).

The popular teaching of today, says that Yeshua comes again in two stages. However, the Scripture does not make this distinction. While the previous chapter dealt with one specific aspect (the rapture) of the return of Messiah, this chapter will discuss the broader, more encompassing affairs of the second coming.

The sureness of death in this life cannot be argued. It comes to all Adam's race. Even Yeshua suffered this fate which all of all mankind share. This was the first time He came. The second time He comes, will not be in reference to sin (death is a result of sin).

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Messiah was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Hebrews 9:27

The first time Yeshua came, was to bear the sins of many. The second time will not be in reference to sin and death, but in reference to salvation and life to those who believe, and judgment to those who do not believe. Notice that neither here, nor in any other place, is there any mention of a third appearance.

The Day of His Return

There are 15 different phrases used in the New Testament to describe this day. Each of these will be looked at briefly to acquaint the reader with the wording of each. Other references will be given to the reader, so that if he wishes, he may look them up as well.

The Day

But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in **the day** when the Son of man is revealed.

Luke 17:29, 30

1 Corinthians 3:13; & Hebrews 10:25

The context of "the day" that Yeshua is revealing, is dealing with the APOKALUPSIS, the "revealing" that was discussed in an earlier chapter.

That Day

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which YHWH, the righteous judge, shall give me at **that day**; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

2 Timothy 4:8; & Luke 10:12

Here the context of that day, is speaking of the EPIPHANEIA, the "appearing" or "shining forth." It can be seen here, that the judgment and rewards of the righteous are being written about.

His Day

For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in **his day**.

Luke 17:24

This verse is speaking about the universality of the coming of the Son of Man, as spoken of here in this context of “His day.”

The Day of Messiah

That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till **the day of Messiah;**

Philippians 1:10; & Philippians 2:16

Here, the need to live a holy and righteous life is being expounded upon, so that one can escape the coming judgment (be blameless) the day Yeshua returns.

The Day of Yeshua Messiah

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until **the day of Yeshua Messiah:**

Philippians 1:6

Yeshua will continue to minister in the lives of those who believe in Him, via the Holy Spirit, until He returns. This is the same context as the previous one (Philippians 1:10), showing it is the same day.

The Day of YHWH

For yourselves know perfectly that **the day of YHWH** so cometh as a thief in the night.

1 Thessalonians 5:2

2 Thessalonians 2:2

The context here, is that the disciple will not be caught unaware as the unbeliever will be, for the unbeliever does not know YHWH. It is speaking of Yeshua’s coming, and the effect it will have upon each group.

The Day of our Master Yeshua

As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of Master Yeshua.

2 Corinthians 1:14

This is speaking once again, of the judgment and rewards at the return of Yeshua.

The Day of our Master Yeshua Messiah

Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in **the day of our Master Yeshua Messiah.**

1 Corinthians 1:8

See comment on the “day of Messiah.” This is speaking of the exact same truth, so it must mean the same exact day.

The Day of Judgment

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in **the day of judgment:** because as he is, so are we in this world.

1 John 4:17

Again, this is speaking of the “Day of Judgment.” So far, two different phrases have been dealing with the judgment, tying them together as meaning the same day.

The Great Day

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of **the great day.**

Jude 1:6

Again, the judgment is being taught about, and again with a different phrase referring to that particular day.

The Great Day of Their Wrath

For **the great day of his wrath** is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Revelation 6:17

The reader is probably beginning to get the picture that all these different phrases do not mean different days. In fact, they are all dealing with the exact same day, just different aspects of that day. This one is dealing with the wrath of YHWH.

The Great Day of YHWH Almighty

For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that **great day of YHWH Almighty**.

Revelation 16:14

Here again, this one is dealing with the return of Yeshua, and the ensuing battle with the kings of the earth.

The Day of Wrath and Revelation

But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against **the day of wrath and revelation** of the righteous judgment of YHWH;

Romans 2:5

Once again, we see the wrath with a different phrase.

The Last Day

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**. 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 at **the last day**.

John 6:39, 40

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**.

John 6:44

Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at **the last day**.

John 6:54

Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

John 11:24

He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in **the last day**.

John 12:48

Now look at these phrases all together. Beginning with the phrase, "the last day," one learns from these passages, that on the last day, the resurrection occurs, as does the judgment. Since the resurrection occurs on the last day, there cannot be another day that follows it, let alone seven more years' worth of days, or one thousand years' worth of days. When does the resurrection occur? It has been shown, that the resurrection was before the "rapture," which was at the end of the millennium. So, here is one more piece of the puzzle to help further one's understanding of when Yeshua will return, and when those who have believed upon His name will be gathered to Him.

In looking at the verse that contains the phrase, "the day of wrath and revelation," one finds that, along with the revelation of the judgment of YHWH, comes His wrath. Upon examining the passage that contains the phrase, "the great day," we find the judgment of angels. On "that day," the Righteous Judge also will reward His servants.

So what we see on the last day, is the resurrection, judgment, and wrath all occurring.

In the verse that contains the phrase, “the great day of their wrath,” one finds the unrighteous crying out to the mountains and the rocks to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. The unrighteous and the wicked are caught unawares on that day, as it comes upon them as “a thief in the night” (the Day of YHWH).

The work that was begun in His disciples will be perfected until “the day of Yeshua Messiah,” that they might be sincere and blameless in “the day of Messiah,” confirmed to “the day of Master Yeshua Messiah,” having confidence in the “day of judgment.” They will not need to be ashamed on the “day of Master Yeshua.”

If the reader has been counting the phrases, then he or she will know that only 14 phrases have been examined so far. The next phrase, “the day of YHWH,” is found in only one passage: 2 Peter 3:12. But one of the other phrases, is also found in this same context, the Day of YHWH, which is also found in 1 Thessalonians 5:2, and in 2 Thessalonians 2:2. It is important in this particular passage, to look at the entire paragraph.

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with YHWH as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 YHWH is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10 But **the day of YHWH** will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and righteousness, 12 looking for and hastening unto the coming of **the day of YHWH**, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness.

2 Pet 3:8-13

In verse 10, the phrase in English reads, “the day of the Master.” In verse 12, the phrase in English reads, “the day of YHWH.” In both verses 10 and 12, these individual phrases are dealing with the “burning of the elements,” thus teaching us that both phrases are dealing with the same day. Furthermore, in verse eight, a very important truth is brought to light in relation to the millennium. And that is, that YHWH sees the millennium as “one day.” So, from the beginning of the thousand years to the end of the thousand years, there will be many events occurring. But as far as prophecy goes, it is all but one day. Therefore, it is important for the student of prophecy to look carefully at any given passage, in order to be able to determine (if possible) whether it should be placed at the beginning of the millennium or at the end of it. And some events will not be able to be placed with any more specificity than being in that one day. For instance, the return of Yeshua is during this day, the third day. However, once certain events take place and all things are restored according to Scripture, according to prophecy and YHWH’s timetable, then Yeshua could return at any time during that day, whether it is at the end, towards the beginning, or somewhere in between. Perhaps this is the meaning of the phrase in this passage, “Looking for and hastening unto the coming of **the day of YHWH**.”

As these passages are examined in their contexts, one begins to understand that all of these different phrases are referring to the same “day,” the millennium. There are not 15 different days referred to, because there are 15 different phrases! One cannot arbitrarily insert a division in these phrases and say that there are two different days being spoken of, when the context of these verses will not support that supposition.

Other Truths about the Day of His Return

This section will examine specific words in the Greek text, in order to further one’s understanding of the return of Messiah. One might say, that this section deals with dotting the “i’s,” and crossing the “t’s.” The deeper one digs into the Scripture, the more important it is, not to forget that the Scripture is to be kept whole, and that one must “reassemble what has been taken apart,” in order to have an accurate picture of what has been studied. Keeping these things in mind, one is ready to proceed on into the next section.

The PAROUSIA: This Greek word is translated into the English as “coming.” Its meaning is “the coming or arrival of a ruling dignitary” as he came to a city on an official visit, and was welcomed with much pomp and pageantry by the local citizens. It denotes the arrival, and consequent presence with, those he is coming to. This is a picture of Yeshua at His coming, which is after the tribulation.

In Matthew 24:3, the disciples ask Yeshua what would be the sign of His “coming.” The following discourse by Yeshua as recorded in Matthew 24 & 25, is His response to that question. In verse 27, He gives the analogy of the lightning, showing that His “coming” will be visible to all. In verse 37, He tells them that His

“coming” will be just like the days of Noah, in which the wicked were all swept away. He says that the wicked will not understand this until it is too late, and they (the wicked) are being swept away.

In 1 Corinthians 15:23, one finds that it is at the PAROUSIA that the resurrection takes place. Also, in the following verse, one finds that the end follows His “coming,” and at that time He delivers the kingdom over to YHWH the Father,³¹ after He has abolished all other power and authority except His own.

There are two verses in the book of 1 Thessalonians, that at first glance, seem to say opposing views. These are 3:13; and 4:15.

To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before YHWH, even our Father, at the coming of our Master Yeshua Messiah with all his saints.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

For this we say unto you by the word of YHWH, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of YHWH shall not prevent them which are asleep.

1 Thessalonians 4:15

The passage of 3:13, says that at the PAROUSIA of Yeshua, He comes **with all** His saints. Probably the best possible view of this verse, is in light of the next reference. Here one learns, that the resurrection takes place **before** the saints who are living are caught up to be with Yeshua. So, the previous verse is probably stating, that it is with all the saints who have died in Messiah. Not only this, but also that Yeshua has met (vs. 17, meet) those who are alive “in the air,” and they too are continuing on to earth with Yeshua as He returns.

It can be clearly seen here, that the “catching up” of the saints Paul is referring to, is at the PAROUSIA of Yeshua as is referred to in Matthew 24.

Paul’s second letter to the assembly of disciples at Thessalonica gives additional information on the PAROUSIA. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit he teaches that the (i.e., the body’s) gathering together to Messiah is at His coming, the PAROUSIA (2:1). Also, in verse 8, he teaches that it is at the PAROUSIA that Yeshua will slay the Anti-Messiah.

