

# Chodesh Report

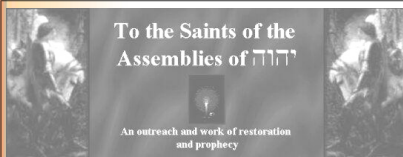
A publication by TTSAOY Chaplaincy Fellowship, an outreach program of TTSAOY, dedicated in service to the saints since 2001.

August 2014

The Original Chodesh Newsletter

Issue 49

## Deception: Satan's Stranglehold



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The *Chodesh Report* is an open dialog of topical research and studies based upon the years of experience of TTSAOY Chaplaincy and like-minded Associates.

This is a free monthly newsletter published by *To the Saints of the Assemblies of YHWH*.

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### Scriptural Allusions I

*And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy seat that [was] upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubims: and he spake unto him. (Num 7:89, KJV)*

### Introduction

Lost teachings of the bible are hard to understand and can be harder to accept.

Development of one's moral code and ethics begin in youth, generally around 7 years of age. Through young-adulthood one refines their life's teachings and values and formulates a more permanent code that in many ways will carry them through for the rest of their lives. This process evolves in three major domains of development: physical, cognitive, and social development. For the rare set-apart [appointed] saint, there is also the added [Holy] spiritual development to consider. These qualities are embedded into one's mind beginning in the early years of development through multiple influences: From what one is taught, environmental norms, and the assimilation to those things thought to be socially acceptable norms. None of this occurs without personal and deep emotional conviction. Once established, these influences can define who one is or may become (Boyd & Bee, 2006;

Feldman, 2005; Festinger, 1956; Myers, 2005; Skinner, 1965). But change can happen, and must.

As Friedrich Nietzsche once said, "The snake which cannot cast its skin has to die. As well the minds which are prevented from changing their opinions; they cease to be mind." The saint's life is one of overcoming the things of this world and assimilating to Yahweh's will in their lives. One need only to read the parable of the talents (Mat 25:14-30) to realize, no change [overcoming] is equivalent to sin and the penalty is severe. Paul wrote,

*For the wages of sin [transgression of the law, 1 John 3:4] is death; but the gift of YHVH is eternal life through Yeshua the Messiah our Saviour. (Rom 6:23, RNKJV)*

This issue of the CR addresses the difficulties of *overcoming*, a requirement of the children of the kingdom. Be warned however. We offer two examples and a self test by presenting some historic facts that will challenge many. The following presentation speaks as a testimony of a great deception

delivered to us by none other than the Adversary and may cause some discomfort for the unprepared.

May Yahweh bless all His chosen with understanding.

### ***Beginnings***

For some, a life's event may shake them to their emotional core. For some this causes deep introspect in pursuit of answers. For those of the faith, one may even begin to question previously held beliefs. Their beliefs, it was hoped, were the kind that should have carried them through life's most challenging tests but seems to have failed them. Ultimately, such faith is found to be as passing clouds of promising images and then fades into nothingness.

Then, there are those who study their Bibles with great interest until they read something that just doesn't fit or make sense. Their current understanding is likely guarded by previous influences and exposure to differing doctrinal views. They may simply opt to defer to accepting what others in their group believe or perhaps yield to errant doctrines from a strong-arm ministry. Perhaps they lack any initiative to study on their own. This person may never progress. Pride, stubbornness, fear ... there are as many reasons as there are people. They decide they are 'holding fast' to their long held albeit possibly errant beliefs. They match the personality in the song, *That's My Story, and I'm Sticking to It* (Collin Raye, 1993). Regarding their spiritual growth, they are of the Sardis disposition. [Revelation 3:1](#) defines it well as a level of spiritual development wherein its character represents those whose works have no forward spiritual progress – dead in works.

The saint's experiences can be similar to these examples but are promised to always result in a positive outcome - so long as they are compliant to Yahweh's will.

During the process of converting, many find it difficult to let go of long accepted doctrines. Psychology defines memories as “the process by which we encode, store, and retrieve information”(Feldman, ). These memories become embedded into our psyche' [an ancient Greek theory which refers to that which is responsible for one's thoughts and feelings; the seat of the faculty of reason] and will remain there until something of more consequence replaces it, or as old age sometimes demands it. We then choose to forget inconsequential information, which is also a function of memory. A

seasoned saint can forget, they can also be stubborn. But all experience discomfort when challenged about their beliefs. This is called *cognitive dissonance*.

In psychology, cognitive dissonance is the mental stress or discomfort experienced by an individual who holds two or more contradictory beliefs, ideas, or values at the same time, or is confronted by new information that conflicts with existing beliefs, ideas, or values.

The theory of cognitive dissonance focuses on how humans strive for internal consistency. When inconsistency (dissonance) is experienced, individuals largely become psychologically distressed. The basic hypotheses are listed below:

"The existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve consonance"

"When dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance" (Festinger, 1956).

