

50 Days of Counting the Omer

~ A Repentance Devotional



“Sing, barren woman, who has never had a baby. Fill the air with song, you who’ve never experienced childbirth! You’re ending up with far more children than all those childbearing women.” GOD says so! *Clear lots of ground for your tents! Make your tents large. Spread out! Think big! Use plenty of rope, drive the tent pegs deep. You’re going to need lots of elbow room for your growing family. You’re going to take over whole nations; you’re going to resettle abandoned cities. Don’t be afraid—you’re not going to be embarrassed. Don’t hold back—you’re not going to come up short. You’ll forget all about the humiliations of your youth, and the indignities of being a widow will fade from memory. For your Maker is your bridegroom, His name, GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies! Your Redeemer is The Holy of Israel, known as God of the whole earth. You were like an abandoned wife, devastated with grief, and GOD welcomed you back, Like a woman married young and then left,”* says your God. Your Redeemer GOD says: *“I left you, but only for a moment. Now, with enormous compassion, I’m bringing you back. In an outburst of anger I turned my back on you—but only for a moment. It’s with lasting love that I’m tenderly caring for you. “This exile is just like the days of Noah for me: I promised then that the waters of Noah would never again flood the earth. I’m promising now no more anger, no more dressing you down. For even if the mountains walk away and the hills fall to pieces, My love won’t walk away from you, My covenant commitment of peace won’t fall apart.”* The GOD who has compassion on you says so. *“Afflicted city, storm-battered, unpitied: I’m about to rebuild you with stones of turquoise, Lay your foundations with sapphires, construct your towers with rubies, Your gates with jewels, and all your walls with precious stones. All your children will have GOD for their teacher—what a mentor for your children! You’ll be built solid, grounded in righteousness, far from any trouble—nothing to fear! far from terror—it won’t even come close! If anyone attacks you, don’t for a moment suppose that I sent them, And if any should attack, nothing will come of it. I create the blacksmith who fires up his forge and makes a weapon designed to kill. I also create the destroyer—but no weapon that can hurt you has ever been forged. Any accuser who takes you to court will be dismissed as a liar. This is what GOD’s servants can expect. I’ll see to it that everything works out for the best.”* GOD’s Decree.

~ Isaiah 54 (The Message)



This Book is Dedicated to:

Yeshua

All 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet have an original pictorial hidden meaning. Amazingly, each of these ancient 22 “hieroglyphs” uniquely describes our Messiah Yeshua! No other person in recorded history fulfills all 22 of these ancient letter illustrations in Holy scripture. First, here are the original “pictographs” of all 22 Hebrew Letters from ancient and early Hebrew writings as depicted long before the days Christ walked on the planet.

- 1) Alph (Numerical Value = 1): Pictograph of a Head, representing Power, Leader
- 2) Bet (Numerical Value =2): Represented by a depiction of a House or Tent
- 3) Gimel (Numerical Value =3): Earliest known Hebrew illustration of this letter indicated a Foot walking
- 4) Dalet (Numerical Value =4): based on a symbol of a Door
- 5) Hey (Numerical Value = 5): Early Hebrew pictograph of Man with arms outstretched
- 6) Vav (Numerical Value = 6): Early Semitic script of a hook, spear, large nail, tent or peg
- 7) Zayin (Numerical Value = 7): Ancient Hebrew depiction of a Sword, sharp weapon, as well as a farming instrument, a plow
- 8) Chet (Numerical Value = 8): Earliest Hebrew depicts a Wall, a fence that divides inner from outer
- 9) Tet (Numerical Value = 9): an image of a Basket, a container made of clay (flesh), net for catching fish
- 10) Yod (Numerical Value =10): Pictorial of an Arm from fingertip to elbow, a Hand
- 11) Kaf (Numerical Value = 20): Open palm, cupped, The word “kaph” in modern Hebrew still means palm or grip.
- 12) Lamed (Numerical Value = 30): Early Hebrew pictograph indicated a Shepherd’s staff
- 13) Mem (Numerical Value =40): The movement of the sea, crashing waves
- 14) Nun (Numerical Value = 50): Earliest Hebrew pictograph of a Seed sprouting, a sperm, Heir, Son
- 15) Samech (Numerical Value = 60): pictograph of a thorn, thistle
- 16) Ayin (Numerical Value = 70): Early Hebrew clearly depicted an Eye, Watching, Knowing, Seeing
- 17) Pe (Numerical Value = 80): pit, open hole, abyss

- 18) Tsade (Numerical Value = 90): Ancient Hebrew pictograph depicted a Man lying on his side. In the "Paleo-Hebrew" the glyph looks like a Man kneeling or "righteous person."
- 19) Qof (Numerical Value = 100): Early Hebrew pictograph indicates the threading of a needle.
- 20) Resh (Numerical Value = 200): Early Sinaitic inscriptions indicate a glyph of a human head, a raised head
- 21) Shin (Numerical Value = 300): An early and middle Hebrew picture of two front teeth, Sharp, Pressing, Shiny
- 22) Tav (Numerical Value = 400): Early and middle Hebrew ancient picture of a Cross either in the shape of a "T" or of an "X;" to be marked

**TOTAL Numerical Gematria Value of all 22 Letters =1495 (The Eternal God)
Biblical symbolism of #22 = Light, Light of the World**

Scripture References of Christ for all 22 "pictographs" found in ancient Hebrew Letters

Aleph: The First

And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

~ Colossians 1:18 (KJV, underline added)

Bet: The House (of David) (House of Bread/Bethlehem)

Doesn't the Scripture say that the Christ will come from the line of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?"

~ John 7:42 (Berean Study Bible)

Gimel: The Way

I am the Way Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

~ John 14:6 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

Dalet: The Door

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

~ John 10:9 (KJV, underline added)

Hey: Arms Outstretched

Then Jesus said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out, and it was restored to full use, just like the other.

~ Matthew 12:13 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

Vav: Pierced

Instead, one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out.

~ John 19:34 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

Zayin: Sword

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

~ Matthew 10:34 (KJV, underline added)

Chet: Fence/Protection

But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

~ John 10:3-4 (NKJV)

Tet: Filler of Baskets, Nets

And they all ate and were satisfied. They picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve full baskets.

~ Matthew 14:20 (NASB, underline added)

He told them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it there, and they were unable to haul it in because of the great number of fish.

~ John 21:6 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

Yod: Hand/Arm of Strength

But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

~John 12:37-38 (KJV, underline added)

Kaph: Open Palm, cupped hand

Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing."

~ John 20:27 (NASB, underline added)

Lamed: Shepherd's Staff

I am the Good Shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

~ John 10:11 (KJV, underline added)

Mem: Waves/Storms

But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

~ Matthew 8:27 (KJV, underline added)

Nun: Sperm/Sprouting Seed

The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say, "and to seeds," meaning many, but "and to your seed," meaning One, who is Christ.

~ Galatians 3:16 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

Samech: Thorn/Thistle (sin of the world)

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

~ John 1:29 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

Ayin: Eye, all-seeing, all-knowing

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

~Hebrews 4: 13-14 (KJV, underline added)

Pe: Pit, Hole

He replied, "If one of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out? ~ Matt 12:11 (Berean Study Bible)

How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

~ Matthew 12:12 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

Tsade: Righteous One

But about the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever, and justice is the scepter of Your kingdom.

~ Hebrews 1:8 (Berean Study Bible)

Qof: Threading the needle

Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

~ Matthew 19:24 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

~ Matthew 19:26 (Berean Study Bible)

Resh: Firstborn, raising the heads of all humanity

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

~ 1 Corinthians 15:20 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

Shin: Power, teeth, sharp, pressing

And from His mouth proceeds a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God, the Almighty.

~Rev 19:15 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

Tav: T or X = to be marked with a cross

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

~ Isaiah 53:5 (KJV)

He was delivered over to death for our trespasses and was raised to life for our justification.

~ Romans 4:25 (Berean Study Bible)

Prayer:

Yeshua, You are the Head (**Aleph**), the source of Power, over all the nations. You are the Alpha, the First, the Beginning, the Genesis. When Aleph is added, You change the Hebrew word for “exile” into “redemption.” Without You we are all in exile, with You we are redeemed. You are our Booth, our Shelter, from the House (**Bet**) of David, the House of Bread. You are the Way (**Gimel**) who shows us how to walk. You gave up Your royal position to come down here, through You we become rich. You chase after us to extend charity, Your fullness fills up our emptiness. You are the Door (**Dalet**), the only Way into the Kingdom, You enable us to transition from one state to another. Behold (**Hey**), Here You are, the Pierced One (**Vav**), You are a Sharp Sword (**Zayin**), The Judge over all the Earth. You are our Protection (**Chet**), the Blood that is applied to the lintel to save us from death. You keep your sheep safe within the sheepfold. You tore the veil to the Holy of Holies so that we may approach the Throne of God with boldness. You fill our baskets as the Bread of Life and fill our nets to make us fishers of men (**Tet**). Your outstretched Hands (**Yod**) on the Cross feed the poor, heal the sick, and help the needy. Your palms (**Kaph**) are always open and extended to offer us Grace when we REPENT and to help us believe. The Shepherd’s Staff (**Lamed**) is in Your Hands. You are the Great Shepherd and we submit to Your leadership, Your direction and Your kind and loving discipline. You calm the waves and the storms (**Mem**). We put our trust and faith in You and You alone. You are the Seed from Heaven (**Nun**), You are the Lamb Who takes away the sins of the earth (**Samech**). You see into every soul (**Ayin**), judging the motives of the heart. You are the only deliverance from the pit, the only salvation from the abyss (**Pe**). You alone are righteous, and You offer Your righteousness to us (**Tsade**). Your Way is narrow and only You can thread the needle (**Qof**) for us so that we can gain entrance into Your Kingdom. You lift up our heads (**Resh**), You restore our souls, we rise with You. Your Word is quick, powerful, and sharp (**Shin**), dividing our inner thoughts to the marrow like a two-edged sword. You were marked and crucified on a Cross (**Tav**) for our Salvation.

BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.

~ Revelation 1:7 (NASB)

PREFACE

You Can Count on It

It is one of the first things we do when someone is born. We count their fingers and their toes. Why do we do this? It seems rather strange when 99.9% of all people automatically come with 10 and 10!

Even after birth, we continue counting ages in months, years, and decades. All significant milestones are counted. We countdown to a rocket ship launch, a beauty contest, and a New Year. There is even a symbolic Doomsday clock and a Countdown to the apocalypse.

In another shade of meaning, we may “count” on certain things and people. We may count on our social security check. We may count on our looks, money, and talents. Many scriptures remind us to count our blessings:

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.
~Psalm 103:2 (ESV)

Therefore, we should not find it strange that the God who created the Heavens and the Earth would also ask us to count. Counting is an important part of scripture.

This book is about Counting the Omer. Without getting into great detail, (which will be further explored and examined throughout the book), Counting the Omer in the Old Testament was one of the “technical” ceremonial duties of the Law during the actual grain Harvest. In its spiritual counterpart, we are to prophetically countdown to the Great Harvest of souls.