Finally, the apostle John in his first epistle, teaches that disciples may have confidence at His PAROUSIA, if they abide in Him. What coincides with the “coming” of Messiah, as shown in the preceding passages is that 1) His coming will be visible; 2) the wicked will be swept away in judgment; 3) the resurrection takes place; 4) Yeshua returns to earth with all His saints; 5) it is at His “coming” that He gathers disciples together; 6) Yeshua slays the Anti-Messiah; and 7) a person can have confidence on that day, if he abides in Messiah. It would be impossible for Yeshua to return for His body of disciples before the tribulation, and destroy the Anti-Messiah after the tribulation at His “coming,” unless the gathering of the saints is at the end of the tribulation. Can a person arbitrarily pull out one aspect of the PAROUSIA and rightfully say that this happens at another time? No!

The APOKALUPSIS: The English word “apocalypse” finds its origins in this Greek word. It means “revelation; literally a disclosure; an appearing or coming, to lighten, a manifestation, to be revealed.” This is what the saints (all saints) at Corinth were waiting for, not for the rapture (or secret coming) (1 Corinthians 1:7).

Paul gives a graphic account of this “revelation” of Yeshua, in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to all those who do not obey Him (2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8). This is a picture of the coming judgment. Notice the correlation of the fire and judgment of the APOKALUPSIS with that of the PAROUSIA. These two words are describing the same event, only looking at different truths concerning that same event. The hope of grace that will be for all disciples, will be brought to them at His “revelation,” tying the APOKALUPSIS and the PAROUSIA together.

The EPIPHANEIA: This word means “splendor, the advent of Messiah, a manifestation, appearing, brightness, or shining (forth).” Here is a picture of the breaking forth of the glory of Yeshua in all His majesty. In 2 Thessalonians 2:8, this word is found modifying PAROUSIA. His “coming” will be bright and glorious; again signifying that His coming will not be in secret or only to a few, but rather to all of mankind.

His followers are to keep the commandment of Yeshua until He “appears.” It will be by the “appearing” of Yeshua, that the living and the dead are judged (2 Timothy 4:1). Also, it will be at the “appearing” of Messiah, that the righteous will be rewarded (2 Timothy 4:8). The body is further admonished in Titus 2:13, to look for their hope

³¹Reader take note of this, as this may be a very strong indication that His “Parousia” (coming) will be at the end of the day (end of the millennium). Again, it is important that one stays open to what YHWH will do.

and His “appearing.”

Considering the different episodes that are to occur at the PAROUSIA, the APOKALUPSIS, and the EPIPHANEIA, it becomes evident that these words all refer to the same event.

The APANTESIS: This word was discussed earlier. It means a friendly encounter, a meeting. Here is the picture of Yeshua, the Bridegroom, coming for His bride, as shown in Matthew 25:1,6. Also see 1 Thessalonians 4:17, in which the disciples “meet” Messiah in the air. As shown in the discussion of the PAROUSIA, this meeting takes place at the “coming” of Yeshua.

The ANASTASIS: This word means “a standing up again,” literally, “a resurrection from the dead, raised to life again.” As was discussed under PAROUSIA, in 1 Corinthians 15:23 (see vs. 21 for “resurrection”), the ANASTASIS occurs at the “coming” of Yeshua. This could be a reference to Ezekiel 37 of the valley of dry bones, in which the bones came together and then stood up.

The apostle John records that the “resurrection” will be on the last day (John 11:24,25). This “resurrection” will include both the righteous and the unrighteous (John 5:28,29).

The KRISIS: This word means “justice, specifically, divine law; accusation, condemnation, damnation or judgment.” This is what will happen to the unrepentant wicked on the day that Yeshua returns. Also, the angels that fell from grace are being reserved for that day (Jude 6).

As shown in the discussion of the APOKALUPSIS, Yeshua will deal out this retribution (judgment; 2 Thessalonians 1:5) at the time He is revealed. It is also at this time, that He will give relief to the afflicted in Messiah.

What has been shown, is that the coming of Messiah coincides with His revelation, His appearing, the meeting of disciples with Him, His gathering up of the saints, the resurrection (which comes before the gathering of the saints), the giving of relief and rest to the saints, the rewarding of the saints, and the judgment of the wicked and the angels who fell. This is the picture of the second coming of Yeshua according to YHWH’s Word.

Section IV

=====

What Can I Do To Get Ready?

Thus far, only what Scripture teaches concerning the specific coming of Messiah, has been discussed. This section will now move into the practical aspect of getting ready for that event. One needs to realize the importance of preparing himself completely for what is to come. One will need to be ready mentally for all that is to come upon all who dwell upon the face of the earth, especially disciples. The chapters of this section, are dedicated to helping one endure to the end victoriously as an overcomer. The greatest concern of this writer, is that a great number of those within the body will stop short, and not walk in the fullness of YHWH's plan and will for their lives. Along with being mentally prepared, one should be ready spiritually. If one is not ready in this area of his life, any other preparations will be meaningless.

Then the social preparedness of one's life, will play an important role in helping one to "survive" until Yeshua comes again.

Perhaps the most controversial subject in the body will be the last two chapters. It is as if those within the body are so insecure, that even the discussion of this topic is avoided. This author will try to take an honest look at what the Scriptures say in relation to material possessions.

Finally, the last chapter will present some questions for the individual to take before YHWH. Taken honestly and openly, YHWH will help you to discover your place in the body of Messiah in the last days.

Chapter 15

=====

Mental Preparedness

In order to be mentally prepared for what is to come, one must have a good understanding that he will, in fact, face the Anti-Messiah. This means that he must know the difference between the wrath of YHWH, and what it means to undergo tribulation. A good working knowledge of the subject is needed, in order to continue to live a victorious life. One must have complete dependence upon the Holy Spirit, to have the understanding needed to prevail under the pressures that this life so often delivers upon mankind; especially, it seems, upon the followers of Yeshua.

This chapter will distinguish between YHWH's wrath and tribulation. Comprehending this difference is crucial to gaining and holding onto a victorious life.

YHWH's Wrath

YHWH's wrath is that unfailing opposition of His holy love, and that steady holy displeasure (Revelation 14:9-11) directed at sin (Revelation 14:19), which originates from within the very nature of YHWH Himself (Romans 2:5). Because YHWH is a holy Elohim, He must punish sin and evil. He is so holy, that sin and evil cannot come into His presence. The Scriptures teach that it is the unrighteous (Romans 1:18), the unrepentant (Romans 2:5), and the disobedient (Romans 2:8), who will experience the wrath that is to come. Each person at one time, if not presently, was subject to this coming judgment. However, if a person believes upon Yeshua Messiah, he is no longer a child of wrath (1 Thessalonians 5:9), because Yeshua has taken upon Himself (Ephesians 2:3) that penalty (wrath), so that they might be spared (escape) and have eternal life (Romans 6:23).³²

YHWH's wrath needs to be distinguished from the great tribulation or persecution. YHWH's wrath is reserved for the wicked and non-disciples. However, anyone can experience tribulation, especially disciples in Messiah (John 16:33). While YHWH poured out His wrath upon the people of Egypt, the children of Israel (YHWH's people) suffered tribulation at the same time. The suffering of this tribulation was due in large part because of Israel's association with YHWH, and the Egyptian's putting the blame upon them for their plight. This was not only true then, but throughout the ages, and will be true during the great tribulation. YHWH can, and has, poured forth His wrath and protected His children from His wrath, in the midst of that wrath (Exodus 8:22-24; 9:6; 9:26; and the Passover 12:23ff.). This is made possible by the Blood of the Lamb being applied to the heart of the disciple. And, as a result of that wrath being poured out, blame will be fixed upon the people of YHWH, and they will suffer persecution and tribulation as a result.

Testing Of the Saints

The norm of the life of a disciple is one of trial and testing, much of it coming from YHWH Himself. Peter admonishes that this should not surprise the true disciple.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Messiah's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

1 Peter 4:12, 13

Please note, that this testing of disciples will continue until the revelation (APOKALUPSIS) of Yeshua Messiah. These things come upon disciples of Yeshua that they might share in the sufferings of Messiah and be found worthy of eternal life.³³

³²Beacon Dictionary of Theology, Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1983, Page 552

³³This worthiness is not a result of works or actions on the part of the disciple, but upon the holiness of Yeshua. But it can be

James echoes this same truth, that disciples are to be joyful in these hard times (1:2-4). That sounds like a difficult thing to do. No one likes to suffer, so to have joy while going through a trial, almost seems contradictory. But James goes on to say, they have the privilege of asking for wisdom if they do not know how to have joy in their trials (1:5).

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

James 1:2,3 (NAS)

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;
Romans 5:3

In both of these passages, we are to exult in the hard times, because this produces endurance or perseverance, something which we all have need of (Hebrews 10:36), “so that when you have done the will of YHWH, you may receive what was promised.” The writer to the Hebrews further teaches on enduring when he says,

“It is for discipline that you endure; YHWH deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?”

Hebrews 12:7 (NAS)

Notice that the discipline which YHWH uses in the life of the disciple, often comes in the form of trial, tribulation, or suffering. That is not to say that all suffering in the life of a disciple is discipline from YHWH. It can, at times, seem rather harsh, but YHWH always applies the needed discipline with love, care, and compassion. He will do what is necessary to make His people into the image of His Son, for the sake of His kingdom, as He continually sanctifies each and every disciple.

Those who take the name of Messiah, may suffer at the hands of those who do not believe; i.e., “persecuted, but not forsaken” (2 Corinthians 4:9). The world may throw its worst at His own, but He shall never forsake them or leave them. Nor will He allow the disciple to suffer more than he is able to endure (1 Corinthians 10:13).

The early disciples counted it an honor to suffer for the name of Messiah (Acts 5:41). Paul even wrote to the disciples at Philippi that there was “fellowship” in the sufferings of Messiah (Philippians 3:10). Then Peter wrote that,

But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

1 Peter 3:14

Finally, the enemy, the Devil, comes in all his might to tempt YHWH's children to do evil, to disobey the Spirit that dwells within us. But He is mightier than he who dwells in the world; and He has provided the way of escape for them in advance.