Avoidance is most often witnessed by responses of rhetorical fallacy: ridicule, rejection, appeal to emotions, straw man, red herring, redirecting the subject, etc., etc.. When rising to explain your “reason of hope” ([1 Pet 3:15](#)), beware of those who use such tactics. They are to be spiritually discerned.

However difficult a matter may seem, the saint *somehow* will always manage to endure. For example, one may momentarily doubt their faith, but one day an epiphany [*revelation*] occurs. Their eyes are opened to a realization and like a child springing forward with excitement of some new-found emotion they hunger for more. Such are the exciting times today with the unfolding of prophesy witnessed by an historic surge of the “increase in knowledge” ([Dan 12:4](#)).

Sadly, over their history some saints have fallen to the wayside. Judas Iscariot and Saul are two. After so many signs of Yahweh's presence in his affairs, one might ask why Saul would abandon his faith? Why would Judas, a man in the very presence of Yah'shua haMoshiak, betray his Master? The bible has answers, of course. In context of this part of our

discussion, let's go to the Master Himself. He speaks us through the Word of the Bible ... and we might add, there is no better teacher of psychology than the Bible itself to help us understand human behavior.

### ***The parable of the sower and the seed (Mat 13:3-17)***

*The same day went Yeshua out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. (Matt 13:1-9, RNKJV)*

Yah'shua knew well that not all would understand these sayings.

*And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? (Matt 13:10, KJV) He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. (Matt 13:11, KJV)*

Those who did/do understand this parable at first hearing, as did the disciples, may correctly assume that their understanding was not an acknowledgment through the power of the sentient being alone but as revealed by the Ruach Chodesh. This also serves as a witness for ones self to acknowledge that El Elohim is working within them. Praise Yah!

Keep all this in mind remembering the first sections discussing the *spirit of man* as we progress from here.

### ***Deception: Satan's stranglehold***

No one can doubt the devious ploys used by Satan to deceive. John the Apostle was inspired by Yah'shua to write that Satan, "... deceiveth the whole world..." (Rev 12:9). Not unlike the occult

atmosphere following WWI, in today's world we see a resurgence of Satanism in every aspect of our environments - from our education system's atheistic and philosophical indoctrinations to music, from the entertainment world to our justice system and its leaders – all have become slaves to the things of Creation. Baal worship by any other name. Simply observe the idol of Wall Street's Bull to symbolize their pride of affluence [and global influence]. One need only to look at our capital's city streets to see the Pentagram as its architectural design – a sure sign of Satan's presence. Long ago Israel was warned of this type behavior and serves as a lesson for us today.

*When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and shall do evil in the sight of YHVH thy Elohim, to provoke him to anger: I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed. (Deut 4:25-26, RNKJV)*

Deception or choice by the power of free will? Of the spirit of man, Paul wrote,

*For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against YHVH: for it is not subject to the law of YHVH, neither indeed can be. (Rom 8:7-8)*

Left to our own devices destruction is certain. No one escapes judgment in the end.

### ***Delusion by deception***

Satan deceived Eve with smooth lies that would appeal to anyone's deepest emotional desires. Knowing that the woman of Creation was designed more emotional than Adam, this wiley angel simply employes what is known as a rhetorical appeal to emotions.

Other means of direct deception can be witnessed within religious cult-like environments who employ techniques. Almost all exploitive religious groups employ some type of thought-form program to ensure control over their members. They use control of one's behavior, thoughts, emotions and information. They use abusive, manipulative methods to attract and retain members, require unquestioning submission to

the leadership, and try to instill the notion that nowhere else will you find as accurate an understanding of "the truth". Techniques include:

- getting the recruit to agree that the state of the world or the state of their own personal condition is undesirable; telling them what they need to do to make themselves or the world better
- keeping the member always investing in the future and never really enjoying the present; keeping his mind always on something else
- getting members to believe that the leader alone has the solution(s), and to deny that there could be anything wrong with their leader or their organization
- re-directing the member to remake himself or herself, or to look forward to remaking the world, while actually molding him/her to satisfy the grandiosity or financial aspirations of the leader. Their main traits are:
- ISOLATION (control of information; encourages members to devote large amounts of time to the group and to socialize only with group members)
- NON-THINKING (members don't study and come to understand on their own; avoidance of thoughts that are contrary to the group's beliefs)
- ABSOLUTE OBEDIENCE (questioning, doubt and dissent are strongly discouraged)
- GIVING EXCESSIVELY (tithes and/or offerings/contributions are required to be given to the group)
- Focused on a Living Leader (who often lives in luxury and is not accountable to anyone; members are devoted to this person who they believe speaks for God)
- Exhorted to Strive for Perfection
- Their Doctrine is Considered to be the Ultimate Truth Beyond Questioning (to question is to "come under the influence of Satan")
- No Gray Areas (the group has all the answers to the questions, which they receive from the leader who has all the answers; everything is either right or wrong, "black or white.")
- Legalism and Control (a member's life is controlled by policies and procedures originating with the leadership)
- Conformity to established practices and beliefs (uses fear, intimidation and guilt)
- A Gap between the picture projected to the general public and the inner reality.
- Preoccupied with Bringing in New Members
- Those Outside the Group are Regarded as Less Enlightened (most often they are screened before being allowed to attend services)
- Deceptive Fundraising Techniques (members and public assume contributions go to social causes,

while most of money goes to the leader and expansion of the group)