If Jesus’ final command on earth was “*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations*” (Matthew 28:19/NKJV), He would not give us a task that was impossible to accomplish. Every minute counts. We can count on it to come to pass if we obey Him. But in the meanwhile, we must count the cost:

And whoever does not carry his cross and follow Me cannot be My disciple. Which of you, wishing to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost to see if he has the resources to complete it?

~ Luke 14:27-28 (Berean Study Bible, underline emphasis added)

Unlike the popular platitude, in God’s Kingdom it is *not* just the thought that counts...it’s the ACTION. We can have as many “good intentions” as possible, but if they are not put into action, nothing eternal is accomplished for the advancement of the Kingdom.

So too, faith by itself, if it is not complemented by action, is dead.
~ James 2:17 (Berean Study Bible)

Thank Jesus, that when we find redemption through Him, He does not keep count of our sins.

If You, O LORD, kept track of iniquities, then who, O Lord, could stand?
~ Psalm 130:3 (Berean Study Bible)

So then, who's counting? Apparently, God is:

For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."

~ Romans 4:3 (Berean Study Bible, underline emphasis added)

How does God see that we believe Him?...that we really have faith? Yeshua asked His followers this somewhat unsettling question:

When He returns in all His Glory...will He find faith on the Earth? (Luke 18:8). When I read this scripture I always think: *"Aw shucks, Lord...why did you have to go and ask that for?"*

Maybe unless we are tested, we are initially like Peter. Perhaps, we have a lot of early bluster but run away at the queries of a mere servant girl.

There will be many trials, tribulations and tests up the road. God-willing, when He returns, He will not find us "out for the count." At the final count, my blessed hope is that He...

counts me in.

And into the city will be brought the glory and honor of the nations. But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who practices an abomination or a lie, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

~Revelation 21:26-27 (Berean Study Bible)

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Opening Chapter:

From Passover to Pentecost

Have We Lost Count?

You shall count fifty days until the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the LORD.

~ Leviticus 23:16 (Berean Study Bible)

If Passover is all about deliverance, counting the Omer is the pathway to lawful living. It is symbolized by the time period when the Jews made their grand Exodus from Egypt to the point at which Moses received God's Law, the Torah on Mount Sinai.

Now we know from our Bible, that was not the end of the story. The giving of the Law was, indeed, momentous. This day is commemorated by the Hebrew festival of "Shavuot." This date is also commemorated today in the Christian world as "Pentecost." Both observances occur 50 days after Passover. Shavuot is the beginning of God's covenant of lawful obedience to Him, initially written on stone, and Pentecost is a pouring out of God's Holy Spirit to write the Law on our hearts.

Think of it like this: Jesus died for us (the Passover Lamb), and we were redeemed from the slavery of sin. Now, it is time to EXIT FROM EGYPT (the world's systems, the world's religions). It is a long and difficult walk with many trials, tribulations, and persecutions. Many obstacles will be in your path...some natural, some self-created, some from enemy attacks, but through it all GOD IS FAITHFUL. However, Jesus asks us this question in Luke 18:8:

Will we be faithful?

Apparently, the answer to that question, from reading the Exodus story to the end, is that very few people will have the faith necessary to enter the Land of Canaan. Only Joshua (Yeshua) and His loyal companion Caleb, (Hebrew word '*keleb*' meaning "dog"), made it into the Promised Land of that generation. Everyone else, over the age of 20 years old, died without entering the Promised Land. Joshua, Caleb and the young represent Christ, His faithful Church and their children.

From history, we can see that Pentecost was not the end of the journey for the First Century Church. After receiving this power from on High (Greek Word *dunamis*: from which we get the word "dynamite") the devil raged and attacked them, causing the beginning of another diaspora which ultimately spread the gospel worldwide.

And this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a testimony to ALL NATIONS, and then the end will come.

~ Matthew 24:14 (Berean Study Bible, emphasis added).

Recently, in November of 2018, a missionary named John Allen Chau was killed while trying to approach North Sentinel Island. This seemed extremely prophetic, as the islanders are known as "the last uncontacted people on planet Earth" and the name of Chau's missionary group was "All Nations." Note this news article title written before missionary Chau was killed:

North Sentinel Island Is Home to the Last Uncontacted People on Earth

"North Sentinel," another prophetic name, may just possibly have been the final outpost prophesied of in Matthew 24:14. In another news article, this is further confirmed:

Missionary Declares Jesus to Remote Tribe

In the first giving of the Law, Moses' descent from Mount Sinai was met with the Israelite rebellion of the golden calf. After smashing the first tablets, apparently it took a "second coming" of Moses, also known as the Deliverer, to get lawful living through their thick skulls. Lest you look at the Jews with some sort of misplaced arrogance, that thick skull belongs to you and me.

As we eagerly await our blessed hope, the return of Jesus Christ THE ultimate Deliverer, let Him find us faithful. May He find us serving Him, not worshiping a golden calf. Our individual calf may be symbolized by many things, but it all comes down to idolatry. Anything that replaces the One True God of Heaven in our hearts needs to get burned up in the heat of our passion for Christ.

Let the Countdown begin...

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father teach us to have the same heart on all days as during the Passover season, when we actively remove sin from our lives. May we be willing to move onward by counting your many blessings day by day. Train us by "counting of the Omer" to embrace a life of lawful living out of an abundance of love for You. You promised to write Your Law on our hearts as You guide us through this desert wilderness. We REPENT and turn away from worshiping false idols as we eagerly await Your return fully awake and prepared for Your Coming as our Bridegroom. We pray this petition in the precious Name of Yeshua, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Name above all names under which every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord.

~ Amen.

Day #1 ~ Counting the Omer

Bringing in the Sheaves

The Time is Ripe

He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

~ Psalm 126:6 (ESV)

There's an old song lyric which expresses "*One is the loneliest number.*" If we think about the number one (1), it is only divisible by itself. It stands alone from any other number, yet it is a component of all of them. In scripture, it symbolizes the Supremacy and Primacy of God Almighty. This "One" thinking is the foundation of the Shema found in Deuteronomy 6:4

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is One.

~ Deuteronomy 6:4 (Berean Study Bible)

Numbers are extremely significant in scripture. God has created order and His order is apparent in His use of numbering throughout His Holy Word. The very hairs on our head are numbered by God (Luke 12:7) and there is an entire Book in the Bible entitled '*Numbers!*'

For the next 50 days we will number the days or "Count the Omer." Scripture tells us to do this. Keep in mind that the devil does not have *one* (pun intended!) single new idea. He cannot "create" or be "creative." He can simply COUNTERFEIT. So, the evil practice of numerology is the devil's counterfeit of God's perfect number ordering. Clearly the scripture is written so that we might see patterns of God's handiwork through numbers. When we take these numbers and attempt to utilize them for witchcraft, astrology, or predictions, we are "out of order"...out of God's spiritual order and into spiritual chaos and disorder.

Counting the Omer is a reminder to bring in the sheaves of a spiritual people harvest as a wave offering to God. Remember, Satan can only counterfeit. Planned Parenthood's "harvesting" of fetus parts is the Satanic version of God's harvesting. Laborers in God's work harvest The Body of Christ for LIFE not death.

The Counting of the Omer is a verbal counting of each day from Passover through Shavuot, also now known as Pentecost. Passover, of course, represents the release of God's people from slavery and death through the slain Blood of the Lamb. The path

from Passover to Shavuot (aka Pentecost), also signifies the path from the written Law to the Law written on our hearts. It represents God getting His people back into "order" after years of having lived in the chaos and disorder of Egyptian bondage. This "*megas dunamis*" (intense spiritual power to fight the evil kingdom of darkness), comes from the combined power of lawful living made alive through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Our temples (bodies) filled with this power make devils cower in fear.

The practice of counting each day is a spiritual preparation so that we might allow God to prepare our souls for obedience to Christ. The Law is imprinted on our hearts and fulfilled as we recognize it is all for, by and through Jesus Christ our Lord and Messiah.

Counting the Omer is not about redemption from slavery in the strictest of senses. Remember, the Israelites were already redeemed from slavery. It more represents the "trek through the desert" (this life) that all of us must traverse upon as we learn that "lawful living" and obeying God's Word is critical in the process.

And being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.

~ Hebrews 5:9 (KJV, underline emphasis added)

THIS is the purpose of Counting the Omer.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

In these devotionals, it is not our desire to return to any legalistic method of practice. We are not to "mutilate the flesh" in the temporal but instead "die daily" as we grow spiritually and less and less enamored of this world. We are to understand the Old Testament teachings as the training wheels on a bicycle or scaffolding on a building. Once the behavior is fully learned, or the building completed, this structured system gives way to the finished result. Old Testament teaching must always point to Yeshua and His Work and we, as His laborers, must always teach "Christ and Christ crucified." (1 Corinthians 2:2)

These are a shadow of the things to come, but the body that casts it belongs to Christ.

~ Colossians 2:17 (Berean Study Bible)

As scaffolding does not need to be reapplied once the "Master Peace" has been accomplished, neither do we need to return to practices in a rote manner. However, any attempt to simply toss out the Old Testament would be tantamount to removing the very necessary instruction of the Holy Word of God (God forbid!) and to disdain His training and reproof. We all need to apply this training reminder until Christ's return.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for instruction, for conviction, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

~ 2 Timothy 3:16 (Berean Study Bible)

In the shadow of the scaffolding, we can begin to see glimpses of the majesty that is to come. We are being fashioned into the Temple of the Most High God. He is the Master Architect. Jesus is the original model. When He was made flesh, He "broke the mold" (1 Corinthians 11:24). There is no one like Him yet, ironically, we are simultaneously called to be like Him! (Romans 8:29). What a mystery! We must first be reduced to the ashes of repentance and then go through His reconstruction process. Only ours is not a temple made with human hands, this can only be a miracle of God.

So, let's begin by singing that old gospel Hymn:

*Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves,
Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.*

It's Harvest Time. On the 50th day, God promises us the liberty of The Jubilee and the joy that comes from repenting and obeying God. We pray that these next 50 days of devotionals prepare your heart to walk in the abundant life that God has prepared for those who love Him and are called according to His purposes.

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, as these times get increasingly dark and treacherous with each passing hour, let us be reminded that you are shaking everything so that what remains cannot be shaken. Let us develop a faith that cannot be shaken by external events. Teach us to number our days aright and remember that this temporal life is but a passing vapor especially in the light of your Eternal Kingdom. As we apply the practice of "Counting the Omer" may we be spiritually trained and strengthened by your Holy Word. Let us see the amazing correlations in Your Old Testament training to our Blessed Hope in the open, obvious, and promised physical return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Mount of Olives. Let us put no hope in the power of men, the false power of idols and the systems of this temporal world. Instead, let us fix our sights upwards as our redemption draws nigh. We pray this prayer in the Holy Name of Yeshua, the King of all kings, the Lord of all lords, the Name under which every knee must bow and the ONLY NAME under Heaven and Earth by which men must be saved.

~ Amen.