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and YHWH is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide **the way** of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NAS)

What is “the way” of escape? Knowing the answer to that question, is probably the key to understanding this verse. Notice that “way” is not plural, indicating that there is only one way. The question then comes to mind, “What is ‘the way’ of escape?” John 14:6, states that Yeshua is “the way”. The way of escape is Yeshua! The way is not a what, but rather a Person. The only victorious way to deal with one's troubles, in his everyday living, can only be found in the person of Yeshua. Yeshua is the only Person who ever was able to resist temptation and not

clearly shown in Scripture, that no person can have eternal life, who is not obedient to YHWH by obeying His commandments.

sin. He is the only One who can help one not to sin. When temptation comes, whatever the form, He will not allow one to be tempted beyond his spiritual maturity. Not only this, but He has been tempted in all things, and knows how to help His people in that hour of need. The temptation disciples are dealing with, has plagued all of mankind. That common temptation, is to not obey YHWH. But each person must choose to obey Him, because they love Him. This is where the spiritual battle is the fiercest in the life of the follower of Yeshua.

Temptation needs to be distinguished from tribulation, persecution, trials, and troubles, suffering, and testing. When a disciple enters a test, YHWH is teaching that person a truth that he cannot afford to miss. However, with each test, comes the adversary to tempt the disciple to fail the test, to tempt him to be disobedient to YHWH. Learning to recognize the test early on, will not only help speed the learning process, but also shorten the test, as well as lessen the chance of succumbing to the temptation.

Then, notice that having examined testing, trials, suffering, tribulation, persecution and now temptation, one is brought back to the need for enduring. To have these truths fixed in one's mind, will go a long way towards preparing one for the hardships that are to come. If a person knows sufferings are coming, and is not surprised by them, then it becomes more likely that he will be able to endure to the end without faltering and coming up short of the "upward call of YHWH in Messiah Yeshua."

Being mentally prepared is not a substitute for being ready spiritually, nor is it a substitute for the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the disciple, but rather, in conjunction with it. This will be dealt with in the following chapter on *Spiritual Preparedness*, and more in the last two chapters of this book.

Chapter 16

=====

Spiritual Preparedness

Of all that one can do to prepare for what is coming in the days ahead, if one thing is more important than the rest, this would be it, simply because, if one is not prepared spiritually, then it becomes doubtful if one would have the proper tools to “endure to the end.” The importance of being prepared in this area, may be emphasized only from an academic perspective, considering that a person is a unified being; i.e., he is made up of all the aforementioned areas. While he is probably not balanced in these areas, this does not release one from the duty of seeking that balance within himself, and to be prepared in all aspects for whatever comes into the life of the disciple.

One might do well to reread the first section on “*How to Study the Scripture*,” and the subheading of “*Like Messiah*” in the chapter, “*Empowered for Service*,” to help in preparing one spiritually. Keeping those principles in mind, and building upon them, additional areas will be covered here. The significance of living a holy life every day carries so much weight, that unless a person is practicing that kind of lifestyle, it will be impossible for him to prepare himself properly. This is so true, and so important, that the author hopes each reader will allow him to repeat it again as a safeguard for them. The significance of living a holy life every day, carries so much weight, that unless a person is practicing that kind of lifestyle, it will be impossible for him to prepare himself properly.

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;
1 Peter 1:15

By practicing living in this manner, it will not matter in what order the events surrounding the return of Yeshua in the “last days” occurs. Nor, for that matter, the magnitude of the circumstances in which one finds himself, whether that be in his daily living before or during the tribulation. It might be pointed out here, that there are, most likely, to be times in a person’s life when he does not measure up to the standard of holiness that YHWH requires. However, more significant than the actual flawless execution of YHWH’s will, is the intent in which the disciple tries. YHWH knows the intent of every person’s heart, whether it be for obedience or for disobedience.

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of **disobedience**. For the word of YHWH is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the **thoughts** and **intentions** of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Hebrews 4:11-13 (NAS)

Verse 13 in the above passage, can be a very comforting truth, if one is an obedient child of the King. However, if one is a disobedient child, or a non-disciple, then it can be a very discomfoting truth to know that there is nothing hidden from the One True Judge. And hopefully, this knowledge would move one into full obedience to the Word of YHWH.

By allowing Yeshua to live His life through the disciple by the power of the Holy Spirit, one is ready at all times to go be with his Master. As was discussed in an earlier chapter, one’s life may be required of him at any time (Luke 12:13-21). This becomes especially pertinent when considering the role that the Anti-Messiah will play, and the relationship he has to the body of disciples.

The Anti-Messiah and the Body of Disciples

Since YHWH has already warned us through His Holy Word, it is not clear from Scripture how much immediate warning the disciple will have, that the Anti-Messiah has arisen. Thus, he must be prepared to deal with

him at all times.³⁴ Being somewhat familiar with Revelation 13 and related passages, will help prepare one's heart and mind for when the Holy Spirit will speak to him, telling him that this is Anti-Messiah.

Each person must be firmly convinced that he can in no way swear allegiance to the Anti-Messiah and have eternal life. There is no way that a person can maintain his relationship with YHWH, and pay homage to the Anti-Messiah.

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of YHWH, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: **and the smoke of their torment ascends up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.**

Revelation 14:9-11

One of the things that will be done under the rule of the Anti-Messiah, will be that all will receive a mark upon their foreheads (symbolic of thoughts) or right hands (symbolic of actions); and anyone who does not receive this mark, will not be able to buy or sell. That will make it difficult to obtain food and other necessities, but probably not impossible. So the pressure to receive the mark of the beast will be very intense, possibly making one feel desperate at times.

Understanding that one cannot join in with the Anti-Messiah, may not be the most difficult reality to grasp during this period. But it may be, as king Nebuchadnezzar discovered, that understanding that all authority is established by YHWH, and that no authority can be established without Him, will be difficult to grasp, as the kingdom of the Anti-Messiah is established.

Till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and **giveth it to whomsoever he will.**

Daniel 4:25b

And again;

Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is **no authority except from YHWH**, and those which exist are **established by YHWH**. Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of YHWH; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

Romans 13:1, 2 (NAS)

This puts the disciple in Messiah, in a quandary that seems to have no answer. The Scripture teaches YHWH's people, that they are to be in subjection to the government which YHWH has established over them. However, there is a government coming that is so opposed to YHWH, that YHWH has seen fit to warn them in advance of the establishment of that government. This does not release one from the obligation one has under His law, to be in subjection to (not fight against?) the government that He chooses to establish over mankind. And to put it bluntly, the government of the Anti-Messiah is YHWH's will. This will be a hard one for many to understand, but it is true. The establishment of this wicked government, may not be the direct result of YHWH's hand, but He does allow it to be established.

It should be said here, that YHWH can, and does, use unrighteous men to further establish His own kingdom. This is not to say that there is any unrighteousness in the nature of YHWH, only that He is sovereign over His creation. This is what was revealed to king Nebuchadnezzar. YHWH will place in authority over a people, the type of ruler they deserve. If the people are wicked (or desire wickedness), then He will place a wicked ruler over them. If the people are righteous (or desire righteousness), then He will place a righteous ruler over them.

So the dilemma is, that since one cannot join, nor can one fight against this coming wicked government of the Anti-Messiah, then what is left? Turn now once again, to the words of Yeshua as recorded in the book of Matthew.

³⁴There will be many anti-Messiahs and false prophets that go out into the world; and the followers of Yeshua need to be ready to deal with them at any time, regardless of when The Anti-Messiah arises.

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judea **flee** into the mountains: let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your **flight** be not in the winter, neither on the Shabbat day: for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Matthew 24:15-21

Who or what is “the abomination of desolation?” This may be the key to understanding this passage as referenced in Daniel 9:23, 27; 12:11. He is most commonly known as “the Anti-Messiah.” So Yeshua warns that when the reader sees the Anti-Messiah standing in the holy place,³⁵ he is to flee to the mountains. Yeshua seems especially concerned about those who are in Judea, probably because of the close proximity of the Anti-Messiah. However, He also addresses those who are in the field or on the housetop, wherever they may be. They too, are to go in such haste that they leave everything behind. Yeshua even tells his disciples to pray that their flight would not be in the winter or on a Shabbat.³⁶ Have you prayed this prayer? If not, why not? YHWH’s word tells His people to do so. Perhaps, you do not really believe YHWH’s word.

The implication of what Yeshua says in this passage could mean the difference between life and death; between freedom and imprisonment; between being a part of His Kingdom and not being a part of His Kingdom. Now is the time to think this issue through. The quickness with which Yeshua implores these to flee, indicates that any indecision or hesitation may make it too late. Why the expeditiousness of the hour will be so crucial, will be examined in this study next.

The Anti-Messiah against the Body

Since disciples are the body of Messiah, it is only logical that the Anti-Messiah would be anti-disciple (anti-body) as well. The book of Revelation teaches some specific things about what the beast will do against the body of Messiah.

There are many synonyms for the body used in the New Testament. Among those used frequently, are “assembly,” “elect,” “saints,” “brethren,” and “body of Messiah.” Here in this passage, one of those terms is found.

And it was given unto him to make war with the **saints**, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, **whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**

Revelation 13:7, 8

It would do the reader well to take note, that every person who has not accepted Yeshua as his personal Savior, will worship the beast. This is bad news for the non-disciple, because all who worship the beast, will burn in everlasting fire.³⁷ On the other hand, those who have accepted Yeshua, and whose name is written in the Book of

³⁵ Just where and what the “holy place” might be, can only be guessed at now. As it related to the tabernacle of the Old Testament, it was the first “room” the priest entered on his way to the “Holy of Holies,” the place where the Ark of the Covenant and the mercy seat were placed. This is probably the most likely meaning here. However, this writer would strongly admonish the reader not to limit himself to a narrow interpretation of this verse. Certainly this should not be excluded, but one must keep in mind, that in Jerusalem, there are many “places” considered “holy.” One such place is the Wailing Wall. The disciples must depend upon the Holy Spirit to inform and teach when the time is right. So keeping abreast of the current events in the world, especially in and around Israel, take on a new urgency.