- Distinct Hierarchy with the Group (everyone has his or her place)
- Secrecy (there is an inner truth and outer truth; a gap between what is projected to the general public and the inner reality known only to the members)
- A System of Merits ("works-righteousness" orientation; heavy use and much distortion of passages from the Old Testament, the epistles, and Revelation; little of the words of Jesus)
- Perceived Persecution (one of their hallmarks)
- Increasing Loss of Freedom for a Member (the demands of the group/leader destroy any other relationships or personal growth, and destroy freedom in every significant sense)
- Misuse of Scripture and traditional Christian Symbols (manipulated to support the teachings of the leader)

#### *Personality test.*

Which emotion best describes you? Find your answer at:

<http://www.playbuzz.com/gregs/what-emotion-are-you-guided-by>

**Being exposed to such an environment can be very deceptive and dangerous, even for a saint!** To be caught up in such an environment might suggest that one has become deceived and following a carefully planned delusion. Do you know anyone who has followed after a man, a

denomination, group, or tradition thinking they have found truth? The real truth is, **THE TRUTH IS FOUND WHEREVER AND THROUGH WHOMEVER YHWH CHOOSES TO REVEAL HIS SECRETS TO HIS SAINTS!**

#### *Delusion of deferment*

Delusion of deferment occurs when one says, "I will wait for the Messiah to return. He will answer these questions once and for all." Rather than allowing the Holy spirit to preside over their thoughts they neglect the discovery of the truth. These persons are either ambivalent to the truth or, for the moment, their hearts are not in the right place [thinking carnally instead of righteously]. They will remain *spiritually discerned* until Yah'shua's return – at which time judgment is dealt the first fruits [the very elect, 144,000]. This type saint may find themselves wanton like the foolish virgins upon the groom's arrival. Perhaps they ought to consider, "Do they really wait on Yah'shua to tell them about what He has already set before them [ie, hide from today's acceleration in knowledge]?"

## Testing the spirit(s)

### Enigma #1.

According to ancient historians, and the bible, the original Hebrew Calendar was lunar<sup>1</sup>. It's observation and determination of times was by sight alone.

Emil Schurer, author of *The Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ* (1993) writes, appealing to the writings of Julius Africanus<sup>2</sup>, Schurer says dogmatically (p. 369),

"The system of intercalation was not fixed even in the second century after [Messiah]." On page 370 we read, "...The intercalation was carried out without reference to any preconceived theory on the basis of an empirical observation made on each separate occasion. That this was still the case in the times of the Mishnah is proved from the two following passages; Megillah I, 4Edujoth vii, 7...There is absolutely no trace of any previous calculation." The Mishnah was compiled from 450 B.C.E. to 200 C.E. and arranged at Tiberius and all this time there is no hint given of a calculated fixed calendar such as the Jews use today!

From *Admissions on the Calculated Rabbinical Calendar* by Brian Hoeck (2001) we read,

"In mishnaic times [the Mishnah was completed ca. 200 C.E.], though the authorities were familiar with astronomical calculations, the new moon was fixed on the basis of observation, which meant that, as a rule, the bet din formally proclaimed

the New Month only after it had heard evidence of witnesses who had actually seen the new moon." (Encyclopedia Judaica, Volume 14, article: Rosh Ha-Shanah, p.311)

"Jews calculated the month according to the phase of the moon, each month consisting of either twenty nine or thirty days, and beginning with the appearance of the new moon. ... (Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services*, pp.156-157).

"...the Gregorian calendar is solar, the Jewish one is lunar. The latter evolved over a period of many centuries, going through a number of formulations, much experimentation, and a great deal of controversy....Despite the fact that the Jewish calendar finally became fixed in 358 C.E. [i.e., it may have been around this time that the formulation of the set calendar was initialized], there was no end to the criticisms and disputes leveled at its inaccuracies for centuries thereafter." (Nathan Ausubel, *The Book of Jewish Knowledge, An Encyclopedia of Judaism and the Jewish People*, pp.70-71, 1964.)

"This method of observation [i.e., new crescent] and intercalation [i.e., adding a thirteenth month based on the season and status of the barley crop] was in use throughout the period of the second temple (516 B.C.E. - 70 C.E.), and about three centuries after its destruction, as long as there was an independent Sanhedrin. In the fourth century, however, when oppression and persecution threatened the continued existence of the Sanhedrin, the patriarch Hillel II took an extraordinary step to preserve the unity of Israel. In order to prevent the Jews scattered all over the surface of the earth from celebrating their New Moons, festivals and holidays at different times, he made public the system of calendar calculation which up to then had been a closely guarded secret. ... (Arthur Spier, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, p.2).