Day #2 ~ Counting the Omer

From the Ground Up

Body Double

Bring two loaves of bread from your dwellings as a wave offering, each made from two-tenths an ephah of fine flour, baked with yeast, as the firstfruits to the Lord. ~ Leviticus 23:17 (Berean Study Bible)

If we readily accept that Jesus is our great God and Savior and He is #1 (Titus 2:13), then His helpmate would be signified by the number 2. Adam was created first, then Eve. Christ the Perfect came first, followed by His perfected Church Bride. As scripture stated: *"It is not good for the man to be alone."* (Genesis 2:18a, Berean Study Bible). It follows that it is also not good for the Son of Man to be alone. There are TWO witnesses in scripture.

In the Old Testament, we see Moses (the Lawgiver) and Aaron (the Law speaker). Christ is the Head, His Church is the Body. We see this pattern of two throughout the Holy Word of God. There is Law and Grace; Faith and Works. What God has joined together, "let no man put asunder." (Matthew 19:6, KJV). There is an element of inseparability in numbers 1 and 2. There is really no way to define "one" (pardon the pun) without "the other."

In Lewis Carroll's 1871 classic book, *"Through the Looking Glass,"* the sequel to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* the title-named character has fallen through a mirror into a second world, an amazing strange land where everything is symbolic...a conundrum, a riddle, a puzzle needing to be solved. It is a place where even the language of poems is different, and "Jabberwocky" is the foreign new-fangled dialect of mystery. Carroll's style of writing was responsible for helping to create an emerging class of literature known as "nonsense genre." Whether it was truly nonsensical has been debated for over a century as the story is rich with symbolism, innuendo, classic quotes, characters, and situations that can be prophetically relevant to many a current event. Avid literary students still debate to this day just exactly what Carroll was attempting to really state in the "understory."

To many people, some of the directions given by God to the Israelites may, at first glance, appear as nonsense. Traditionally, when counting the Omer, a person may only recite it while it is nighttime. If they forget to do so, they can remember to count the next day, but according to Hebrew tradition, there is no blessing. I find this an interesting parallel for today. Those who "count the Omer," by acknowledging God FIRST when it

is still "dark outside," are the ones who will receive a blessing. Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess eventually that Jesus Christ is Lord and that His Moral Law reigns. However, it is best to REPENT now, while others are still asleep, and the world is very dark.

Another interesting note: The traditional Jewish texts state that the Omer may be counted in any language, but it is critically important for the person to understand what they are saying! So, acknowledge God early and make it your business to understand what "season" we are in.

Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.
~ 1 Corinthians 13:12 (New Living Translation)

The more we study scripture, the more apparent it becomes that the best way to comprehend the Bible is prismatically. If we fail to see the multi-dimensional honeycomb Truth of scripture, we will continue to have nonsensical debates with fellow Christians, much like Alice and the Mad Hatter.

But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.
~ 2 Timothy 2:23 (New American Standard Bible)

Honey, in scripture, is symbolic of pure Truth as it is the only food substance on the planet that never spoils. Clearly, God is trying to tell us something here. The sweetness of His Word is:

What *WAS*

What *IS*

What *IS TO BE*

It is also:

True *THEN*

True *NOW*

True *IN THE FUTURE*

We live in a fallen world...a world that is confusing, riddled with chaos, rife with frustrating characters and often we don't know which way to turn. Like Alice, we must

choose whether to succumb to the madness or finally find our way out. To do so, we must obtain a sense of wonderment for the epic story we are living in and to seek God for the part we must play in it. When we peer into the mirror of our souls, we should see Christ.

Narcissists gaze into their souls and see their own beauty and glory. Make no mistake, there is beauty and glory in mankind as we are created in the Image of God Almighty. Scripture tells us Lucifer was created quite beautifully. This ended up being his fatal flaw:

Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness; I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

~Ezekiel 28:17 (KJV)

There's a deep question here. It is probably THE ultimate question of questions. Looking around at the evil and confusion in the world, it is easy to wonder:

Why did God create us?

May I humbly suggest an answer? The miraculous answer is He had need of us, just as Christ had need of the beasts of burden for His triumphant entry (Luke 19:31). When He created Adam in the garden, God stated that Adam needed a helpmate. Adam said Eve was made "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23, KJV).

Christ is the final and ultimate "Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:22). The Church is His "Eve." We are His Bride. Together with Christ we birth godly offspring.

Is Carroll's fanciful place really all that unreal? On planet Earth we hear terrorists cry "off with their heads." We ask the leering, creepy Cheshire Cat politicians "Which way do we go?" Those in the pews continue to seek direction from a warren of deliriously confused clergy, some as crazy as a March Hare. The immature populace of Tweedle-Dee and Tweedle-Dum argue incessantly and follow along like mindless drones.

But then there's fresh-faced Alice, the Church, navigating through the challenges...a stranger in a strange land, sometimes in complete bewilderment yet wonderment at God's glorious drama.

Jesus said this about His followers:

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

~ John 17:16 (KJV)

We must never forget we are the Body of Christ and what He taught us...

Your Body is a Wonderland

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, as the world gets more frightening and confusing, help us to find a sense of purpose in the midst of all the bewildering nonsense. Return your Holy order to replace the chaos and disorder as You place us under the government of the Most High. We understand that as everything gets shaken, what remains is solidly fixed to the unmovable Rock of our Foundation. Teach us to understand, as plagues continue to rock the world, that we must remain peaceful and quiet in our abodes as you are preparing to set the captives free. We will watch, but not participate in, the Judgment that is smashing down all the idols and sacred cows of secular society. As markets crash, as abortion clinics close, as secular, godless schools shutter, we patiently await your trumpet call to amass together for our trek to the Promised Land. Help us to attain a sense of wonder at the mightiness of Your Power and the insignificance of the false gods of this world that have heretofore seemed so genuine and strong but are instead fake and weak in the face of Your awesome strength. We look onward to the place you have prepared for us where there will be no more crying and tears but only a perfect government rule by the Prince of Peace Himself. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, our great God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

~Amen.

Day #3 ~ Counting the Omer

Triple Threat Three Times Our God

*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is One.
~ Deuteronomy 6:4 (Berean Study Bible)*

Probably one of the most significant times of schism in Church history occurred during the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D. when Nestorius debated Cyril, the Patriarch of Alexandria, regarding the complex specificity in the meanings of "ousia" (essence) versus "prosopon" (person). Sadly, I think we are still being divided by our misunderstanding of the Tri-UNITY of God (three essences) by Trinitarian (three persons) teaching gone awry.

When Lionel Richie wrote these lyrics to his song in the 1970's, no one had a hard time understanding that he meant just one special, particular lady:

You're once, twice, three times a lady, and I love you...

Why, then, do we have so much difficulty grasping the triune nature of God? Yet, the "three-ness," but "one-ness" of God is perhaps one of the most misunderstood concepts of Christianity today--not just by those of another faith but by Christians themselves!

The way most Christians describe God, we would probably be guilty of the very idol worship we eschew in other faiths--the worship of multiple gods. This is one of the primary stumbling blocks to preaching our faith to Muslims and Jews who can think of no greater blasphemy in their beliefs than polytheism. Muslims literally recite multiple times a day that their allah-god is the one and only. Our covenantal Jewish brothers and sisters also charge us with this heresy even though Yahweh of the Old Testament is, in fact, our One and only God just like them.

When I was younger, a Sunday School teacher told us to envision H2O in three different forms: Water, Steam and Ice all have different characteristics, yet, all of them are indisputably H2O. This explanation of God, like most un-scriptural explanations, was temporarily placating but it still didn't satisfy my curiosity, nor is this accurate theology based on the Holy Word of God. H2O can't be ALL of these three things AT ONCE and yet still maintain its distinct categories.

However, we readily accept the triunity of ourselves in our everyday vernacular. Let me give you a few quick examples. I'm sure you've heard some variation of any three of these statements:

"She was there in body and words but her mind was elsewhere

"I'm sorry I won't be able to attend your wedding, but I'll be there in spirit!"

"His mind and spirit were still active, but physically he was wasting away."

If we heard any variation of these three comments, we wouldn't call the loony bin and have the person carted away. We would totally understand the concept that was trying to be conveyed. Why do we completely acknowledge our own tripartite nature but find God's a difficult concept to grasp? God said we are CREATED IN HIS IMAGE.

Thus, in the Hebrew, let's examine the exact word in Genesis of "Elohim." Elohim is a plural! Was God having a split personality disorder in Genesis? Of course not. He was referring to Himself-all "ousias" or "essences" of Himself.

Jesus Christ is God. In a similar analogy, your body is YOU but it is not the complete definition of you. Your body may die but your "essence" will continue to live on (your words, your spirit). God said He would make man in His Image. Are you just your words? Well, no. Are you just a spirit? Uh, no. Are you just a mind? Nope. Are you, in fact, ALL THREE-Yes, yes, yes! Jesus came to redeem/resurrect the fallen flesh of mankind so that we may live with Him throughout eternity in body, mind and spirit.

To figure this one out we must go back to the beginning... Few people accurately read one of the most misquoted verses in the Book of Genesis:

Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us."

~ Genesis 1:26 (New Living Translation)

Next let's, fast forward to John 1:1

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

~ John 1:1: (KJV)

I love scripture and how orderly it is. Even this very verse is sovereignly labelled 1:1. It's as if God is saying: "Listen up, people! The very FIRST thing you need to know is God is 1...multiple essences, yes...but 1...you must get that straight before we begin."

Then it goes on to say:

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

~John 1:14 (Berean Literal Bible)

The Word was made flesh. (made, "genea," generated G1096 in Strong's Concordance). The Word always was, is, and will be. Yet, the flesh of Jesus Christ was generated/begotten. No Christian will deny that Christ came to Earth as a baby and grew into a man. Yet the "essence" of Jesus always pre-existed. The appearance of Jesus Christ is better understood as "The Word came on the scene" as if called into an epic drama. He was not created, He is The Creator.

For in Him all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities. All things were created through Him and for Him.

~ Colossians 1:16 (Berean Study Bible)

The WORD created the world. Jesus Christ is THE Word!

By the Word of the Lord the Heavens were made, and all the stars by the breath of His mouth.

~ Psalm 33:6 (Berean Study Bible)

We are created through Him and for Him. It would be as if the Author, Producer and Screenwriter showed up in His own drama on stage. He is not simply "one of the actors"...He created all the characters and wrote the entire epic story! In the Book of Daniel, we find an excellent example of a "theophany" where Jesus Christ Himself shows up directly in the drama:

"Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

~ Daniel 3:25 (NKJV)

Jesus clearly said: *"Anyone who has seen me, has seen the Father"* (John 14:9). *"I and the Father are One"* (John 10:30).

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government will be upon His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, Prince of Peace.

~ Isaiah 9:6 (Berean Study Bible/emphasis added).

To understand the personhood ("prosopon") of Jesus better, we must understand that God "put on" the necessary attire in order to appear within His own Epic Drama. Jesus is the physical manifestation of the FULL Godhead (Colossians 2:9), not a separate adjunct of some Three-Headed deity. He is Emmanuel...God with us!