³⁶ This is only one passage of many which gives strong indication that Yeshua’s true disciples would still be observing the seventh-day Shabbat just as they were when Yeshua said this, and that this prophecy was recorded for us today. The Fourth Commandment is still in effect; it has not changed. The key word in this commandment is the word “remember.” Only Yeshua was able to keep the Sabbath, we can only observe it (remember it).

³⁷ The reader may do well, to take note of Matthew 5:30. Could it be that a person who has taken the mark on his right hand could still be saved by repenting and cutting off his hand or plucking out his eye? Neither of those acts would save a person; it

Life, will be sought after by the beast with a vengeance, as though a war had been declared. This will be very similar to what Hitler did in Nazi Germany, only much worse, for it will be worldwide.

Once in conducting a Scripture study on the subject of the second coming, a person brought up the question of her husband who was, at that time, unsaved. This is a valid concern for anyone who has loved ones who have not yet accepted Yeshua as their own personal Savior. Her question dealt with what she should do when the Anti-Messiah came into power if her husband was still not saved. This is a valid and pointed question, and a question that needs an answer for many people who live in a home where one, or both, the husband and wife are not saved.

First, each person must realize that YHWH loves you! YHWH loves your unsaved spouse as well, and desires for them to repent and believe upon Yeshua. However, one must begin to deal with this issue at the point of his own relationship with Yeshua. If one's relationship with Yeshua is where it should be, then that person can be assured that YHWH will take care of him in ANY circumstance in which he might find himself. Of course, the best scenario would be for the husband (or wife) to accept Yeshua and that they face this coming tribulation as a family. However, Yeshua teaches that there will be those families that "father will be against son, daughter against mother, etc." So, each person should begin now to answer the question of, "What would I do when this happens?" Staying with an unsaved spouse, may mean imprisonment and perhaps death, but there is nothing wrong with that, as one would just go to be with Yeshua. Staying may also mean the salvation of that unsaved spouse. Hopefully, each will be obedient to Messiah, regardless of the cost. Again, it is imperative that each person get close to, and remain close to, Yeshua through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, so one will not have "hearing" problems when it becomes critical to hear clearly His instructions. Whatever the decisions, whatever the course of action taken, keep in mind the mandate of the Master - go and make disciples.

The spiritual preparation to deal with this contingency should begin now, as that will make it that much easier to deal with when the Anti-Messiah does rise to power. This writer is not suggesting that one live in the realm of "what if...?", rather to be aware of one's own personal situation and be prepared to act accordingly at the appropriate time according to Scripture.

Verse 15 echoes the truth that the Anti-Messiah will kill those who refuse to worship him.

And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and **cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.**

Revelation 13:15

It was shown in the previous passage, that everyone whose name is not written in the Book of Life will worship the beast. So, only those who are of the body of Messiah will be killed by the Anti-Messiah; everyone else will take the mark and worship the beast.

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to **receive a mark** in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that **no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark**, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is **the number of a man**; and his number is six hundred threescore and six.

Revelation 13:16-18

The Anti-Messiah who is described in this chapter is a man. This passage gives the number of that man. Exactly what that number means, can only be guessed at now; but when the man, the Anti-Messiah comes, the Holy Spirit will teach all true disciples who he is, and what his number is, what it means, and what the mark is, and anything else that is pertinent to this situation.

Remember, YHWH loves you and cares for you. He does not want you to be deceived and perish. Practice listening to His Voice now, so that when the time comes, you will be able to hear His Voice clearly when it will be a life or death matter. The reality is that it is a life and death matter right now; only it is difficult to see, due to the ease in which people live today.

Lastly, the Anti-Messiah will even gather the armies of the world, in an effort to do battle with the returning King of Kings, Yeshua. However, as has been shown earlier, the Anti-Messiah will be slain when Yeshua returns (2 Thessalonians 2:8).

would still be YHWH doing the act of salvation. However, in order for the repentance to be genuine, would a person have to remove the mark from their body? It's something to consider.

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together **to make war against him** that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Revelation 19:19, 20

This is the last battle of this present age, in which every nation of the earth is involved. Notice, that the battle seems to be over, even before it starts. Yeshua simply takes these two, the beast and the false prophet, and throws them into the lake of fire.

Why Flee?

The question that this heading asks, is one which rarely seems to be addressed. Just before Yeshua ascended into heaven, He commissioned His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. This task is nearing its completion. Those final days during the reign of the Anti-Messiah, will see the fulfillment of the body's task. This is the very reason for the flight.

Look at what happened to the early disciples, to help understand what will be happening during the reign of the Anti-Messiah.

And at that time there was a great persecution against the assembly of disciples which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.

Acts 8:1b, 4

A great persecution had broken out against the disciples, and as a result of this, the disciples were scattered throughout the region. As these disciples went, they told everyone they came in contact with, the good news of Yeshua. They preached Yeshua!

When that final and great persecution begins, disciples will have to flee in order to stay one jump ahead of the Anti-Messiah. And as they go, they will preach Yeshua. Some will be arrested. Some will be killed. But many will come to know Yeshua in a personal and saving way. The disciples will fulfill their commission during the reign of the Anti-Messiah. The commission that Yeshua gave to His disciples will be fulfilled by His disciples in the last days!

How should I react?

One reaction that should be avoided, is that of fear. Fear will paralyze and rob one of the joy of YHWH. The love of Yeshua in one's life should keep one from being fearful of any situation that might come into his life.

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear hath torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love.

1 John 4:17, 18

A child of the King is not reserved for judgment, therefore one should not fear. Any suffering that will come in this life is only temporary, no matter how severe or intense it may be.

There are some practical responses that one can, and should, take. The first of these, is that one should be alert to what is taking place in the world, in the Community of Disciples, and in his own community.

“And what I say to you I say to all, **‘Be on the alert.’**”

Mark 13:37 (NAS)

And again;

But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

1 Thessalonians 5:4-6

This passage teaches, that as a child of the light, he has a duty and responsibility to know and be aware of what is taking place. True disciples are not to be surprised by what YHWH does and is doing. While they do not, neither will not, know the exact timing of Messiah's coming, because they are children of the light, they will not be surprised. Let that truth soak into your being. The truth of this promise is so great that its meaning will bring joy and victory to those who will hear the Spirit in the days ahead. True disciples will not, and cannot, be surprised by the coming of Messiah because He has given His own Spirit to them. The Spirit of Messiah (the Holy Spirit) dwells in them. In other words, Yeshua cannot surprise Himself! Can He? His desire is not to sneak up on them, but rather to love, protect, and preserve them until He comes.

Along with being alert and sober, is the importance of prayer.

Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is YHWH's will for you in Messiah Yeshua. But **examine everything carefully**; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; 21-22 (NAS)

This passage presents an intriguing parallel. The words "always," "without ceasing," and "everything," tell something about the completeness of what one's life in Messiah should be. "Rejoicing always" represents a life of worship. "Praying without ceasing" represents one's constant companionship and communication with YHWH.³⁸ "In everything give thanks" represents an attitude and acknowledgment that one receives everything he has, and has nothing that he has not received from YHWH.

A person doing these things, will be joyful in spite of any adverse circumstances, appear to have just talked with YHWH, and act as though he were taking care of YHWH's business.

This brings to light the need to exhibit self-control.

Everything will come to an end soon, so, to pray better, keep a calm and sober mind.

1 Peter 4:7 (Jerusalem)

Unless a person is willing to control his desires, or perhaps more accurately, allow YHWH to control them, since one does not have the strength to resist temptation, he will not be alert. Notice how prayer ties in with being alert, sober, and self-controlled.

One more item needs to be looked into here: that of worldliness, materialism, or worldly concerns. If a person's drives and ambitions are directed towards the things of this world, then he will not be as alert as YHWH desires for him to be.

"Be on guard, that your hearts may not be **weighted down** with dissipation and drunkenness and the **worries of life**, and **that day** come on you suddenly like a trap; for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of the earth. But keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Luke 21:34-36 (NAS)

³⁸In the Body today, there is a lot of rhetoric on how YHWH answers prayer. The most common version goes something like this, "YHWH answers prayer with a 'yes,' 'no,' or 'wait.'" I would challenge anyone to find this concept anywhere in the Scripture. The truth of the matter is, that this statement borders on idolatry. Now, if you think that is too strong a statement, consider the following. When a person chooses to believe something that is not true about YHWH and acts as if it is true, then this is the essence of idolatry (see A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, pg. 11-12). For then one is serving a god of his own making. YHWH wants to have a relationship with you as an individual. Consider the relationship between a husband and a wife. If the wife would continually ask the husband questions and queries, and the only answers she would receive would be either, "Yes," "no" or "wait," that wife would soon lose interest and the relationship would break down. The truth is, that YHWH wants to have a conversation with you, and that, on an ongoing basis. This is the type of relationship that is needed in order for one **not** to be deceived by the Anti-Messiah. Yeshua said that His sheep know His voice. Won't you take time to cultivate listening to the Voice of YHWH?

Yeshua taught His disciples that they should be alert. They should not let the things of this life take their attention away from the things that really matter: Kingdom things (eternal things). Yeshua promised that if a person puts the things of YHWH first in his life, then He will provide all the necessities of life (Matthew 6:33). This can be especially applicable to the time when a follower of Yeshua will not be able to provide for himself. Dependence upon YHWH must be complete.

One's reaction, then, should be one of action, not in fear, but in the power of the Spirit, in prayer, in watchfulness (alert), in self-control, and in not being weighted down by the worries of this life.

Chapter 17

=====

Social Preparedness

“How can a person be socially prepared for the tribulation?”