From Jewish sources we can sometimes gain deeper and more accurate insight about the ancient Hebrew calendar. For example: The Mishna confirms

1 **H2320** שָׁחַדָּה **chodesh** (kho'-desh) **n-m. 1. the new moon 2. (by implication) a month** [from **H2318**] *KJV: month(-ly), new moon*. Root(s): **H2318** Strong, J. & Kohlenberger, J. (2001).

2 Sextus Iulius Africanus (c. 160-c. 240). Julius Africanus [Gr. name] is the father of traditional Christian chronography. The works of Julius Africanus are: (1) The "Chronicle" (Gk. Chronographiai) in five books, covering the time from the Creation (B.C. 5499 in his calculation) to the third year of Eliogabalus (A.D. 221); and (2) The "Embroideries" (Gk. kestoi; compare the title of Clem. Alex.: stromata), also called "Puzzles" (Gk. paradoxa), is a kind of encyclopedia of sciences — mathematics, botany, medicine, etc. — full of all manner of curious anecdotes and illustrations. So detailed was Julius's chronologies that it is the source of all later Byzantine writing of history ([Fortescue, 1910](#); [Walraff, 2007](#)).

the use of the lunar calendar during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple era. And, while discussing regulations regarding the use of Lulab [or Lulav – meaning palm branches] during Feast of First Fruits [Pentecost] at the beginning of the Sabbatical year<sup>3</sup>, the Mishna also explains the Omer count to the Feast of Weeks quite plainly.

MISHNA: Formerly the Lulab was used in the Temple all the seven days of the festival; in the country, however, only one day. When the Temple was destroyed, R. Johanan b. Zakkai ordained: In the country it shall also be used all the seven days, in memory of the Temple. He ordained also at the same time that on the sixteenth day of Nissan, called the day of Noph (the day of waving the omer: Lev. xxiii. 11), it should not be allowed to eat new grain.

What, then, does the bible say about new moons? In the KJV Bible, the term *month* [*chodesh*] translates as new moon 235 times in the Old Covenant [Testament]. The Greek typically loses many allusions and euphemisms in translation, so in the New Covenant it is simply called *month*. However, according to the Old Testament writings [there was no New Testament until after 200 CE], it appears that Yahweh's designated calendar was/is lunar.

#### Enigma #2.

*And YHVH spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before YHVH, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. (Lev 23:9-11, RNKJV)*

The Jewish historian Josephus documented the timing of the wave sheaf [*omer*, H6016].

From the books of **Josephus 3.10.5**

But on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth day of the month, they first partake of the fruits of the earth, for before that day they do not touch them. And while they suppose it proper to

honor God, from whom they obtain this plentiful provision, in the first place, they offer the first-fruits of their barley, ...

Like Josephus, the Apostle Paul too was a Pharisee under the tutelage of Gamaliel.

*I am verily a man [which am] a Jew, born in Tarsus, [a city] in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, [and] taught according to the perfect manner [exactness, G195] of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. (Acts 22:3)*

The historian W. M. Feldman weighs in,

"The Talmudic Rabbis [ca. first half of the third century C.E. (i.e., prior to 250 C.E.) to the end of the fifth century C.E.] recognised the variation in length of the synodic month...and hence they determined the beginning of every month separately by observation of the new moon as well as by calculation." (W.M. Feldman, *Rabbinical Mathematics and Astronomy*, Hermon Press, 1965, p.123)

"Further, Gans points out, that it is hardly likely that R. Gamaliel would speak of a mean [i.e. average] synodic month, as in his time the 'fixed' calendar was not yet in use." (W.M. Feldman, *Ibid*, p.124)

"For as the beginning of a month was fixed on the accredited evidence of witnesses who reported having seen the new moon soon after sunset on a certain day, it was the duty of the Calendar Council not only to test their evidence by stringent cross-examination...but also to ascertain, by mathematical calculation, whether the moon could, in fact, be seen at that particular moment at the particular place from which the witnesses came." (W. M. Feldman, *Ibid.*, p.160) (From, *Admissions ...* B. Hoeck, 2001).

How, then, did Gamaliel the Pharisee observe the omer [see [Lev 23:11](#), key word sheaf] count to the Feast of Weeks? As a Pharisee, Gamaliel observed the 'wave sheaf' on 16 Abib, so said WCG's scholar exemplar Samuele Bacchiocchi,

As far as Pentecost is concerned, Bacchiocchi acknowledges in his book that there were two methods of counting Pentecost ...

<sup>3</sup> The Talmud explains that there are four New Years within the year as: "There are four different New Year's days; viz., the first day of Nissan, the first of Elul, the first of Tishri, and the first of Shebbat." INTRODUCTION TO TRACT ROSH HASHANA (NEW YEAR'S DAY): *The Babylonian Talmud*, (p. xx1). (Rodkinson, 1916).

The Pharisees interpreted the 'Sabbath' as the festival day of Passover, Nisan 15, which was also the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Thus, they waved the first sheaf of barley on the following day, Nisan 16, and from that day they counted the fifty days to Pentecost.