This "three heads" type of belief is found in paganism such as the multiple-headed legends of false Roman gods: Cerberus and Hydra being examples. If you are blessed to grasp this mystery by the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit, one might understand that Jesus' flesh tent "encased" God FULLY: The Father, His Word, His Spirit.

For in Christ all the FULLNESS OF THE DEITY dwells in bodily form.
~ Colossians 2:9 (Berean Study Bible/emphasis added)

In Jesus we see the glory of God manifested in the flesh.

The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
~ John 1:14 (Berean Study Bible)

In the Old Testament we learn that no one can see God's face and continue to live in the flesh (Ex 33:20). By this "encasement" (ie: Incarnation), we are protected from having our eyeballs melt out of our skulls like an Indiana Jones episode when we "see" God (Yeshua).

Then, how is mankind able to see Jesus, Who is Himself God, and still live? Spoiler answer: WE DON'T!

Then Jesus told His disciples, "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."
~ Matthew 16:24-25 (Berean Study Bible)

"Truly, truly, I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a seed; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life will lose it, but whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life."
~ John 12:24-25 (Berean Study Bible)

Those who only "saw" Yeshua's skin casing and not His Mind, His Spirit, His Word...the full Godhead that dwelled within Him, crucified HIM instead of themselves! However, just one glimpse at His "insides" then we become DEAD to this temporal life! That is how the First Century Church was able to experience such crushing persecution and martyrdom. After looking into the eyes of Yeshua and grasping that they were looking at GOD ON EARTH (Emmanuel), this earth became nothing but dirt to them. They had their eyes focused on a Heavenly Kingdom where they would gaze into His eyes for all eternity.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come!
~ 2 Corinthians 5:17 (Berean Study Bible)

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

~ 1 Corinthians 15:50 (KJV)

To sum up: Nowhere does Scripture state that God is "three persons" any more than we would describe ourselves as three people. Perhaps this is just bad semantics gone awry over time in Church teaching, but it is critically important as all heresies, at their core, attempt to LOWER or SEPARATE Jesus to an improper position. This cannot be done once we accept and understand Tri-UNITY instead of Trinitarian teaching. God is One. This may seem nitpicky, but Jesus told us it was THE most important thing to know!

Now one of the scribes had come up and heard their debate. Noticing how well Jesus had answered them, he asked Him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus replied, "This is the most important: 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is One Lord.'"

~ Mark 12:28-29 (Berean Study Bible)

Only when we get back to this correct understanding, will we truly grasp the Deity of Jesus Christ and the Incarnational work that He has done for us on the Cross so that we, as His Bride, may join Him one day IN UNITY as the "two become one."

I pray that God, who gives peace, will make you completely holy. Any may your spirit, soul and body be kept healthy and faultless until our Lord Jesus Christ returns.

~Thessalonians 5:23 (Contemporary English Version)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, please open our understanding and pour out your great wisdom from Heaven so that we may fully grasp the majestic mystery of the Incarnation. There is no salvation under Heaven and Earth in any other Name than the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Since Your Holy Word declares that You are a saving God from Genesis through Revelation, we must then grasp that there is no spiritual separation between Yahweh and Yeshua and that You, indeed, are One. There is NO OTHER SAVIOR...no not one. Help us to not think of ourselves as more complex than our Creator by acknowledging that we have a body, a mind/soul and a spirit to reflect how we were created in Your image. Once, having grasped the unique nature of "Elohim," let us then utilize this knowledge to REPENT for any time we have rejected LIFE and treated others in a one-dimensional way without seeing them as creations of the Most High. Teach us to grasp that You love Your creation so much, that you made a way, through the Incarnation, to fuse God to man so that we might enjoy eternal life in Your Heavenly Kingdom. There is NO OTHER WAY that this incredible mystery of God/man spiritual melding could possibly happen without You coming IN PERSON ("prosopon") to show us the Way to Your "ousia". We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, Yeshua Hamaschiach, our Messiah and Great God and Savior.

~Amen.

Day #4 ~ Counting the Omer

Unfair Share

No Man's Land

And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.

~ Numbers 18:20 (KJV)

In Numbers 18 and Deuteronomy 18, God lays out in considerable detail the "portion" or "share" of the Levites. At first glance it might seem as if the Levites were short-changed. Why don't they receive any of the fabulous earthly real estate that was eventually divvied up to the tribes of Israel?

In Counting Omer on Days #1-#3, we spent a considerable amount of time explaining God and His essence. Today, on Day #4 of Counting the Omer, we focus on His chosen people and their inheritance. They are his special vessels elected specifically to bring Him Glory in the Temple.

In America, the Democratic Party policy of "fair share" has always struck a discordant note deep within my psyche. I am cringingly reminded of a crying brat stamping his or her feet while whining:

"That's not fair!"

It is also the ultimate Marxist battle cry attempting to enrage the uneducated masses (dare I say proletariat?) to presume that somehow, somewhere they are being victimized by the greedy bourgeoisie.

Anarchists know that they must lay this groundwork to succeed with their plans to destabilize the status quo. They MUST sow seeds of dissatisfaction, which is simply a form of thanklessness. The Bible tells us to enter God's gates with thanksgiving. Thus, it stands to reason, that we enter Satan's gates or the gates of hell with our ingratitude.

For a moment, let me temporarily agree with this "unfair" premise. Life seems unfair in the earthly fallen realm. Atheists constantly use this petulant premise as evidence that God does not exist. Why do bad things happen to good people? The whole question is wrong from the onset. "Bad things" in the scheme of eternity have a different perspective than what we might perceive as bad. "Good people" is an oxymoron.

Mankind is fallen. There are no "good people" or "people of goodwill" without a complete inner obeisance and bondservant-hood transformation by the One Who is Good.

*And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.
~ Luke 18:19 (Berean Study Bible)*

We are being led by these tyrants into bondage, as surely as they are falsely telling us to throw off our "chains." In the French and Russian revolutions, the stoked up masses were told to throw off the chains of a monarchy. Hitler told the Germans to throw off the chains of WWI financial penalties from the Treaty of Versailles. The Democrats yell:

"They're gonna put y'all back in chains!"

New day, different liar.

We are watching Western democracies implode after two centuries of increasing human secularism. Apparently, there is no such thing as "equality, fraternity and liberty" or "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" without God. Who knew? Islam and Marxism are rushing in to fill the void. The Communism of the USSR has already imploded but sadly not fully recognized as the utter failure it is. Socialist Germany was wiped flat after falling under the spell of The Third Reich and broken into two. Why do we foolishly think somehow, we in "democratic" countries will be different?

We have magical thinking that, somehow, we are special. We will "imagine" something from our corrupt human minds that will work this time. God told us what happens when we start to "imagine" that we have a better system, a better idea, a better society than one structured around God.

And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have IMAGINED to do.

~Genesis 11:6 (KJV/emphasis added)

Destruction of this Tower of Babel is not far up ahead. As surely as a slave trader dragged prisoners to the auction block, our souls have been captured by lies promising a better life away from our godly roots. IT'S NOT FAIR!--is our misguided battle cry.

Here is what is unfair...that the innocent should die for the guilty. We are not getting our "fair share" when Christ died for us. He offered Himself in trade for our freedom. This is the deal of a lifetime. Lyrics from the rock band The Who come to mind:

I call that a bargain...

the best I ever had.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we acknowledge Your Authority and You as the One and Only True God. You are the God of the Old and New Testament, the Rock of our Foundation. All other ground is sinking sand. In our insatiable quest for "freedoms" we have foolishly untied ourselves from Your anchor. Without You as the Pilot in Command, we now find ourselves tossed about on the raging sea of humanity without a clear direction. We REPENT and confess that we are unable to steer our own ship and we will soon find ourselves shipwrecked if we don't REPENT and TURN AWAY from the 4 National Sins of innocent slaughter, sanctification of perversions, removal/replacement of God Almighty in our public square and the betrayal of Israel with "land for peace" deals. We thought we could walk on water and instead find ourselves sinking rapidly. Please reach down Your Hand and pull us out so that the waters don't close around us. We pray this prayer in the Name of Yeshua, the ONLY NAME under Heaven and Earth by which men might be saved.

~Amen.

Day #5 ~ Counting the Omer

I Walk the Line

The Straight and Narrow

They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way.

~ Jeremiah 31:9(a) KJV

Today, as we reach Day#5 in Counting the Omer, we are reminded that there are 5 Books of Law in the Old Testament known as the Pentateuch. However, in scripture the #5 is associated with both the Law *and* Grace. As with Solomon's baby, the two must go together and not be cut asunder like the two tablets of the 10 commandments.

There is a mistaken notion, especially among the grace, grace, grace and more grace crowd, that serving in the Kingdom is akin to a wide-open space to roam---sort of like going on a safari in the wild plains of the Serengeti. This is an inaccurate analogy. If we study Bible scripture, we see that the closer and closer we get to God, the way becomes narrower and narrower...tighter and more constraining.

Now, at first glance, this concept can seem almost unsettling like being in the grip of a Boa Constrictor. There was a recent YouTube video of an Anaconda wrapped around a dog. Each time the dog exhaled a breath, the snake got tighter and tighter, literally squeezing the life out of him. The dog was surprisingly calm realizing that struggling would only make the situation worse. Thankfully the owner came upon the situation, scared off the snake, and the dog survived no worse for wear. So why would we want to envision an image of containment in our Christian lives?

The problem arises when we mistakenly think we are "free." This is a word in our Western culture definition which usually translates to "doing my own thing." We are deceived. Seriously practicing Christians embrace the concept that we are bondservants to Christ. The scripture tells us that the only thing we have control over is our will or our right to choose. That's it. Despite what secular culture and all the commercials tell you, we don't get a vast array of choices, only two:

I call Heaven and Earth as witnesses against you today, that I have set before you LIFE and DEATH, blessing and cursing. So choose life, so that you and your descendants may live.

~ Deuteronomy 30:19 (Berean Study Bible/emphasis added)

We can't say: "I choose not to choose." Go back and re-read the underscore. You must

make a choice. Like the boa-wrapped dog, you can't "wiggle out" of it unless your Master comes and chases the snake away.

I imagine after this harrowing snake incident, the owner proceeded to keep the dog on a short leash when walking through dangerous territory. I think the dog was more than happy to be close to his owner's heels and was cautious about running unrestrained through wild terrain again. Next time it's safer just to stay close to the Master's feet and obey. Whew...close call!

The etymology for the word "Serengeti" is really quite interesting. On the surface, Serengeti means:

Seren = Serene endless view
Geti = Plain

But it ALSO means:

Seren = Siren Song
Geti = Rift Valley

The ancient Greek definition of "geti" has additional shades of meaning which indicate cattle being prodded by a spear through a gate. The devil, while seemingly giving us a vast array of delicious options, is really "cattle-driving" those who listen to his "siren song" with a pitchfork to their destruction. You may foolishly think, like the Fleetwood Mac song, "you can go your own way," but instead you are really tromping to the slaughterhouse.