The Scripture teaches that Abraham was a friend of YHWH. This is probably the highest compliment that the Scripture could give to a person. Abraham was so close to YHWH, that YHWH would come and tell him what He was going to do. That is the type of friendship that is possible for any person who is willing to seek after it.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. **Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.** Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his master does; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

John 15:13-15

A person can be the friend of YHWH, if he is willing to obey Him. This is the only requirement to be His friend. The first duty of being obedient, is to believe on Yeshua and be saved. This is done by confessing your sins to YHWH and asking forgiveness.

Once this relationship is established, then the disciple has the responsibility to cultivate this friendship to its fullest. This is done by listening to YHWH and doing what He commands. (These commandments are found in Torah.) If a person is not willing to do this, he cannot be a friend of YHWH.

This friendship which one has with YHWH, is the only relationship that will ensure eternal life. Doing what a church denomination commands, will not. Doing what a preacher commands, will not. Doing what a government commands, will not. Doing what any other person commands, will not. While each of these things have a place in a person's life, especially when they agree with YHWH, only doing what YHWH has commanded, will ensure eternal life. This is not preaching salvation by works, but rather works by salvation. As Martin Luther said, “It is not against works which we contend, but against trust in works.”

In conjunction with one's friendship with YHWH, is one's friendship with His people. The cultivation of these two relationships is vital to being able to endure to the end.

This is **my commandment**, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

John 15:12

This commandment that Yeshua gives to all who would follow Him and be His friend, is that he is to love those who are a part of the body of Messiah. If a person is unwilling to love the person who has confessed Yeshua as YHWH, then he cannot be His friend. Each individual who has become a disciple in Messiah, must cultivate his friendship with YHWH and His people (Yisra'el). This will have a direct bearing on one's ability to endure. If one is a friend of YHWH, then he will have many friends in Messiah. Being able to recognize these friends, may be crucial to one's survival during the tribulation. Therefore, knowing His own now, becomes even more important.

Furthermore, when one chooses to observe holidays which are pagan in origin, then what suffers is the truth. And without truth, there can be no true spiritual fellowship. And, what takes its place, is something that is a counterfeit and is only on the surface. John 4:23 states, that we must worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Also, 1 John 1:6-7, teaches us that the only true fellowship exists when the truth is practiced (walking in the light). He further states, that when this is not done, then one becomes a liar and is in darkness.

True fellowship, with the Father and with one another, always involves truth. There can be no fellowship without it. Truth is hard to hear at times, but it must be heard and obeyed, for this is the only thing that leads to eternal life.

Chapter 18

=====

Physical Preparedness

The particular issue of preparing physically or materially is one that seems to be shunned by many, and in some cases, outright denouncement by others. It is an area that needs to be openly and honestly discussed within the body, to provide leadership and guidance to the members of the body. Many feel insecure, or perhaps, even threatened by this issue. But YHWH is big enough to handle it; one just needs to but face it, and test the spirits.

Many well-intentioned disciples, pastors, and preachers, hold to the “pan-theory.” The reader may even have heard about it. It will all “pan out in the end.” It is usually said half in jest. A “wait and see” attitude is a good way NOT to be ready. For the person who holds to that mindset, one of ease, going with the flow, don’t rock the boat, does not fully understand how radical the ministry of Yeshua was in His day, nor even today. The eternal spirits of men and women hang in the balance; can they afford a wait and see attitude? Yeshua warned His disciples for a very good reason; He expected action (obedience) upon what He said. What He taught, whether one is dealing with His second coming or something else, was not idle chatter, nor was it for information only. No, Yeshua expected those who follow Him, to act upon His word in complete obedience; and not just obedience to those things which one chooses, but rather to His word in its entirety.

Won’t you allow the Holy Spirit to examine your heart and see what your attitude is towards His return? It may be that He needs to do some heart changing.

One may ask, “I thought YHWH was going to take care of me?” Or, “Where does my faith in YHWH fit into this?” These are questions that need to be asked and answered. Yeshua said that His coming would be “just like the days of Noah.” Let’s begin by examining the days of Noah.

The Days of Noah

One might do well to pause here long enough to turn to the book of Genesis and read the story of Noah to refresh your memory. It is in Chapters 6-9.

The people were multiplying upon the earth. They were marrying and giving in marriage (6:1, 2, 4). They had a carefree attitude in living (6:5); i.e., “do your own thing”, “if it feels good do it,” and “I’m okay, you’re okay.” This is a picture of their everyday living; people going about their lives as though everything would continue as it always had.

Violence was so prevalent that it had filled the earth (6:11). Wickedness and evil were the order of the day (6:5, 12). The people showed no restraint or self-control. They were so out of control that YHWH was sorry He had made man (6:6). YHWH felt it necessary to do something about the wickedness and evil. He would destroy the earth and all of mankind.

But YHWH had a friend (6:8). His name was Noah. Noah was a righteous man (6:9). He was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5); he lived his life the way YHWH wanted him to live. YHWH warned Noah of what was going to happen (6:13). YHWH told Noah what to do about it. Noah listened and obeyed the word of YHWH (6:22). Noah prepared for what was going to happen.

The world did not listen to this preacher of righteousness. They did not heed the warning of what was to come. They did not understand until it was too late, until the flood came and swept them all away in judgment (7:21, 22). There were none left, except for righteous Noah and his family.

And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and **Noah only remained alive**, and they that were with him in the ark.

Genesis 7:23

Turn now to what Yeshua taught concerning the days of Noah. He says that His coming would be “just

like the days of Noah.”

Just Like the Days of Noah

“For the coming of the Son of Man will be **just like the days of Noah**. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; **so shall the coming of the Son of Man be**. Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left. Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Master is coming.”

Matthew 24:37-42 (NAS)

At the time when Yeshua comes again, the people will have a carefree attitude of “Eat, drink, and be merry.” They will be marrying and giving in marriage, multiplying upon the face of the earth. The earth will be filled with violence (Matthew 24:7,9, 10). There will be much wickedness and evil (Matthew 24:12); the people will be out of control. They will exercise no restraint or self-control. The order of the day will be, “If it feels good do it.” They will continue to do this until it is too late. They will not understand, until the day that Yeshua returns, and then they will all be swept away in judgment. “Just like the days of Noah,” only righteous Noah was left after the flood of judgment. So will the coming of the Son of Man be, the wicked will be swept away in judgment, and the righteous shall shine forth.

As in the days of Noah, YHWH has warned the inhabitants of earth. Have you heard His warning? Have you listened to that warning? What are you doing about it? Nothing? Maybe you haven’t heard the warning? What do you suppose would have happened to Noah had he not acted upon the warning that YHWH gave? He would have drowned! Are you going to drown? Only this time YHWH will judge with fire. Are you going to burn? Are you preparing for the coming tribulation (flood)? If not, why not? Maybe you don’t believe the warning? You say you believe, and that YHWH will take care of you? What if Noah would have said that, and not built an ark? (Physical preparation!) Clearly, YHWH has issued a warning. Will you heed His warning?

Will only those who hear and heed the warning endure to the end? It is only he who endures to the end who will be saved (Matthew 24:13). Where does faith fit into all this talk of getting ready? Do you think it takes more faith to do something, even though it may seem illogical (such as building a big boat that is not even close to water, and preparing for a flood), or to do nothing? At times YHWH calls His children to do things that the world ridicules and makes light of; but one only needs to obey, not worry about what the world thinks. YHWH holds Himself responsible for the consequences of one’s obedience to His will.

This can only happen if my faith rests solely and completely upon Yeshua. If my faith is in anything else, I will not be able to act in accordance with the word of YHWH. Ask YHWH to reveal to you where your faith is. If it’s not in Yeshua, and Yeshua alone, then change it right now, before it becomes too late.

The subject of physical preparation is not a popular one to teach and preach about. But this goes along with the spiritual preparation that one makes for eternity. You may ask why there is a need for this type of preparation. There are at least two valid reasons to prepare physically for what is to come. The most obvious is what YHWH Himself has said about the subject, and one’s obedience to the “word of YHWH!” The second is closely related to the first, and deals specifically with the great commission. It is as one prepares physically, in obedience to the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit, that the world stops for a bit to inquire about what is going on. It is at this point, that the obedient servant of the Almighty will have an opportunity to tell about Yeshua. Plainly stated, physical preparation can, and will, lead to an opportunity to witness and to warn of the coming judgment.

This is what was going on in righteous Noah’s life as he built the ark. In the 100 years that it took him to build the ark, the world came to Noah to see what this “radical” was doing. As the world paraded through Noah’s yard, he would stop for a while to address the crowd. He would warn them of the coming rain, flood, and judgment. Of course, the people of the world ridiculed him, as they have every righteous person.

Do not think that anyone will be any different. Yeshua has taught that, because the world has persecuted Him, so they will persecute His disciples (John 15:20). This is what His disciples need to be about in these days, as they quickly hasten to the day of the return of Master Yeshua Messiah. Prepare for the coming tribulation, and thus prepare to witness.

There is one other truth about Noah’s day that should be considered. Out of the entire population of the earth during Noah’s day, only eight people were saved. Now, one cannot know the exact population, but whatever it was, it is not a very high percentage of people who were saved. Then apply that to what Yeshua said about His

return being “just like the days of Noah,” and a very unsettling truth begins to emerge. Is it any wonder that Yeshua asked the question, “When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8 KJV). He also said that the way is narrow that leads to life and few who find it. On the other hand, He also said that the way was broad that led to destruction and many who find that way (Matthew 7:13-14).

It is important to consider these truths when considering the physical side of getting prepared for the return of Yeshua. For, in reality, there be very few who are actually making this type of preparation. Why? For us to obey YHWH in this manner, it takes an extra measure of faith. It also goes contrary to what the vast majority in the body would teach today. But then the Scriptures teach, that in the days just prior to His return, many would be apostate (2 Thessalonians 2:3). It is better to believe YHWH’s word, which is never in error, than to believe some apostate preacher. But then don’t take this writer’s word for it; check it out in the Scripture for yourself.

Chapter 19

=====

What Should I Do Now?