"In the Targum of Jerusalem we find the same interpretation for Leviticus 23:11, 'After the first festal day of Passover.' Philo and Josephus support the same tradition. works writes: 'Within the Festival of Unleavened Bread there is another festival following directly after the first day.'<sup>4</sup> In a similar vein, Josephus writes: 'From the second day of Unleavened Bread' they count fifty days.

"Indirect support for this interpretation is also found in Joshua 5:11: 'And on the morrow after passover, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ... This suggests that the offering of the wave sheaf was made on the day after Passover, Nisan 16, which marked the beginning of the fifty days to the Feast of Weeks.

Bacchiocchi goes on to point out that the Sadducees, however, supported by the Boethusians (a high ranking family of Sadducees), the Karaites (a Jewish sect that started in the ninth century after Christ and lasted a few hundred years before dying out), and the Samaritans (vicious enemies of the Jews ... did not agree with the Pharisees. They counted Pentecost from the day after the weekly Sabbath that fell during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Samuele Bacchiocchi states:

"This method has the advantage of finding its counterpart in the traditional *Christian* [sic] day of Pentecost . . . In spite of this advantage, I concur with Edersheim: 'The testimonies of Josephus, of Philo, and of Jewish tradition, leave no room to doubt that in this instance we are to understand by the "Sabbath" the 15th of Nisan, on whatever day of the week it might fall. (p.169, emphasis mine). (Dankenbring, 2002).

### *The bumptious Saduccee's errant interpretation*

Unlike the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the political and legal antagonists of the people during their time, hung their Kippahs upon Hellenistic influences and interpretation and its artistic form of hermeneutics. Subsequently, they were successful at

confusing many by re-interpreting [Leviticus 23:11](#) from its original meaning.

### *The Morrow After the Sabbath*

The Pharisees understood 'the morrow after the sabbath' ([Lev 23:11](#)) to mean the day following the first Passover sabbath.

Regarding the Biblical commandment to offer the 'omer "on the morrow after the Sabbath" = (ib. verse 11), the Rabbis maintained that "Sabbath" here means simply a day of rest and refers to Passover. The Sadducees (Boethusians) disputed this interpretation, contending that "Sabbath" meant "Saturday." Accordingly they would transfer the count of "seven weeks" from the morrow of the first Saturday in Passover, so that Pentecost would always fall on Sunday. ... Johanan then turned to his disciples and pointed out that the Law purposely fixed the interval of fifty days in order to explain that the seven weeks, nominally, do not necessarily begin from Sunday (Men. 65a, b). (Complete contents the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia: PENTECOST).

Some claim that this controversy was the reason for the substitution by the Talmudists of "'Azeret" for "Shabu'ot" or "Weeks," on which the Sadducees, and later the Karaites in the geonic period, based their adverse contention. ... The Septuagint translation τῆ ἐπαύριον τῆς πρώτης ("on the morrow of the first day") confirms the rabbinical interpretation. Onkelos paraphrases "mi-batar yoma taba" (= "from after the holy day").

... The original contention of the Sadducees was one of the reasons for fixing the traditional Christian Passover on Sunday, in the year 325 (Pineles, "Darkeh shel Torah," p. 212, Vienna, 1861).

<sup>4</sup> *The Works of Philo: THE SEVENTH FESTIVAL, XXX (176)* (p. 584), (Yonge, 2006).

From *Counting the Omer: An inquiry into the divergent methods of the 1st century Judaisms* (Hegg, 2010),

[from the wave sheaf] to the Feast of First Fruits [Pentecost] begins on 16 Abib - “day after the Passover” (*ממחרת הפסח*)”.

**The authority of the Pharisees**

“... let's face it, the Pharisees have had a bad press! ... the very name Pharisee has become synonymous with hypocrisy and self-righteousness. After all, how could men such as these be in control of the religion of Israel?”

(Keyser, 2014).

Lawrence H. Schiffman, professor of Hebrew and Judaic studies at New York University suggests the Qumran scrolls confirm the Pharisees as Israel's spiritual leaders prior to the destruction of the Temple and enlightens us regarding the polity of the Sadducees.

One of the scrolls found in a cave in the vicinity of the Qumran community throws light on the PROMINENCE the Pharisees enjoyed in the period PRIOR to the destruction of the Temple. In this text, known as MMT (4Q Miqsat Ma'aseh ha-Torah), a diatribe against the

community's opponents often describes the views of the PHARISEES.

According to Schiffman: MMT is a foundation text of the Qumran sect. It was written in the early Hasmonean period when THE TEMPLE WAS MANAGED AND ITS RITUALS CONDUCTED IN ACCORD WITH PHARISAIC VIEWS. The Hasmoneans made common cause with the Pharisees in order to CLEANSE the Temple of the EXCESSIVE HELLENIZATION that they blamed to a great extent on the SADDUCEAN PRIESTS WHO HAD BECOME, IN THEIR VIEW, TOO HELLENIZED.