The Equator is one big imaginary line encircling the Earth. Geographic locations on the Equator experience the fastest sunrises and sunsets. It's truly the line where dark and light are closest together. The ultimate example is the equatorial location where the upper edge of the Serengeti passes through Lake Victoria in Africa. The Rift Valley there runs from Israel's Jordan Rift Valley to Kenya's Great Rift Valley. Great political symbolism here if you meditate on it.

Right now, there's a "rending" going on in the spiritual world. During Jewish mourning, known as "sitting Shiva", funeral-goers rip a piece of their outer garment off. Some wear a black ribbon. The Hebrew meaning for ribband is: "Line." The torn garment or ribband symbolizes and expresses the mourner's sorrow. This is a spiritual concept of the Remnant...those who will sit and mourn with God while the Earth is wracked with spiritual and physical grief. "Sitting Shiva" goes on for seven days. The Remnant will mourn for a "seven" also.

He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

~ Daniel 9:27 (NIV)

The Great Rift is coming. It will be evidenced in both physical and spiritual struggles globally. Those who are closely wrapped up in Christ will have His Shalom Peace to face the coming constrictions as the earth labors and travails like one in childbirth. We will know, like the patient, trapped dog, He is coming soon to set us free. Those roaming the plains recklessly will weep and wail in loud pain and torment. Only if you are walking the line with the Lion of Judah will you truly be...

Born Free

But thank God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient with all your heart to the standard of teaching in which you were instructed and to which you were committed. And having been set free from sin, you have become the slaves of righteousness [of conformity to God's will and purpose.]

~ Romans 6:17-18 (Amplified)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, as we enter this time of great rending, embolden us to openly wear a ribbon of mourning as we REPENT of the National Sins that have placed the world into a global death spiral. Call up your army of mourners Lord, those who sit at the city gates in sackcloth and ashes openly declaring that it is time for all nations to REPENT. Your Holy Word reminds us that "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:4). We know that as we share the grief in our spirits by this worldwide apostasy, God's Comfort will be fully present. We look onward to the arrival of our Prince of Peace, who will wipe away every tear and the Kingdom of God where there will be no more mourning and no more tears. Until that Day arrives, strengthen us to bring the Light of Christ to a lost and dying world. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, the ONLY NAME under Heaven and Earth by which men may be saved, YESHUA of Nazareth.

~Amen.

Day #6 ~ Counting the Omer

Romancing the Stone Has Elohim Left the Building?

But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by Myself, saith the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation. ~ Jeremiah 22:5 (KJV)

In scripture the #6 is known as the number of man. Man, left to his own devices in this fallen world, eventually becomes "self-actualized" instead of God-actualized which results in #666, the number of the Beast. As discussed in Day #3, the nature of man reflects God's own triune nature. When that triune nature is corrupted in thought, word and deed, it becomes a multi-prismed chamber of evil...in mind, body and spirit.

It has become almost predictable now after a major disaster that a clueless politician will stand up and utter these words: "*We will rebuild.*" As pointed out in the best-selling novel, *The Harbinger* by Jonathan Cahn, these words are the final rebellious fist-raising to the sky just before a nation begins to fall. It comes from the prophetic Book of Isaiah.

The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars.

~ Isaiah 9:10 (KJV)

Despite scriptural forewarnings of what it portends, much of the Christian world is supporting the temple to be rebuilt in Jerusalem before the Second Coming of the Messiah. Jewish Orthodoxy also seeks to rebuild the temple and there are several organizations in Israel devoted solely to this purpose. This does not make good sense on an exegetical study of scripture as well as a theological spiritual level. Here's what Jesus said:

Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

~ John 2:19 (New American Standard Bible)

With clear hindsight, we now know He was talking about His eventual death and resurrection from the grave three days later. If Jesus was referring to the restoration of a bodily Temple, why are we so obsessed today with a temple made of "wood and stone?"

"Wood and stone" in the Bible have negative connotations. Most often "wood and stone" is mentioned as references to idols. In more common everyday vernacular, it refers to those things that we worship and exalt besides God. Would not another temple, with all the attendant animal sacrifices required, be a blasphemy in light of the "Ultimate Sacrifice" which has already been given through Jesus Christ on the cross?

By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

~ Hebrews 10:10 (NASB, emphasis added)

Today, we have lots of "wood and stone" idols. Based on man's rebellious nature, it is not surprising to see the frantic effort to rebuild another temporal, earthly temple in Jerusalem. This is in direct opposition to what scripture clearly teaches us about how Yeshua came to transform us.

Do you not know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

~ 1 Corinthians 3:16 (emphasis added)

Why would the Most High God return to inhabiting wood and stone after making a flesh and blood appearance? As noted, the prophet Daniel says this is a move that we should expect of the ultimate anti-Christ.

While the Bible does, indeed, prophesy that there will be a temple restoration before the true Eternal Temple of the Body of Christ is resurrected in the New Jerusalem, first, Hell will have to freeze over...literally! Before the beginning of Christ's Millennial Reign, Satan will be bound, and Hell sealed over for 1000 years.

And I saw an angel coming down out of Heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended.

~ Revelation 20:1-3 (NIV)

It is during this time that there will be complete and total "Temple Restoration" of the Body of Christ which will be ruled by Yeshua Himself. After 6000 years of fallen mankind, we will enjoy a 1000-year Shabbat with the Lord of the Sabbath!

One last thing Christians should also be very aware of is the predicted "abomination of desolation." A false Christ will arise who will occupy the rebuilt earthly temple and declare himself as God. Literally, that will be a time to "run for the hills."

So, when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel---let the reader understand---then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

~ Matthew 24:15-16 (NIV)

I expectantly believe that we are on the crux of mass Messianic Revival, especially in Israel. I pray for this in the United States as well; a fourth "Great Awakening." Here in America, if we don't put God back into His proper place, in the center of our "temples," we can continue to expect confusion, chaos and disorder. We, as a people, have asked God to leave our so-called "neutral" society. Now we are witnessing the horrific and terrifying results of a God-less culture gone mad and under judgment. Plagues, like the corona-virus have literally emptied the wood and stone buildings! Yet, cluelessly, Mammon-worshiping, apostate churches still raise their fist to the sky and declare:

"WE WILL REBUILD!"

Here's the Truth...No ear-tickling pulpits or oblivious politicians declaring a false world unity will rebuild this mess. We will trip over ourselves in confusion and disarray. Indeed, we desperately DO need a temple renewal. Let's start by removing the stones in our hearts and minds, preparing the soil through REPENTANCE, and planting the Seed of Faith.

In the United States and worldwide, we truly need a major overhaul...

A complete heart and soul restoration.

This Jesus is 'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.'

~ Acts 4:11 (Berean Study Bible)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, Teach and guide us to see clearly as we enter a time of global mass confusion. Give us ears to hear and eyes to see what is going on in the spiritual realm instead of having an earthly, temporal dim view. Let us not raise our fists against You and declare that we will rebuild what You have clearly torn down. Give us a heart of understanding that has Your Law written upon it instead of hearts of stone that resist You and Your commands. As idols are torn down, let us become more and more detached from worldly pursuits while keeping our eyes looking upwards for Your imminent return. In the remaining time that we have, help us to REPENT of any lingering obstacles of brick and stone in our own hearts which prevent our soil from being receptive for Your Heavenly Kingdom which is soon to begin. Let our obedience to Your Sabbath commandment be a symbol between us as we expectantly await the "ultimate Sabbath" of Your 1000-year Millennial Reign. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, our Great God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the ONLY NAME under Heaven and Earth by which men may be saved.

~Amen.

Day #7 ~ Counting the Omer

Seeds of Truth

Yes, Yes and Amen

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so, through Him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. ~ 2 Corinthians 1:20

Most people are aware that the #7 signifies "completion" in scripture. God was finished with His Creation and rested on the seventh day. Jesus is "The Lord of the Sabbath" and in Him we find completion. When Peter asked Jesus how often we should forgive someone, Jesus answered 70 x 7, which was a way of saying: COMPLETELY!

Did you know that there are certain prayers that, if you seek God and are truly sincere, God will grant your prayer request 100% of the time? This is not one of those tricky theological squirms such as: "God always answers prayer, sometimes He says "No" and sometimes He answers "Wait." For these prayers, He will always answer YES and always give you your petition. Wow...right about now you are thinking *What are these prayers?* This is better than Aladdin's Lamp!...definite answers from the Most High God, Creator of the World, 100% guaranteed! Even more astounding, it's not limited to just three, there are SEVEN of them! In honor of Day #7 of the Omer, let's count them:

1) "Dear God: I sincerely want to know You. Please reveal Yourself to me."

It always amazes me how few people have actually taken the time to pray this prayer. There's no end to the overabundance of philosophies, religions and beliefs to select from. I'm sure it may get confusing to an unbeliever. Which one is correct? How can we be certain? Here's some simple logic. It's blatantly obvious that God exists just by looking around at incredible marvel of the universe. If He exists, He must be able to see and hear me. "Hey God! Since You are obviously out there...I want to know You." Here's what the scriptures have to say about this:

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.
~ Jeremiah 29:13 (Berean Study Bible)

Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.
~ James 4:8(a)/(Berean Study Bible)

This should not be a "one time" request but prayed continually as your intimacy and relationship grows with Christ over time.

2) "Lord, please forgive me."

Again, I think we make this way too complicated. The Bible is very simple and straightforward on this. No hot coals to walk over. No hair shirts to wear. No special incantations.

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 (Berean Study Bible)

This one does come with a requirement:

And when you stand to pray, if you hold anything against another, forgive it, so that your Father in Heaven will forgive your trespasses as well.

~ Mark 11:25 (Berean Study Bible)

Nevertheless, like request #1...It's a given.

3) "Jesus, please teach me how to live properly."

Not only does God always answer this sincere prayer, but it comes with a 100% satisfaction guarantee!

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

~ Matthew 5:6 (NASB)

4) "Heavenly Father, please teach me to love my neighbor as myself."

Now, the devil has done a horrifically "great" job redefining the word "love" in today's vernacular. If you truly love someone, you are much more concerned with their ultimate outcome than a temporary fond feeling. For all seriously practicing Christians, the greatest blessing ever conferred on them is Jesus Christ. Unless you are willing to share your greatest blessing with someone, you don't truly love them. That is why Jesus first said:

"Love the Lord Your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all Your strength."

~ Matthew 22:37 (Christian Standard Bible)

Then, He said:

"And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

~ Matthew 22:39-40 (NIV)

If God's Holy Word says that this is part of THE greatest commandment-that everything else literally hangs on these two requirements, then it stands to reason that He desires for you to improve in this area. Ask Him for help in truly loving your neighbor with sharing the gospel message. You'll get a definite YES.

5) "Jehovah-Jireh (God my Provider), Please supply my daily needs."

"Give us this day our daily bread" sounds sort of obnoxious at first like "Gimme". But that's what The Word says. These are Jesus' exact words when teaching us how to pray.

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after these things, and your Heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

~ Matthew 6:31-33 (NIV)

We must come to the realization that we are God's children. He doesn't want us focused on scratching around in the dirt every day trying to make ends meet. Now, I am not about to go off here on some crazy prosperity themed message. I don't believe God wants you praying for Rolex watches and Mercedes. However, I do believe he wants you to simply expect that, as your Heavenly Parent, he is aware of His obligation to clothe, feed and shelter you just as any good parent would acknowledge this obligation without hesitation. (Philippians 4:19)

6) "Abba Father, please fill me with Your wisdom."

Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

~ James 1:5 (Berean Study Bible)

I don't know how much more "cut and dry" this one can be. There's really no way to spin this scripture. When you need wisdom, ASK and, without God giving you a lecture about how undeserving you are, He will simply give it to you. Why aren't we praying this one every hour? Wisdom is more valuable than gold and it's FREE for the asking from the endless store of God's treasure House!

7) "Yeshua, please help me to grow up spiritually."

User Warning on #7: You'd better be extremely serious when you pray this one! Be careful what you ask for. It comes with a test. If you pray for patience, your patience WILL be tested!

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

~ 1 Peter 1:7 (KJV)

If you're like me, you may have prayed something like this:

"Lord--give me patience and give it to me NOW!" For some reason that prayer never works. What DID happen is I would soon get a great opportunity to control my road rage or bite my sharp tongue while trying to curb a sarcastic reply.

Finally, plan to pray every day. The Risen Christ is knocking on the door of your heart and mind to "dine" with you. (Revelation 3:20). Ask Him in and ask Him what you can do today to bless Him. Write that down to gain His wisdom. This will by no means ensure perfection. There are many days when you will fail miserably. Even the Apostle Paul struggled with this reality:

For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do--this I keep on doing. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord.

~ Romans 7:15-20; 24-25 (NIV)

However, slowly, over time, you will start to notice incremental improvements. The change will come more rapidly as you give in to it.

Did you ever tell a child that you planned on doing something with them or for them and then forget? Well, we all know this line...*But, YOU PROMISED!* No matter how many times you explain that you had a bad day, you have a headache, you will do it another day, you messed up...they will not let you off the hook. Smart kids. They will get their petition. Ask any parent!

Well, God doesn't have a bad day. If He promised something, He simply wants you to remind him of His Promises and be serious about receiving it.

So, don't be afraid to boldly approach the throne of grace on these issues. Go ahead...Remind God...He wants you to say...

YOU PROMISED!

Yet he did not waver through disbelief in the Promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God was able to do what He had promised...

~Romans 4:20-21 (Berean Study Bible)

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen. ~ The Lord's Prayer*

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, remind us to come to you often in prayer. Even as Jesus taught us to pray The Lord's Prayer, He taught us to pray in "sevens" unto the completion of all things. We acknowledge that the Lord's Prayer is comprised of these seven prayers/acknowledgements:

#1) We acknowledge Your Supremacy and that You rule from Heaven and Your Name is revered.

#2) We look onward to Your final Kingdom's arrival when Your will be done on Earth perfectly as it is in Heaven.

#3) As we await Your physical return, we thank you for providing us with our daily needs as we know that You are a good Father, our Provider.

#4) Forgive us our sins as we continue to forgive others who sin against us.

#5) Help us to avoid temptations from the evil one and to overcome.

#6) We acknowledge that only Your Kingdom has the Power and the Glory necessary to win this battle and will last forever and ever throughout eternity.

#7) Yes, Yes and Amen.

Day #8 ~ Counting the Omer

Poor Crop Yield Reaping the Whirlwind

But Onan knew that the offspring would not belong to him; so whenever he would sleep with his brother's wife, he would spill his seed on the ground so that he would not produce offspring for his brother. ~ Genesis 38:9 (Berean Study Bible)

As we count Day #8 of the Omer, we continue in the Lord's directive to the Israelites after the Passover miracle. Today is a day that we acknowledge and focus on God's abundance. He saved 8 people in the Ark, which was abundantly enough to repopulate the entire earth. Circumcision occurs on the 8th day and symbolizes abundant sensitivity to God. In Greek Gematria, the Name of Jesus adds up to 888, more than enough to counter the Beast of 666. The number 8 on its side is the infinity symbol. As always, when we follow Christ and His Holy Word, there is an abundance, more than enough. However, are we producing an abundance of Godly offspring today?

Applying this concept to today, there is still an elephant in the room within Christian circles on the obvious connection between birth control and abortion. What has led us to this point? The Greek Word "ousia" means "substance" or "essence." It literally means the "being" of a living person. Therefore, mankind's substance is himself, it is his issue. Birth control was the crowbar that the devil has used to get in the door of our minds and consciences to spawn the hideous, oxymoronicly named monster "Planned Parenthood." Any time we use birth control, we are restricting our very substance. Why, then, do most Christians continue to bow down at the altar of birth control? Like Onan, the prodigal son shows us another scriptural acknowledgement of "wasting our substance."

And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his SUBSTANCE with riotous living.
~ Luke 15:13 (King James 2000 Version/emphasis added)

The very *first command* of God found in scripture is:

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it.
~ Genesis 1:28(a) (NKJV)

Scripture goes on to say that women (symbolizing The Church) will be saved through childbirth.

And it was not Adam (mankind) who was deceived, but the woman (The Church) who was deceived and fell into transgression. Nevertheless, she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

~ 1 Timothy 2:14-15 (NKJV w/ parenthetical comments added).

Scripture continues by informing us that with children, we are best able to defend ourselves.

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are children born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. He will not be put to shame when he confronts the enemies at the gate.

~ Psalm 127:4-5 (Berean Study Bible)

The very name "Planned Parenthood" is an affront to God's teachings and, instead, encourages man's unfruitfulness through a wasteful spilling of seed. One must ask why so many in the Christian world embraced and promoted birth control which is clearly an anti-scriptural ideology which tries to draw asunder procreation from the unitive conjugal act. This is the very thinking that spawned the sexual revolution!

From the virgin Mary's perspective, her pregnancy was indeed unplanned! Only God should make this call as to when He grants life. We see this concept in the spiritual realm as well:

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

~ John 6:44 (Berean Study Bible)

In an apt analogy, continued support of birth control would be no different than supporting Aryan race supremacy while simultaneously claiming we had nothing to do with the proliferation of the death camps.

Clearly, we've been duped by Satan. We've chased the careers, the big house, the latest model cars, multiple vacations a year and then discharge our "issue" into a condom or take a pill which creates hostile womb conditions.

As a side note: I wonder how many people realize that IUD's and birth control pills actually EXPEL fertilized eggs by destroying the womb conditions necessary for successful attachment? For those who need a wake-up call, this process of expelling already fertilized eggs is called an ABORTION. You and your spouse might be having an ABORTION every single month with your "birth control"

methods. Spiritually chilling, one of these abortion methods is known as "Plan B." Zyklon B, also known as Hitler's Plan B, was the poisonous gas that was used during the HOLOCAUST.

Jesus Christ came to bring LIFE and LIFE more ABUNDANTLY. Jesus' agenda has nothing to do with birth control which is the realm of Satan.

The thief cometh not, but for to STEAL, and to KILL, and to DESTROY: I am come that they might have LIFE, and that they might have it MORE ABUNDANTLY.

~ John 10:10 (KJV/emphasis added)

We are also committing the sin of birth control spiritually! When we refuse to "go and make disciples of all nations" but instead speak vaguely of "fostering religious freedom" we fail to bear more of God's children! We are "wasting our substance" whether it is our physical seed or our tax dollars. Either way it is a sin before God that will ultimately result in our demise as an individual or as a nation.

Until all of Christianity REPENTS of violating this command of God Almighty, we will continue to birth nothing but wind.

We were pregnant, we writhed in pain, we gave birth to wind. We have brought NO SALVATION to the earth, nor brought any LIFE into the world.

~ Isaiah 26:18 (Berean Study Bible, emphasis added)

What a sad epitaph this would be for our Judeo-Christian based nations. May we soon regret the evil done to our societies by our penchant for birth control and REPENT and turn away from this sin.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, in Jesus' Holy Name, I REPENT for following my own agenda and wasting my substance instead of following Your instructions to be fruitful and multiply. I want to deepen my relationship with Christ, the Passover Lamb, and remove any sin strongholds through REPENTANCE. Please forgive me for my selfishness and my lack of knowledge in not honoring Your Word. Please forgive me for not bringing Life into the world. Free us from the lies of the enemy which seek to steal, kill and destroy the Life which You so lovingly provide. Cleanse us, Your Bride, from all sin so that we will be ready for Your soon return and to be presented without spot or wrinkle. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, the King above all kings, the Lord of Lords, Yeshua.

~Amen and Amen.

Day #9 ~ Counting the Omer

Eat the Fruits Thereof

Getting Into the Spirit

And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof, but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination.

~Jeremiah 2:7 (KJV)

Today on Day #9, we remember that there are 9 Fruits of the Holy Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control (Galatians 5:22-23), thus the number 9 symbolizes divine completion. Christ died on the Cross at the 9th hour (3:00 pm in modern time); the time when He "gave up the ghost" and uttered His final words before facing death:

Then Jesus called out in a loud voice, "Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit." And when He had said this, He breathed His last.

~Luke 23:46 (Berean Study Bible)

Maybe our global preoccupation with supernatural apparitions makes the term "Holy Ghost" seem so terrifying to children when He, in reality, is a beautiful transcendent expression of sensing God's presence or nearness. The term "Holy Spirit" is a better translation into modern language than "Holy Ghost" from the Hebrew term "Ruach HaKodesh."

See the excerpt below from Wikipedia:

In Judaism, the references to The Spirit of God, or "Ruach HaKodesh, abound. The term ruach ha-kodesh(Hebrew: רוח הקודש, "Holy Spirit" also transliterated ruah ha-qodesh) occurs once in Psalm 51:11 and also twice in the Book of Isaiah. Those are the only three times that the precise phrase "ruach hakodesh" is used in the Hebrew Scriptures, although the noun ruach (רוח, literally "breath" or "wind") in various combinations, some referring to God's "Spirit", is used often. The noun ruach, much like the English word breath, can mean either wind or some invisible moving force. In the Greek, the Holy Spirit is defined by the word "Paraclete." Paraclete comes from the Koine Greek word παράκλητος (paráklētos, that can signify "one who consoles or comforts, one who encourages or uplifts; hence refreshes, and/or one who intercedes on our behalf as an Advocate in court."

Ask someone you love dearly to do this exercise: Shut your eyes and then ask them to put their face as close as possible to your face without physically touching your skin or making a sound. You will be able to sense their presence even without any other sensory clues. Now, imagine this Presence as the greatest Comforting feeling you have ever experienced. That is the nearest I can come to explaining the Presence of the Holy Spirit to those who have not yet had a "close encounter" with the Almighty.

In an earlier devotional, we outlined the triune nature of God. The Father, the Son (The Word made flesh) and the Holy Spirit are One and the same God, but different essences ("ousias") of our one God. This should be a concept that is easy for us to grasp since we readily accept that human beings are also comprised of three essences: body, mind and soul. Since, the scriptures tell us that we are created in the image of God, this tri-unity ought to make perfect sense to us.