The issue of physical (or material) preparation is a difficult one for many disciples to deal with.

However, the need to prepare physically, is an issue that every disciple must face head-on considering the teachings of Yeshua, especially about the days of Noah. Noah had to prepare in order to be obedient. Since the coming of Yeshua will be just like the days of Noah, this aspect cannot, and should not, be ignored.

The questions and Scripture passages presented here, are to help one to begin to face this issue. What specifically can be done to prepare, is something the body of Messiah should be discussing, and helping one another to make the proper preparations. If this issue makes you feel uncomfortable, or perhaps even insecure, maybe you should pause here, and ask YHWH for an open and honest heart before Him. Tell YHWH you are willing to listen to Him and be obedient to whatever He says. This writer is not interested in putting forth his own opinions, only the word of YHWH. He only asks that you allow the Holy Spirit to have His way in your life.

The writer does believe that there are issues that are not being dealt with by His disciples. Because this is so, there are many within the body who have found it necessary to go outside the body for information and guidance in this area. Thus, the chance for being misled greatly increases, since those in the world care not for the things of YHWH. The survivalist movement in the U.S. today is growing, and for the most part does not deal with the true, spiritual aspects of life. Thus, the leaders in the body must take the initiative in dealing with this issue before it is too late, rather than shrugging it off as fanatical.

Many times, those who hear the Voice of YHWH directing them to prepare, never tell some of their closest friends with whom they worship every Shabbat. They do not want to be ostracized and shunned. They do not want to be labeled as fanatics. So, it is in secret that they make their preparations, always looking for clues in conversations with their fellow disciples as to whether or not they, too, are making preparations. Their desire for true intimate fellowship is very strong. They desire to know that they are not the only ones who are doing this thing, to know that they, in fact, have heard the word of YHWH.³⁹

This writer realizes that many who read this book will reject the warnings. They will make light of being prepared. But this author has, in his travels, observed a growing movement to get prepared for the coming of Yeshua (and facing the Anti-Messiah). It is not discussed openly in most circles yet. But the sense of urgency that these radical disciples feel, the universality of the movement, and the sense of destiny that they seem to all possess is something that the body should take serious note of.

Here are a few questions and related Scriptures to ask yourself, before YHWH in prayer. Don't put off dealing with these; for, in doing so, it may become too late. Do it now! As the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you hear **His Voice**, do not harden your heart." (Hebrews 4:7)

Some questions to ask myself in prayer:

1. Should I get out of debt?

Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loves another hath fulfilled the law.

Romans 13:8

This verse teaches that one should not be in debt to others, except for the debt of love. There are many financial planners today, most of whom are in agreement here. Heavy debt load inhibits the effectiveness of the individual and the family.

³⁹There have been many times that this writer has found ordinary people, and even some pastors, who were making these types of preparations. But they had never told anyone else.

As this question relates to the coming tribulation, one's freedom and his freedom to move, are at issue. If a person is tied to many worldly possessions, he may not act as quickly as he should, because of his reluctance to leave all behind, and may not flee in time to avoid the government of the Anti-Messiah.

Getting out of debt and staying out of debt, may mean doing without some of the niceties of life. But one doesn't need them for salvation, and they may even be a hindrance to salvation. It is not wrong to own things, or even a lot of things, but when they own or control you, you are in trouble.

In addition to these things, being out of debt frees up a lot of finances that YHWH can use to further His kingdom. Putting these finances into the hands of YHWH, will help to prepare not only oneself, but others as well. Listen to YHWH, for He has a plan for your life in this area.

The bottom line, is that each should get out of debt as soon as possible, even if that means trading off the new car(s) for older models, perhaps even living in a smaller house. Whatever it takes to get out of debt - Do It! And do it now.

2. Should I be physically fit?

Know ye not that ye are the temple of YHWH, and that the Spirit of YHWH dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of YHWH, him shall YHWH destroy; for the temple of YHWH is holy, which temple ye are.

1 Corinthians 3:16, 17

Therefore to him that knows to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

James 4:17

One of the popular fads of today is health; health food, health exercises, health doctors, health vitamins, health living, health clubs, etc. These are not wrong in and of themselves, unless health becomes one's master. Then it becomes a moral issue.

Once a person establishes a relationship with YHWH through Yeshua, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in the life of the disciple. That person has become a temple of YHWH. He needs to take care of it the best way he can. It is possible to go overboard. If the taking care of one's body consumes all of one's time, then that is probably wrong. It would be better to cut back and look after the needs of others. There needs to be a balance.⁴⁰

If one takes seriously the words of Yeshua that there is coming a day, perhaps in your lifetime, that those who belong to Him must flee,⁴¹ then being physically fit takes on a whole new dimension. This flight, when it happens, will most likely be on foot. Since the disciple of Yeshua will not be able to buy or sell, this certainly includes gasoline and related items.

3. Should I stock up on food and supplies?

This question is far from being black and white. It probably is best answered by each person for himself. But some thoughts in this area are in order.

First, one must realize that he is not his own; he has been bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). Therefore, all that he has belongs to YHWH, He is the one who gave it to him, He is the Creator of all things, all things belong to Him. Keeping that in mind is important. One of the dangers in stocking up food and supplies, is the sin of hoarding. If one is generous to those in need, then it would not be wrong to "stock up." Another danger is depending on the supplies one has acquired and not upon YHWH.

Secondly, YHWH has promised to take care of all my physical needs if I put the things of YHWH first in my life (Matthew 6:25, 31-34). However, YHWH has also warned of a coming world ruler who will not allow disciples of Messiah to buy nor sell (because they will not worship him, Revelation 13:15-17). The question then is, "Does YHWH expect me to prepare for that time when I will not be able to buy or sell, much as Noah was warned and built an ark?" Won't YHWH take care of me? What purpose did YHWH have in mind in warning all disciples, if it was not to be prepared?

⁴⁰It might do the reader well to read and study Romans 14:1-23.

⁴¹There have been times throughout history that the followers of Yeshua have come under persecution and had to flee, for Yeshua taught His disciples that, "When they persecute you in this city, flee to the next "(Matthew 10:23). Regardless of whether or not "the" Anti-Messiah arises in the very near future, one should not discount the reality that this country (U.S.A.) has set itself up for judgment, thus persecution of His disciples.

Where does faith enter into this? At times YHWH has required His people to do things that the world did not understand, and they ridiculed the people who were following after YHWH. This does not diminish nor release one, from his responsibility to be obedient to what YHWH has said. The body must listen to YHWH and act accordingly, regardless of who makes fun of them. To do less is to be disobedient, which leads to condemnation and judgment.

One other thought in this area deals again with the coming “flight.” If one “stocks up” with an abundance of food and supplies, then it would not be very likely he would be able to carry all this with Him. In addition to this, it would make it that much harder to “flee” in a timely manner, as the “supplies” may tend to make one hesitate in leaving his security behind. The issue once again, is one of trust. Trust in a loving and caring YHWH.

One aspect that the reader may consider, is becoming adept in providing food and shelter for himself and his family by living off the land. This takes time and practice to acquire this type of knowledge. So if this is an area to be included, it needs to be done before the knowledge is needed.

4. Should I buy guns and ammunition?

The first question to ask here is, “What purpose am I buying them for; what will I use them for?” There is a growing movement in the U.S. concerning survival. There are people from all walks of life, both disciples and non-disciples. Many within the body have labeled this movement as purely fanatical, and will have nothing to do with it. There are those who are fanatical, but what movement doesn’t have its fanatics? Those who are disciples of Messiah for the most part, must go outside the Body for guidance and information. This increases the chance of being led astray, since the world is not concerned about the things of YHWH. One verse that is notable in advancing one’s understanding of being prepared, is found in the midst of the description of the Anti-Messiah.

He that leads into captivity shall go into captivity: he that kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

Revelation 13:10

If a person buys guns and ammunition in preparation for the coming tribulation, with the intent to use them against other people, he must be prepared to die in the same fashion. If YHWH’s kingdom can be furthered better by a certain person’s captivity, and he belongs to YHWH, will buying guns change His will for that person? Not according to this verse.

What about self-defense? Don’t I have the right to defend myself and my family? According to the laws of the land, yes. According to what seems right from a humanistic point of view, yes. One verse that may be of interest in this discussion is found in the book of Luke. These are the words of Yeshua, one word of caution about this verse, and the context. Yeshua is teaching on His coming again, and the particular verse this study is interested in, is dealing with defense, as in a court of law.

Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls.

Luke 21:14, 15, 18, 19

If this has an application here, it would have to do with the fact that one’s life is not his own, but YHWH’s. He is our Protector. One may be called upon to die for his faith in Him, but it only means that one will be with Yeshua that much sooner. The most important thing in a person’s life during this time, will be maintaining an effective witness for Messiah. This is more important than getting the drop on the next guy. Each person must be willing to die for Yeshua in order to spread the Gospel message. One can only do this if he is fully surrendered to Messiah.

Notice, that in both passages, it speaks of the endurance of the saints. Their faith and endurance come from YHWH, not because they have more and bigger weapons than the next guy; but rather, because they have a personal relationship with Yeshua. If the reader is open and honest before YHWH, He will tell him if this is an area that he should include in any preparations he is to do. Be open and listen to Him, and then OBEY! Care should be taken not to be judgmental of the next person who may not be preparing in exactly the same manner. YHWH may very well lead each person to prepare differently in order to provide for the body of Messiah during the tribulation.

5. Should I prepare for nuclear war? Or for germ warfare?

Considering the fast pace at which the political scene is changing in the world today, and its instability, along with the rise in terrorism, the reality of one or both of these seems to be heightened. If it were possible to prepare for the event of one of these holocausts, should I? There are many books that go into great detail on how to prepare for these and other catastrophic events. Among other things, for most this may be impractical. It may even be unnecessary.