Various elements in MMT and in the Temple Scroll represent the polemic of those who continued piously to hold fast to Sadducean views against the

Leviticus 23:15–16

15 ‘You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete sabbaths. 16 ‘You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the LORD.

15 וְסַפַּרְתֶּם לָכֶם מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת מִיּוֹם הַבִּיאָכֶם אֶת־עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה שִׁבְעַת שַׁבָּתוֹת תְּמִימֹת תִּהְיֶינָה: 16 עַד מַחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִית תִּסְפְּרוּ חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה לַיהוָה:

How is the word “sabbath” to be understood in Lev 23:15–16? ...

... the matter is not that simple. The fact that the passage is specifically directed to the time when Israel would enter the Land must be given its full weight. And its clear collation with Joshua 5 seems inescapable. It would appear that the story of Israel's entrance into the Land is written specifically to show their obedience to the prescriptions of the Leviticus 23.

Joshua 5:10–12

10 While the sons of Israel camped at Gilgal they observed the Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month on the desert plains of Jericho. 11 On the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. 12 The manna ceased on the day after they had eaten some of the produce of the land, so that the sons of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate some of the yield of the land of Canaan during that year.

10 וַיַּחֲנוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגִלְגַל וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הַפֶּסַח בָּאַרְבַּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ בְּעָרֶב בַּעֲרֹבוֹת יְרִיחוֹ: 11 וַיֹּאכְלוּ מֵעֵבֹר הָאָרֶץ מִמַּחֲרַת הַפֶּסַח מִצֹּת וְקִלְוֵי בָעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: 12 וַיִּשְׁבַּת הַמָּן מִמַּחֲרַת בְּאַכְלֵם מֵעֵבֹר הָאָרֶץ וְלֹא־הָיָה עוֹד לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן וַיֹּאכְלוּ מִתְּבוּאֹת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן בַּשָּׁנָה הַהִיא: ס

Israel camped at Gilgal where they fully obeyed the Lord and all males were circumcised. In this covenant ceremony they prepared themselves for the feast of the covenant, Pesach. Then, in Gilgal, on the desert plains of Jericho, they celebrated the Pesach meal as the Torah prescribes—on the 14th of the month. The following day, being a sabbath upon which no ordinary work was to be done, they rested, and thus must have entered the Land on the 16th, the “day after the Passover” (ממחרת הפסח), using the same construction as the phrase in Leviticus 23:15, “the day after the sabbath.” This use of Pesach to refer not only to the sacrificial lamb, but to the Festival as a whole, including Chag HaMatzot ... Since the eating of the Pesach meal always over- lapped into the 15th of the month, the day following the Passover is easily seen to be the 16th.

The Pharisees are correct, the omer counting



Hasmoneans and their Pharisaic allies.

Schiffman concludes:

Thus, evidence of the ideological underpinnings of Pharisaism and its halakic principles can be found in the Qumran corpus [body of writings]. Sensitive read, the Qumran corpus reveals the role of the Pharisees as allies of the Hasmoneans. More importantly, it CAN NO LONGER BE CLAIMED that there is no evidence for the Pharisees earlier than the tannaitic materials and the first-century Jewish historian Josephus, who wrote after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. In fact, the scrolls provide extensive and wide-ranging testimony about the pre-destruction history of the Pharisees and their ideology.

MMT AND THE TEMPLE SCROLL PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF PHARISAIC DOMINANCE OVER THE TEMPLE RITUAL IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE HASMONEAN PERIOD. These Pharisees held views similar to those claimed for them in rabbinic literature. Moreover, they also expressed many positions - substantive and theological - later found among the tannaim of the Mishnah. (Ibid., p.54).

Our last consideration on this topic should include the fact that the word Pharisees is mentioned 85 times in the NT, the Sadducees only 14 times (KJV). Why? Perhaps it is because Yah'shua placed no authority upon the Sadducees by reason of their ignorance of the law and indifference to it. They were a political party empowered solely by the favor of Roman rule, not by popular acceptance as were the Pharisees.

### ***A Self-Test of the Spirit(s)***

Here's a rhetorical question for our readers to consider: Can the reader find any of these historic accounts of the authority and laws of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple era that might be considered offensive?

*Of offense.* Yah'shua once said,

*"... blessed is [he], whosoever shall not be offended in me." (Matt 11:6, KJV).*

Yah'shua follows this through with,

*"Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.*

*(Matt 13:21).*

In the scriptures above, the word offend [or offense] does not translate well in the literal form. As used the term offend is in reference to creating a stumbling [G4624] from the truth, not simply creating discomfort or hurt of the spirit of man. When talking to the masses, Yah'shua knew there were those who had no 'root' in the Spirit and would therefor be obstinate and contentious of His teachings.

*The further back you can look, the farther forward you can see.*

~ Winston Churchill

For millennium there has been an unnecessary dispute over the sacred calendar and count to Pentecost. Many among the sabbath keeping community of COGs offer traditionally taught Christian evidence as support for their beliefs. Both often use historical and scriptural as grounds for their position; but, they often do not give due consideration to the origins of their sources.