However, it brings up this question: *Why* does God express Himself in three different ways? I'm not sure I can be so presumptuous as to answer this question for the Maker of the Universe, but I can answer it from the perspective of why I believe we need all three:

1. The God of the Old Testament is The Lawgiver. The Judge. He is forceful, huge and intimidating. This essence of God allows us to understand Law and Justice. We learn right from wrong and the serious consequences of not obeying. We learn a "fear of the Lord" which is the necessary requirement for the beginning of all wisdom.

2. Christ the Messiah, The Word, is represented in the humble bodily Personage of Yeshua. Now, He is someone we can all relate to. Jesus represents Mercy. The Word is the manifestation or transmission of lawful living. Jesus does not come to do away with the Law but to fulfill it.

3. The Holy Spirit is required for "rehabilitation." It is His Power placed within us to overcome and to change for the better. As Law-breakers, we need to be rehabilitated from the Adamic fallen world.

Thus, we need all three: Justice, Mercy and Rehabilitation operating in our lives for the completion of Salvation to escape the prison of this fallen world. We need ALL of our Triune God in order for the captives to be released and set free!

This reminds me of the following story. A little boy was huddled under his covers one evening during an unusually loud thunderstorm. He struggled to be brave, but finally he cried out to his parents in the next room:

"Mom, Dad...can I come and sleep with you?" His dad replied: "No, son...you'll be just fine." Son: "But I'm scared!" Dad replied: "Go back to sleep...Just ask God to watch over you." Son: "Where is He? I can't see Him." Dad: "God is everywhere--He will protect you. Just go back to sleep." A minute or so passed by with more thunder and lightning: "Hey Dad?"..."Yes son?"..."I think I need somebody with some skin on."

Ah yes...we can feel this little boy's angst!

I don't know if the colloquialism "Give me some skin" is still popular anymore, but it was very prevalent when I was growing up. God was willing to "give us some skin" when He came as our Messiah, Jesus Christ.

For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet was without sin.

~Hebrews 4:15 (Berean Study Bible)

Although Jesus IS the perfect physical embodiment of God Almighty (Col 2:9), even He acknowledged that the Holy Spirit was Who was needed after His resurrection:

Nevertheless, I tell you the Truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter [Holy Spirit] will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

~John 16:7 (KJV/brackets added)

When God became Man in the person of Jesus, He willingly took on physical limitations. We do not see Jesus cloning Himself and showing up in 50 places at once while in the flesh. Jesus knew that each "temple" of man would ultimately need the Light of the Presence of God (the Holy Spirit) to abide within them if there was any hope of becoming "more than conquerors" to this present world of darkness.

As we Count the Omer from Passover to Pentecost, let's pray for a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit. In the Final Days, God promised to pour out His Spirit upon us:

In the last days, God says, I will pour out My Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on My menservants and maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. And everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord will be saved.

~Acts 2:17-18, 21 (NIV)

Any other conclusion is truly scary.

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

~2 Peter 2:20 (KJV)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, You told us through Your Holy Word that when we are too grieved in spirit to pray, groaning in grief and without words, that Your Holy Spirit would pray for us. We find ourselves in that position today dear Lord. Help us as we go through this time of spiritual mourning. The earth is rocked with the labor pains that you told us in advance was to be a signal of Your soon return. As we long for Your Second physical return, strengthen our inner heart, soul and spirit with the strength to endure and persevere. Instruct us to not become entangled again with the pollutions of the world but to set our minds on the Heavenly Kingdom that is soon to arrive. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, the King above all kings, the Lord above all lords... Yeshua our great God and Savior.

~Amen.

Day #10 ~ Counting the Omer

Grasping at Straws Shaken to the Foundation

The words, "Once more," signify the removal of what can be shaken-that is, created things-so that the unshakable may remain.

~Hebrews 12:27 (Berean Study Bible)

As we continue to Count the Omer from Passover to Pentecost, we reach Day #10. Anyone with basic Bible knowledge should know what #10 represents in scripture. The #10 represents the 10 commandments, the Mosaic Law which is the original Foundation of all functioning Judeo-Christian based democratic government.

There is a story about former President Obama calling for a meeting with the top historians in the country in the early days of his presidency. With just 5 months experience in the Oval Office, he wanted their advice on what to name his Presidential legacy. FDR gave us expanded government powers with "*The New Deal*;" Lyndon Johnson labelled his expansive welfare agenda "*The Great Society*."

Obama floated the idea of calling his ideological agenda "*A New Foundation*." While I don't believe his human secularist philosophies ever crystallized into a succinct title, it seems eerily prescient that his suggested legacy name fits perfectly with the new brand of Leftism he helped emerge. He sensed that the U.S. was ripe to move off its original foundational Biblical underpinnings. It is not surprising that Obama attempted to identify "a new foundation" because everyone would agree that NO foundation is patently ludicrous!

In architectural engineering, it is not necessarily the building strength that survives an earthquake but the integrity and soundness of the foundation. For instance, scientists have studied why some structures suffer catastrophic collapse while others come out virtually unscathed during a major quake. They found the underlying factor in the failed buildings to be faulty foundations that are constructed on sandy soil. When an earthquake strikes, the rocking back and forth literally *liquefies* the sandy foundation whereas the firm foundation moves along with the building acting as a cradle of support.

As a nation, we have already moved off the gold standard for our currency. We also continue to move off the gold standard of the Bible for our foundational principles. Will our "new foundation" survive the next political or economic earthquake?

Let's take a look. Just as there are 7 Deadly Sins in Judeo-Christian theology, this new geo-political underpinning has its own 7 Deadly Sins. Here's a glimpse of the frightening new "foundational sins" proposed by the human secularism of a so-called "neutral" public square:

The "Sin" of Inequality
The "Sin" of Gender
The "Sin" against Mother Nature
The "Sin" of Success
The "Sin" of Capitalism
The "Sin" of Borders
The "Sin" of Believing in One True God

Let's closely examine each one:

The "Sin" of Inequality: Even children understand that life is not always fair or even. Some are short, some are tall. Some learn faster and others play sports better. There is always going to be someone with more looks, brains, money and talent than us. However, our current obsession with this "sin" comes from fostering hatred between all people groups. We have all heard the term "divide and conquer." Any country that is divided is easy to conquer. Jealousy is a necessary requirement to stir up unrest.

The "Sin" of Gender: Apparently now, if you are a woman who doesn't want those born with penises in your restroom, you are marked as an irrational "hater." If you are an athlete that wants to compete fairly against your own natural gender, you are "transphobic." Simply being born male automatically marks you as a future predator and potential abuser. No one is more reviled today than an older white male. Wouldn't that be defined as Ageist Racist Sexism? Not according to this mixed up new creed.

The "Sin" against Mother Nature: This lie seems to be "been there, done that" yet we continue to fall for it all over again. Wasn't it considered the height of ignorance back in the 1970's not to believe in Global Cooling? Now it's Global Warming. Apparently, that phrase is also too restrictive, and it has been renamed to a more generic "Climate Change." If this wasn't so sad, it would be hilarious. Was there ever a time in recorded history that we didn't have climate change?? These false alarms all sum up to one evil agenda: DEATH. The "cure" for these so-called "sins" is always touted as LESS PEOPLE on the planet. That can only be accomplished through more abortion, euthanasia, forced sterilization and mass genocidal holocausts.

The "Sin" of Success: We now promote laziness and lack of personal responsibility as a virtue. Ironically, modern man has achieved the absolute highest standard of living ever recorded in history! So...*Why* are we so angry with wealthy and successful people? The

only answer I can seem to come up with is plain and simple ENVY. There is also a complete lack of thankfulness and gratitude for the many and multiple blessings that we enjoy. We are not only seeing the glass as half empty, we are petulantly throwing the other half in the face of our fellow mankind. Covetousness is a demon "virtue" in this false religion.

The "Sin" of Capitalism: Take one look at the current crop of rising global politicians and you will recognize that Socialism (aka "Marxism-lite") is rapidly growing in approval. This is despite the obvious evidence that nothing raises people out of poverty more efficiently than a free market system. With the clear and well-recorded societal implosion of Venezuela, it would seem self-evident that this ideology is both dangerous and evil. However, in the fake religion of human secularism, laziness is piously elevated to a moral virtue.

The "Sin" of Borders: This is a shadow-type demonic hatred that is really directed at the spiritual realm. The devil HATES standards. He HATES rules. He HATES the citizenship of God's Kingdom which is entered by bowing down to God and His requirements. However, in this crazy new world order, both temporal and spiritual borders must either be non-existent or fluid. When we remember that the spirit of anti-Christ is a spirit of lawlessness, then we can recognize how evil this really is. "Imagine" is the new national theme song in this messed up belief system. The Tower of Babel was constructed when man "imagined" he could build a tower to heaven.

And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

~Genesis 11:6 (KJV/emphasis added)

The "Sin" of Believing in One True God: The new social "progressives" are squarely set against people of faith in the One True God and the One True Way through Jesus Christ. Suddenly Christians are considered criminal if we refuse to sanction a clearly aberrant behavior or celebrate a false demon-religion. Almost any type of behavior is tolerated today except--"self-god" forbid--living outwardly as a devout Christ-follower (ssshhhhhh!). That simply will not be tolerated.

This "New World Order" of virtue-signaling, fake sins is already growing the poisoned fruit of more racism, hatred, strife, class warfare, economic failure, false demon-religions and global chaos as the world continues to adopt these new principles. Anarchy is the net result of the doctrines of this Human Secularist "foundation." If the Judeo-Christian bed-Rock is replaced by these new twisted "morals," they will become the slippery groundwork for the next beastly, government tyrant.

Another "earthquake" is coming. What will our foundation be?

*On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand;
All other ground is sinking sand.*

~Words: Edward Mote circa 1834

If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?

~Psalm 11:3

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, Your Holy Word tells us that Christ is our Rock, the only firm Foundation, the Cornerstone of any successful endeavor. We will either adopt Your Holy Order or trip over ourselves in chaos and confusion in a human secularist world of disorder. Help us to REPENT of any times we thought ourselves righteous and pious by adopting these false beliefs that are not progressive but regressive, leading us down into ultimate disaster. There is no liberty or freedom without Jesus Christ, only a continued march towards bondage, destruction, and death. Teach us that we cannot replace our Judeo-Christian Foundation with any false alternatives lest we be on sinking sand when the next shaking comes. As governments topple and apostate churches receive Your Judgment, remind Your people that it is time to COME OUT and be separated so we do not share in their plagues. We pray this in the Name above all names, our great God and Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ.

~Amen.

Day #11 ~ Counting the Omer

Cruising for a Bruising The Wages of Sin

A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. ~ Isaiah 42:3 (NKJV)

Today, during Day #11 of Counting the Omer, we are reminded that after Judas' death there were only 11 disciples. The Number 11 in scripture indicates something out of order, thus the #11 indicates chaos and disorder. There are 12 tribes of Israel, 12 disciples. The #11 shows us that a critical element is missing and must be corrected so that we may get back into alignment with God's governing order, signified by the number 12.

Scripture is very orderly. When we exegete scripture, we must take it in context. Here is a good example of poor exegesis: Most people falsely believe that Jesus made this statement: *"I am a friend of sinners."* However, this is not true!