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and **if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them**; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Mark 16:17, 18

This writer believes in these promises. The promise concerning the intake of any deadly poison has an obvious application to germ/chemical warfare. But then one's faith must rest completely upon Yeshua for this, or any other promise to be claimed. In addition to this, the three Hebrew children who were thrown into the fiery furnace, and were not burned comes to mind. They did not know whether YHWH would spare them or whether they would perish in the fire. But either way, they would not worship the idol, only YHWH. This can be applied to the threat of nuclear war. One need not fear death; only serve YHWH with one's life or with one's death.

In looking at, and dealing with these issues, one must realize that YHWH may call one to prepare in a specific way, and another in some other specific way. The important thing, is to realize that all fit into the body of Messiah with different gifts and callings. One must be careful not to judge his neighbor for how he feels YHWH has called him to prepare.

Faith alone cannot save!

Turn to the book of James, and some astonishing truths about faith will be discovered. One finds that faith, by itself, will not, cannot, save a person. What the Holy Spirit is teaching, is that mental assent or belief alone, is not enough. That belief must be joined with, and result in, action, based upon that belief. All the following verses are taken from James chapter two.

What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?

vs. 14

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

vs. 17

Thou believest that there is one Elohim; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, vain man, that faith without works is dead?

vs. 19, 20

Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

vs. 22

Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

vs. 24

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

vs. 26

Before the reader gets too far ahead, let it be stated here, clearly and emphatically, that this writer believes a person is saved by grace through faith in Yeshua, PERIOD. However, taking the above verses into consideration along with Ephesians 2:10, one can only make his salvation complete, by walking in obedience to the Holy Spirit. This must include Torah! If one is not obeying the Spirit, then one cannot say he is in a state of grace (or perhaps, he was never even in a state of grace). A person cannot willfully and knowingly sin, be disobedient against YHWH,

and be in His favor (see Romans 11:17-22). A disciple can only be in a state of grace, by the power of YHWH, if he acts in accordance with His will.

This writer's prayer for each reader is that he would take these issues before YHWH, NOW, and allow Him to prepare him for what is to come. If you will consciously decide to walk in the fullness of YHWH's will for your life, He will get you ready to meet the future, whatever it may hold.

The writer's concern for the body, is that it is **not** ready for the coming tribulation, because many believe that they will be spared that hardship. YHWH has promised to help through the difficulties of life, but not to relieve a person of them. Consider Noah, Moses, David, Job, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshech, Abednego, Elijah, John the Baptist, Peter, Paul, and even Yeshua, and many, many more. None of these were spared sufferings or trials, but YHWH did give them the grace and strength to go through it. So He will you.

Practice living your faith today, that you may be ready for what tomorrow holds. If you wait to get ready tomorrow, it could be too late.

Call of the Watchman

The prophet Ezekiel records the duties of the watchman (chapter 33). Look at a few of the more pertinent verses.

So thou, son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

Ezekiel 33:7-9

YHWH has surely warned His people. It seems that many of YHWH's people are ignoring this warning. Not only do they not heed the warning, but neither do they warn others. As you have read this book, YHWH has dealt with you in some very specific areas. One of those areas may have been in the area of telling others about the Scriptures you have studied in this book. It will take complete and unconditional consecration, to answer the call of the watchman. If you have heard this call, ask YHWH for the desire to answer His call. You, and you alone, must make the choice. Your faith must be in Him, and Him alone. If you are concerned about what others think about you, you will never be able to fulfill the call of the watchman. It will take a willingness to be shunned by others, family and friends. It will take a willingness to bear the full reproach and shame of the Good News of Yeshua. But regardless of what happens to the individual, the warning must be cried out, before it is too late. Time is growing short. The night quickly approaches when no man can work.

Won't you put aside your own personal agenda in favor of doing and being completely obedient to Yeshua, our Master and Savior?

And the very YHWH of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray YHWH your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Master Yeshua Messiah.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Appendix A

=====

Coming Out of Babylon

Coming out of Babylon is a concept that is not heard in many quarters in this day and age. But there are two aspects of coming out of Babylon that will be looked into here: namely, coming out spiritually and coming out physically. The reader would be wise to note, that the coming out of Babylon must be done in that order; complete spiritual separation first, then the physical separation.

Abraham is the first Biblical example recorded, of a person hearing and obeying the call to come out of Babylon. Here was a man who lived in the very land that founded the Babylonian system. Not only was this the spiritual birth place of all organized false worship, but he also lived in the very land itself. Not too long after the founding of this false system of worship, Abraham came onto the scene. There was still enough truth in the land that he was able to follow YHWH in what he knew. That probably consisted of keeping the Shabbat, among other things. For even in Abraham's day, the worshippers of the false system worshipped on the first day of the week, not the seventh day as YHWH had so instructed His creation from the very beginning.

So Abraham began to separate himself from the false system, first by observing the true ordinances of the one true Elohim. As a result of this, YHWH sent forth the call to Abraham to come out of Babylon. Abraham obeyed. He packed up with Sarah, his wife, and Terah, his father, whom Scripture says was an idolater (Joshua 24:2). So while Abraham had made an effort to be peculiar unto YHWH, Terah had not. In Abraham's journey he did not know where it was he was going, only that he must go in obedience to YHWH.

This is what YHWH wants from each person, to hear the call to come out of Babylon, and then to obey Him. Each person hearing His Voice needs to obey His word to the fullest degree possible. Each person then needs to get out of the midst of the land of Babylon. This brings up the question of, "Where is the Babylon of this age?" "Where is the Babylon of the last days?" It is the express opinion of this writer, that the United States of America is the Babylon of prophecy in Scripture; i.e., in the book of Revelation and other Scriptures that are dealing with the last days. Space is limited here, so only a few reasons will be given as to why this writer believes this to be true, and to point the reader in the right direction so that he may find the truth in Scripture through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

First, it is important that the reader realize that Babylon is not only a place, but also a system. It is the system that Satan set up, which is the very antithesis of the Patriarchal system; i.e., the Kingdom of Heaven. Point for point, Babylon as a system, has a perversion of each and every thing that is true of YHWH's kingdom. This can make it difficult for the unsuspecting to know which is which. Is it any wonder that Yeshua taught His disciples that unless those days would be shortened, that even the elect might be deceived if possible (Matthew 24:22)?

The Babylonian system is the worship of Nimrod, who is the founder and builder of Babylon; i.e., the Tower of Babel. And it is also the worship of his wife, Semiramis, whom the Scripture refers to as the "Queen of heaven" (see Jeremiah 44:19, 25)(She is also known as the "mother of god.") And every such mention is a reference to idolatry. It has been reported that a group of men, went to Iraq, which is the modern day nation of ancient Babylon, to intercede during the Gulf War. They were taken to a mosque just outside the city of Nineveh, which is named for Nimrod, one of the many names of Nimrod being Nin; and Veh meaning "city" so you have the "city of Nin" or the "city of Nimrod." In the lowest level of this building stood a statue of Ishtar (pronounced easter), which is one of the many names of Semiramis, and this statue was an almost exact replica of the "Statue of Liberty" in this country, the United States of America. This statue of Ishtar was holding up a torch with one hand while the other was holding a book (tablet). She also wore a spiked crown.⁴² This statue bore the inscription: "Ishtar, Daughter of Babylon."

In addition to this, also standing in New York City in Central Park, is an Egyptian obelisk, which was placed there in 1880. These obelisks were originally erected in Egypt about 3500 years ago in the worship of the

⁴² "Come Out of Her My People" by Boaz Michael; Pub. First Fruits of Zion; pg. 5.

Egyptian goddess, Isis. It has been shown by other writers, that Isis was patterned after Semiramis, the wife of Nimrod of Babylon. So the worship of Semiramis is represented again here in this obelisk, in the midst of New York City. The Washington monument is patterned after these obelisks.⁴³

In Ezra's, day after Israel had been taken captive by Babylon, and the people were beginning to come back into the Land, Ezra records that only a small fraction returned (42,000⁴⁴ came back, see Ezra 2:64). Since most of the Jews did not return, but stayed in Babylon, one can learn from this and apply it to today. While the United States has never forcibly taken the nation of Israel into captivity, still more Jews live in the United States than in Israel, and the largest group of those is in New York City. And just as in the days of old, they are free to return to their land if they so choose. Here then is one more indicator of the present location of Babylon; i.e., where the majority of the Jewish people live in the world today - the United States.

Turn now to the book of Revelation, particularly chapters 17 and 18.

And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

Revelation 17:5

Here, notice that Babylon is a mystery and that she is the mother of all idolatry. History teaches that it was at the Tower of Babel, that the perversion of worship was organized by Nimrod and Semiramis. This is probably the main reason YHWH confused their speech. But even then, as now, much of the worship was clothed in secret and mystery and was for only the properly initiated. The Patriarchs of old would not have tolerated such perversions. Indeed, the common people would not have allowed the gross atrocities done by these secret worshippers of Nimrod and Semiramis had they known outright. But as it was, they were gradually indoctrinated into the rituals until they were sacrificing their children to them.

Now in the U.S., people have been led to believe that it is all right to sacrifice their unborn children to the gods of convenience, career, health, prosperity, and personal choice. The number of deaths of children here in this country alone is staggering. Since 1973, somewhere around 30 million children have been sacrificed on these altars. This is appalling! Yet it goes on, and on, and on.

Look now at the physical description of Mystery Babylon in Revelation 18.

And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning,

Revelation 18:9

The U.S. has the dubious honor of being the pornography capital of the world, in literature, films, and now on the Internet. Some have argued that it is their constitutional right to peddle this trash. These things are not only true for heterosexual sins, but also for the homosexual sins as well. However, YHWH will destroy the modern-day Babylon with all of its trash and filth, and all the kings of the Earth will mourn over her, but only from a distance.

And what other country today would the people, merchants, and kings of the Earth mourn over, to the extent as described in Chapter 18 of the Book of Revelation?

And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buys their merchandise any more: the merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all citron wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

Revelation 18:11-13

The U.S. has more factories, manufacturing facilities, and warehouses than any other nation. The U.S. feeds the world. Without the production of the U.S. farmer, the world would be hungry. The U.S. gives and loans more money to the nations of the world than most nations spend in a ten year period. There is not one nation in this

⁴³ "New Standard Encyclopedia" vol. 9, *Obelisk*, 1960.