### ***Focus of Concern***

*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places]. (Eph 6:12)*

Besides offering an historical exposition of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple administration during the first century, the examples used above were intended to test the spirit, and to remind the reader that regardless of one's current position on these topics one must remember to submit to YHWH's authority through the Ruach Chodesh --YHWH's very essence within-- rather than to allow the *spirit of man* to dominate their thoughts.

### ***Scriptural Allusions II***

*Then spake Yeshua to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. (Matt 23:1-3, RNKJV)*

It is certain that the saints are compelled of the Holy Spirit to abide by their Master's instruction,

*"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, [that] observe and do ..." (Mat 23:2-3).*

... rather than the Sadducees of whom He said,

*"... Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of YHVH. (Matt 22:29, RNKJV).*

For those who caught in the snares of confusion, know this, it is not by ignorance or a deficit of intellect, but by the prince and the power of the air that the saints are targeted and often dissuaded, even blinded. No human has the power to conquer the powers of ha-Satan on their own. All the more important to submit to YHWH's authority so that He can draw near, guide, and protect. When the time comes, those who remain victimized by ha-Satan's endless lies and carefully planned delusions will [hopefully] be instant to reconsider their past, make any necessary adjustments, and continue in their earnest pursuit of truth. Until then, "May Yahweh grant understanding to all His chosen ones."

### **Conclusion**

Keeping in mind that a saint's spiritual development is not a curtain fall event but is the process of a graduated quickening over a lifetime, by the witness of these question one may gain insight into their current spiritual development. The question to ask is, "Were my reactions to the above examples dominated by the spirit of man, or by the Ruach Chodesh?"

Yah'shua taught that in the spirit there is no offense [is taken, or takes no offense]. The hypocritical Pharisees themselves often took offense. "Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?" (see [Matt 15:10-20](#)). While it was known that the Pharisees could cite the scriptures by rote, they could not understand its deeper messages. They, or rather their *spirit of man*, took offense. This is a good example of *spiritual discernment*.

*Looking back.* In order to understand the message for mankind from our Creator the saints must first unlearn many such changes and re-learn the fundamental truths that they may have communion with YHWH under His guidance. This, of course, requires the hardest of all human challenges, to embrace objective and truthful behavior modification

... in other words, they place ALL their trust in YHWH to help them on their way and wrest the inward man *in truth and in spirit*. By doing so, the *spirit of man* will eventually be transformed into that *good and acceptable servant* that YAH so desires of all mankind.

But, none can know the righteousness of Yahweh on their own. If your heart is in the right place, and you seek earnestly, He will know. Yahweh chooses to quicken the minds of the saint and nurtures them towards His desire, as if they are His own children – as the *children of the kingdom*. Can you as today's saints submit fully to the authority of the Creator?

May Yahweh grant understanding, peace, and happiness to all His saints.

~ David

## **FYI**

When considering life's problems the mind lends itself to familiar and comfortable pathways. Subsequently, we end up repeating mistakes. This approach can be described similarly to what the process of reverse engineering is to scientific discovery.

**Reverse engineering** - to disassemble and examine or analyze in detail (as a product or device) to discover the concepts involved in manufacture usually in order to produce something similar (Merriam-Webster, 2014).

Alternatively, research has proven the art of meditation to be both healing and healthy. The Mayo Clinic (2014) writes,

Meditation has been practiced for thousands of years. Meditation originally was meant to help deepen understanding of the sacred and mystical forces of life. These days, meditation is commonly used for relaxation and stress reduction.

**Meditation** - Noun: meditation 1. Continuous and profound contemplation or musing on a subject or series of subjects of a deep or abstruse nature 2. (religion) contemplation of spiritual matters (usually on religious or philosophical subjects) [WordWeb.info]

Meditation is considered a type of mind-body complementary medicine. Meditation produces a deep state of relaxation and a tranquil mind.

During meditation, you focus your attention

and eliminate the stream of jumbled thoughts that may be crowding your mind and causing stress. This process may result in enhanced physical and emotional well-being.

The book of Psalms offers wonderful insight into King David's life and the efficacy of meditation.

### **A Psalm of David**

*The YY is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the YY for ever. (Ps 23:1-6,*

*HKJV+S)*

## **FYC**

### **Yeshiva in Israel and Brainwashing**

**Question:** I am going to be a senior starting September, and as you know, this is the time you start applying to colleges and such. I come from a modern orthodox family, but I would love to go to a Yeshiva in Jerusalem. My only concern, is coming back “brainwashed” as some may say. Brainwashed meaning, stubbornness in my religion, and things that used to be important to me aren't important anymore, and the only thing that is important to me is my religion. I would like to come back a little more religious than I am now, but I know that with my personality I get convinced really quickly, like if someone important tells me you cannot do this, I will never do it.