⁴⁴ "The New Unger's Bible Dictionary" by Merrill Unger; Moody Press, 1985; pg. 211, states that there were in excess of 300,000 taken captive, putting the residence of most of the Jewish people after the return in Babylon.

world that would not be adversely affected if, at some time, all that ceased to be. There is no other nation in the world that these things can be said of, or are true of it.

This does not take into account the prophecies of Jeremiah (chapters 50 and 51), in which YHWH tells that there will come a time when Babylon will be destroyed so completely, that not one person will be left alive. Not only that, but also there will never again be a person live in the midst of Babylon. Now history clearly shows that, 1) the ancient city or country of Babylon was never completely destroyed, and 2) there are people living in that land today, which make these prophecies (and related prophecies) all future tense. Surely, no one could conceive that this description could be of modern day Iraq; for who would mourn for its demise?

No, the only nation that fits this description is the United States, which makes the following verse for the citizens of the U.S. quite important.

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her, my people**, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and YHWH hath remembered her iniquities.

Revelation 18:4-5

If this writer is correct in his understanding of the Word of YHWH unto him, that this is, in fact, Babylon, then it becomes imperative for every disciple of Messiah Yeshua to obey YHWH's Word as quickly as possible. For as this verse and others suggest, if a person does not obey in this fashion, then that person will also partake of the plagues that YHWH will pour out in abundance upon Babylon.

Won't you listen to YHWH through His written Word? Won't you obey Him and live? Will you be able to put aside all your preconceived ideas, and be able to hear clearly what YHWH is saying to you?

Appendix B

=====

My Personal Testimony

I am including my own personal testimony for a very special reason. It is also for a very special group of people: those who have been taught and believe in a pre-tribulation rapture. This is what I was taught from the time I was an early teenager (age 13). It was through the providence of YHWH, that He awakened within me at this early age, the desire to know everything about the return of Yeshua. I read everything I could get my hands on about the subject. I never questioned the teaching of a pre-tribulation rapture. Although, even then, in the back of my mind, there were these nagging questions that never came to the forefront. I would talk to anyone who would listen about the coming of Yeshua and the rapture.

Then, when I was about 23 years of age, I was challenged by a friend where I was employed. He gave me a book and said that I ought to read it. I read it and became angry at what the author said. I asked my friend if I could keep the book for a while, for I wanted to “prove” that what the author was teaching was in error. I dived into the Scripture. I began searching and studying as I had never done before. I was determined to show my friend who was right. This was a process that took the next two years of my life. The more I studied, the more it looked like what I had been taught and believed for so long, was in error. It is a very difficult thing to have to change one’s beliefs. But as this transition period came to a close, I was finally able to admit to myself and others, that I had been taught wrongly. But, change was no longer an option, but mandatory, if I was to remain true to my Master and Savior Yeshua Messiah.

From the time I was 13 years old till now, and especially since I was 23 years old, I have diligently searched the Scriptures, for more than 38 years now. The deeper I dig, the more and more convinced I become, that disciples, all living disciples, will go through the entirety of the tribulation. Everything in Scripture points to this reality.

I know that the majority of those who teach and believe in the second coming of Yeshua, do so with a pre-tribulation rapture attached. This is mainly because that is what they were taught, just as I was taught that. I know that it will not be easy for anyone to change what they believe. How well I know! But YHWH is faithful. Listen to Him. It will be hard work to change. But it is always worth the effort to obey YHWH.

APPENDIX C

=====

Plan of Salvation

I firmly believe that I would be remiss in my duties and call as a follower of Yeshua Messiah, if I did not include this section in this book. It is so very important that a person confess their sins before YHWH and man now, while there is some freedom to do so without life threatening implications. This becomes even more urgent as the time of the great tribulation draws ever nearer.

Step 1: Realizing that as YHWH reaches out to you, you become aware of the need in your life. That is, you are a sinner and are not worthy of having eternal life.

But YHWH commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us. Romans 5:8

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of YHWH; Romans 3:23

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of YHWH is eternal life through Yeshua Messiah our YHWH. Romans 6:23

YHWH is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.⁴⁵
2 Peter 3:9

Step 2: Once you have become aware of your need to have your sins forgiven, you must realize that this involves a moral choice, either to accept what YHWH says about you, and His remedy for your sin problem, namely, His Son, Yeshua Messiah, who died and shed His Blood for you, that you may receive the forgiveness of sins in your life. The other option, is for you to reject YHWH's plan of salvation for you and His Son Yeshua, thereby, rejecting eternal life.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of YHWH abideth on him. John 3:36

Step 3: Once you understand the need in your life, once you understand that you have a moral choice to make, then you must make the decision either to accept or reject Him. No one can make this decision for you. Only you can decide! And you will stand one day before the Judgment seat of YHWH and give an accounting of whether or not you have accepted YHWH's wonderful gift of salvation that Yeshua purchased with His own Blood upon the cross of Calvary.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

⁴⁵To repent, simply means to turn from one's sins and go the other direction. Instead of living lawlessly, away from Messiah, one now wants to please Him and to do His will (keep Torah), rather than his own. It is not just being sorry for your sins, although that is part of it; but it is also not doing those things that are displeasing to YHWH.

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Master Yeshua, and shalt believe in thine heart that YHWH hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:9, 10

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My Voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Revelation 3:20

Once you have made the decision to accept Yeshua Messiah as your personal Savior, just pray a simple prayer of confession, agreeing with YHWH that you are a sinner; and ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and then believe that He has done it. Then, live according to His commandments (Torah).

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

1 John 5:14, 15

Once a person has confessed, repented, and believed on Yeshua Messiah; then YHWH does His part, He does that which He promised to do.

Forgiveness: He pardons from the penalty of sin.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

Acts 10:43

Justification: This is a legal act that satisfies the Law of YHWH. It makes you “just” before the judgment seat of YHWH; not by your own merits, but rather by and through the righteousness of Yeshua, applied to your life through the Blood.

YHWH presented Him [Yeshua] as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in His Blood. He did this to demonstrate His justice.

Romans 3:25 (NIV)

Regeneration: YHWH brings new life in Messiah; one is “born-again.”

Therefore if any man be in Messiah, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Yeshua answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of YHWH.

John 3:3

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of YHWH: and they that hear shall live.

John 5:25

Adoption: YHWH adopts you into His family and accepts you as His own son, with all the privileges that come with it.

Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of YHWH through Messiah.

Galatians 4:7

The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of YHWH: and if children, then heirs; heirs of YHWH, and joint-heirs with Messiah; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Romans 8:16, 17

If you have gone through the steps above, and have accepted Yeshua Messiah as your personal Savior, I would like to encourage you to find a Scripture believing, Scripture preaching, teaching, and obeying fellowship where you can become an active part of that local fellowship, where you can be immersed in Yeshua's name into the family of YHWH. May YHWH richly bless you as you seek Him and seek to do His will.

APPENDIX D

=====

The Reapers

There is a very interesting parallel between the very first Passover and the return of Yeshua. As it is now, a person can believe, and have the Blood of the Lamb (Yeshua) applied to his life (heart or spirit) by the Holy Spirit.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Yeshua Messiah his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

1 John 1:7

And from Yeshua Messiah, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own Blood,

Revelation 1:5

As with the very first Passover (read Exodus 11 & 12), the people of YHWH took the blood of the lamb, applied it to the doorposts and lintel of their home, and when the death angel came, and when he saw the blood, he passed over. So it shall be with the return of Yeshua. He will send forth the reapers, who are the death angels, for they gather the non-disciples for the fire. This is precisely what happened in Egypt; the living were spared because of the blood, and those who did not have the blood applied, died. And as the Scripture says, there was not a house in all of Egypt that did not have someone die in it (Exodus 12:30).

When a person repents and confesses his sins, and asks for and receives forgiveness, then the Blood of the Lamb is applied to his heart. And when Yeshua shall send the reapers forth, they will gather the non-disciples, those who do not have the Blood applied. These will then be cast into the eternal fires, and those left will be the disciples. (see Matthew 13:24ff).⁴⁶

Also, in the book of Revelation (chapter 14:14-20), one finds that, when the reaping of the earth has come, those who are reaped are placed in the “winepress of the wrath of YHWH” (14:19). Again, it can be seen, that those angelic beings who are doing the reaping are doing so unto death; much as it happened in the book of Exodus during the first Passover. And until that time of reaping comes, mankind, as individuals, has the opportunity to have the Blood of the Lamb applied to their lives. But once the end of the age has come, and the reapers are sent forth, the Blood can no longer be applied.

Just as in the days of Moses, they must have the blood applied before sunset. And the Scripture teaches that the followers of Yeshua must work now for the time (night) is coming when no man shall work, for that is the time of reaping.

So, repent now, and have the Blood of the Lamb applied to your life.

⁴⁶Please take note, that most of those who had applied the blood to their doorposts in Egypt, were delivered by YHWH, and were guided by the Pillar of Cloud and the Pillar of Fire, were also laid low in the wilderness. Most were not allowed to enter into the Land of Promise. Reader, take note and beware!

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Beacon Dictionary of Theology, 1983, "Wrath," by Willard H. Taylor.

Contenau, Georges, Everyday Life In Babylon And Assyria, The Norton Library, W. W. Norton & Co. Inc., New York, 1966.

Haley, John W., Alleged Discrepancies, Whitaker House, Springdale, PA.

McKeever, Jim, Christians Will Go Through The Tribulation, Alpha Omega Publishing Co., Medford, OR, 1978.

Michael, Boaz, "Come out of Her My People...", First Fruits of Zion, Greeley, CO, 1994.

New Standard Encyclopedia, 1960 ed., vol. 9. "Obelisk."

Tozer, A. W., The Knowledge Of The Holy, Harper and Row, Pub., San Francisco, CA, 1961.

Unger, Merrill, The New Unger's Bible Dictionary, 1988 ed., Moody Press, Chicago, IL.