I just want to have the right mentality going into the seminary. Please let me know if there is any way you can help me with this. Thank you

**Answer:** I understand your concerns as people do tend to ‘flip out’ when going to Israel.

I am not sure though, that developing idealism is such a bad idea. When a person is young, they are not yet poisoned by the cynicism of the world and have the ability to become inspired. While it's true that people may overdue things, that usually balances out when people enter the wider world. But you won't have another chance to become idealistic, as you will

have with a year in Israel.

A year in Israel is a great way to prepare yourself for life ahead, and some of the serious challenges of life come in the few years following high school graduation. I am a campus Rabbi at Rutgers and about 50% of Yeshiva HS graduates here do not remain religious, nor do they at any of the secular Universities such as Binghamton, Maryland, Brandeis, Penn, Etc.

Developing an ideal, even if it isn't what you will live your life as, is still important, because it gives you something to strive for in your future life.

Try developing a relationship with a Rebbe or wise and caring older father type figure, who can guide you. Not every Rebbe is wise in the skills of life and human understanding so choose someone who you feel understands you and people in general. This is extremely important if you want to stay balanced.

When counseling a client the Chaplain's first objective is to learn as much about the client as possible. Sometimes this takes several visits. Before beginning any discussions it is imperative to develop a relationship of trust. This cannot be accomplished with persons until they are comfortable knowing that you truly understand their problem. Oftentimes, it serves the client better to refer another and suggest them as a 'better fit' considering the matter at hand. For example, it is recommended that when a Chaplain is called to counsel a woman, a woman should also accompany the chaplain – preferably his wife or an elder presbyter. If the client is a youth, a younger person should accompany [for translation purposes as required]. If the client has medical inquiry, it follows that the Chaplain would have a trusted resource to refer for the client.

As a counseling elder, it is advisable to keep a little black book with a variety of local and regional resources covering everything from medical services to used tire sales. First in order of secular needs is your local Department of Social and Human Resource center – a gateway to every need for all ages. Others matters, such as a domineering ministering elder, warrants counseling with a trusted 'other' presbyter [elder (-ess)] within the congregation; or possibly need to seek an outside perspective, such as from a trusted sabbath keeping Chaplain.

**Q:** When confronted with a situation as in the last example, how would you respond as the selected spokesperson for the congregant members upon being challenged by the domineering elder?

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*The Life Cycle of an Arizona Monsoon Storm*



*Illustration 1: First comes the clouds and blowing dust.*



*Illustration 4: ... more rain, and lightening,*



*Illustration 2: Dust storms are a common occurrence.*



*Illustration 5: ... and frequent flooding.*



*Illustration 3: Then comes the rain,*



*Illustration 6: Then ... a beautiful rainbow.*

## The Lighter Side

### *Chodesh 6, August 2014*

The new moon should be visible within the realm of Israel on **August 27, 2014** Jerusalem Standard Time [JST] after sunset [1][2][3].

The Data:

Sunset	7:09 PM (JST)
Moonset	8:00 PM
Age	1.6d/30 since last
Illumination	3% (marg. sighting)

[1] *Lunisolcal V4.5 (Voeking, 2013)*

[2] *Ephemeris V2.0 (Sachs, 2000-2001)*

[3] *SkyViewCafe V5.8.6 (Shetline, 2000-2013)*

*What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal.*

~ Albert Pine (English author d. 1851)

*There is no love without forgiveness, and there is no forgiveness without love.*

– Bryant H. McGill

### *Yahweh's Feast Days of (2014)*

-	Abib 1 (Starts @ sunset Mar 31)	Day 1 of the year	Apr 1
-	Yah'shua's Kiddush	Abib 13	Apr 13
-	Passover Memorial (at even)	Abib 14	Apr 14
I, II	Passover Feast (DUB)	Abib 15-21	Apr 15-21
-	Wave Sheaf	Abib 16	Apr 16
III	Feast of First Fruits (Pentecost)	Abib 16 + 49	Jun 4
IV	Feast of Trumpets	Day 1 of 7 <sup>th</sup> new moon	Sep 27
V	Atonement	Day 10	Oct 6
VI	Feast of Booths (FOT)	Day 15-21	Oct 11-17
VII	Last Great Day (8 <sup>th</sup> Day)	Day 22	Oct 18



**DUDE**

I'm JOKING you are NOT adopted !!!

*Jacob & Esau, how it began.*

*Let not him who is deceived trust in vanity; for vanity shall be his reward. ~ (Job 15:31, FV)*

### *The meaning of dreams*

Upon waking, a woman said to her husband, "I just dreamt that you gave me a necklace of pearls. What do you think it means?"

The man smiled and kissed his wife. "You'll know tonight," he softly whispered.

That evening, the man came home with a small package which he gave to his wife. She jumped up and embraced him, and then settled on the couch to slowly and delicately unwrap the package.

It contained a book entitled, 'The Meaning of Dreams'.

### *Of dreams & Visions*

*The interpretation of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind.*

~Sigmund Freud

*And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: (Joel 2:28,*

*RNKJV)*

*Notes:*

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