The phrase itself came about when the Pharisees hurled *insults* at Jesus. In the same chapter, they also called Him a DRUNKARD (do you think Jesus was a drunkard?)...they also called him a GLUTTON (do you think Jesus was a glutton?) and then they called Him a *"friend of tax collectors and sinners."* Yet most everyone typically believes this third insult to be true! Why?!

The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at this glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is vindicated by her actions."
~Matthew 11:19 (Berean Study Bible/emphasis added)

If we keep the phrase in the proper context, it was a nasty lie, just like the other statements were a lie. Jesus, of course, is NOT a drunkard, He is NOT a glutton...and I humbly propose to you He is NOT a "friend of sinners."

Let's check this out scripturally. Paul called the Bereans "more noble" than others because they searched the scriptures to see if it was so. Here's the scripture:

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.
~Psalm 1:1 (KJV)

I do not sit with deceitful men, Nor will I go with pretenders.
~Psalm 26:4 (NASB)

I hate the assembly of evildoers, And I will not sit with the wicked.
~Psalm 26:5 (ESV)

We can be assured that sinless Jesus was well taught and obedient to ALL Old Testament scripture admonitions.

Well, one might say, that was the Old Testament, the Old Covenant! Jesus came to show us a different way! No, that is still an incorrect understanding of scripture. Here's what the New Testament says:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?
~2 Corinthians 6:14 (KJV)

I wrote you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people.
~1 Corinthians 5:9 (Berean Study Bible)

Have no fellowship with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.
~Ephesians 5:11 (Berean Study Bible)

Thus, scripture absolutely does not teach us that Jesus is a "friend of sinners." He came to CALL SINNERS TO REPENTANCE!

I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.
~Luke 5:32 (KJV)

When modern day Mega-preachers tell us that you are supposed to "hang out" with sinners, that is a patently false teaching. It results in chaos and disorder. We are to call sinners to repentance, just as our perfect Rabbi-Teacher Jesus showed us. If, after we give them the gospel message, they don't want anything to do with repentance, here's the scripture admonition for that:

If anyone will not welcome you or listen to you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that place, as a testimony against them.
~Mark 6:11 (Berean Study Bible)

When we continually align ourselves with evil-doers, we don't advance the cause of Christ. We simply get the world's muck on us. Soon we become indistinguishable from the world...unsalty salt only good for trampling underfoot.

Even worse, when we "befriend" the world, we become ENEMIES OF GOD!

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

~James 4:4 (KJV, underline emphasis added)

So, instead of attempting to make "friends," let's...

GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS.

The Great Commission:

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned."

~Mark 16:15-16 (NKJV)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, You will not be mocked. For whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap. If a man sows a life of sin, he will reap a crop of judgment. If a man sows a life of righteousness, he will reap a reward from his Master as a faithful servant. Help us to overcome the false teachings of apostate churches today which are not friends of God but instead friends of the world. In making this alliance, You tell us that they are, indeed, YOUR ENEMIES. Scripture tells us that those who serve Mammon, will HATE Christ! (Matthew 6:24). Teach us that we can only have one Master and the only Master who pays eternal dividends is You. You will not tolerate the divided heart of an adulterous bride. Remind us that You must be our only God and we must have no golden calf idols. Whatever we do, let us do it for the Glory of God and to further advance Your Kingdom, not to line our own pockets. When we interact with people in the world, which your Word tells us that we must while on this planet, remind us that our purpose is to call people to REPENTANCE. If they do not heed this Word, then we are to stamp the dust from our feet and move onward. Remind us that if there is no fruit, there is NO REPENTANCE. Help us to teach properly that true repentance is evidenced when actions line up with the confession of faith just as the Chief tax-collector Zacchaeus returned four-fold what he had stolen. Only then did You say: "Today salvation has come to this house" (Luke 19:9). As we fulfill the Great Commission, which was Your final instruction to Your disciples, let us keep the message as simple as You originally taught us: REPENT, BELIEVE, CONFESS and WALK, so that we can be an effective, faithful witness and testimony to your saving Power.

~Amen

Day #12 ~ Counting the Omer

Cut to the Core

Let No Man Put Asunder

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

~Joshua 1:8 (NKJV)

We pray that this exercise in Counting the Omer will instill a greater desire in you to study the scripture daily and in more detail. God's Holy Word is truly Divine and The Word will never cease to enliven you once you place your faith in Him. One of the ways God's Holy Word invigorates us is through His orderliness and consistent thematic style. For today, Day #12 of counting, we pause to consider the number 12. There are 12 tribes of Israel, 12 gates to the Kingdom of God, 12 legions of angels, 12 fruit from the Tree of Life and many other examples. Thus, throughout scripture, the number 12 indicates God's perfect government.

How is this applicable to us today? Strangely, in most modern Judeo-Christian based countries, we have embarked on a new journey of the so-called "neutral" public square. This is not God's government but the realm of a godless society as Atheists are most obsessed with the "separation of Church and State." When there is no Mosaic moral compass, the end result is anarchy.

There is a huge difference between a freedom-loving government with a prohibition on sanctioning one particular Christian denomination and one that removes God's Moral Laws from the heart of our society. Somehow over the years, as secularists love to promote, separation of Church (God) and Government (State) has been believed to be an actual hallowed concept to which we must all submit in our idol replacement worship of mob rule demon-crazy.

Freedom of Religion in America was originally meant by our founding fathers to acknowledge that, while Christianity does not convert people physically at the point of a sword, we convert people spiritually at the point of The Sword (The Word of God). Therefore, as people who love liberty, we permit others to remain as a stranger in our land BUT...as the last verse in Leviticus Chapter 19 shows, we must continue to obey ALL of God's decrees!

You must treat the foreigner living among you as native-born and love him as yourself, for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God. (verse 34).

Here's the final passage: YOU MUST KEEP ALL MY STATUTES AND ALL MY ORDINANCES AND FOLLOW THEM. I AM THE LORD.

~Leviticus 19:37 (Berean Study Bible, emphasis added)

With the repeal of each biblical restraint, such as the striking down of sodomy laws in 1999 by the Supreme Court and the sanctification of perverse "marriages," we now find Christianity on the *defensive* in formerly Christian-based nations.

Ancient texts suggest that it was under King Manasseh's reign that Isaiah was sawn in two. Interestingly, the name "Manasseh" means "one who forgets." Western Civilization is exactly like King Manasseh. We have become "one who forgets"...one who forgets that only where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty. (2 Corinthians 3:17)

Moral Neutrality is a false belief. We must be anchored on something, the Solid Rock of The Word, or be based on nothing but sinking sand! Thus, the "neutral public square" is not neutral at all. We are simply replacing the only liberty-producing Moral Law of the Most High God with a mish-mash of demonic religions and man's faulty reasoning. It is deceptively believing that in syncretism, or mixing all beliefs together, we will have a solid foundation. Instead we will have quicksand.

The Truth is: The God of the Old/New Testament and good government are inseparable. Let no man put them asunder. We cannot cut the Foundation of God's Laws from a good system of governing any more than we can remove the foundation of a building and expect it to remain standing.

As the old "Love and Marriage" song states...Biblical Morality and Government go together like a horse and carriage. Let me tell you brother, you can't have one without the other!

Stay tuned as we watch foolish mankind attempt to build another Tower of Babel. This demonic spirit of "neutral" syncretism is winding its way into compromised religions and Western Government all over the planet as the devil rages and organizes his minions for the coming World War. The Beast of Revelation will be the spiritual offspring of Humanistic Government and Syncretized Religion which has completely lost the plot of obeying God's commands. Truly a hideous monster. A perverse "marriage" one might say. Sadly, the theme for this false teaching will mostly be Satan's redefinition of the word "love." We already see him badly using this word in the LGBTQ+ perversion of truth agenda with "Love is Love" as their motto. The Truth is: GOD is love. Love is following the commandments of the One True God. Everything else is hate and death.

Satan is already busy picking off the low hanging fruit...the weakened Western societies that have attempted to expunge God's Holy Word from their public squares and their laws. We know that Christ and His Bride will eventually prevail, but in the meanwhile, we can expect war on earth and in the heavenlies as Satan rages.

Therefore, what God has joined together, let no man put asunder. In God's spiritual mathematics there will be division on planet Earth, but for the Church....Get ready. It's time to...

Be fruitful and multiply.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, these final days on planet earth can seem very disconcerting. As the pages of prophetic revelation come into distinct view during these end times, fill us with courage to do what You commanded us to do. Remind us that our Commander in Chief is the King of the Universe and all power and authority in Heaven and on Earth is under His feet. If You commanded us to "Go and make disciples of all nations," then You did not charge us with a task that is impossible. All things are possible to those that love You and are called according to Your purpose. As evil forces begin to unite and amass across the globe, so too may God's people unite and amass for the final battle of good against evil. Satan knows his time is short and he knows he is the ultimate loser. In the meanwhile, he is obviously ramping up to do as much damage possible to the souls of men. Pour out Your Holy Spirit, the "megas dunamis" promised to us in Your Holy Word. There is no evil spirit or agenda that can stand against Your Power. As we set our sights on things above and not on things of the earth, fill us with a heavenly purpose that is willing to die to save others so that we may follow in the footsteps of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and share in His Eternal Heavenly Kingdom.

~Amen

Day #13 ~ Counting the Omer

Reap What Was Sown

The Bitter End

Come, let us return to the LORD. For He has torn us to pieces, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bind up our wounds.

~ Hosea 6:1 (Berean Study Bible)

The number 13 has long been associated in the secular world with bad luck and evil. While true Christians should not believe in luck or bad omens, in scripture the number 13 is the number of apostasy, rebellion and lawlessness. Let's take a look:

~Nimrod was the 13th in the line of Ham who was cursed by Noah.

~The Valley of Hinnom (where Molech pagan rites were held) is mentioned 13 times.

~In the Book of Esther, Haman's decree against the Jews was signed on the 13th day of the first month (Nissan 13). It stated that all Jews would be killed on the 13th day of the twelfth month (Adar 13).

~Jesus lists the 13 things that defile a person in Mark 7.

What is God's response to stubborn apostasy, rebellion and lawlessness? In the Bible, God continually characterizes His rebellious people as an unfaithful wife. He seems to alternately experience shock, jealousy, anger, sorrow and perhaps worst of all, at some point He expresses resigned acceptance.

In a seeming cycle reminiscent of Elizabeth Kubler Ross' *"Five Stages of Grief,"* God Himself appears to go through a series of phases in trying to reconcile his wayward Bride.

SHOCK:

Where(as) they (you) burned their (our) children in sacrifice to the god Molech--I can hardly conceive of such evil!

~ Jeremiah 32:35(a) (The Message Version/parenthetical emphasis added)

ANGER:

Soon I will pour out my fury on you and unleash my anger against you. I will call you to account for all your detestable sins.

~Ezekiel 7:8 (NLT)

BARGAINING:

"Come now, let us settle the matter," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.

~ Isaiah 1:18 (NIV)

SORROW:

"How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!"

~ Matthew 23:37(b) (NIV)

ACCEPTANCE:

According to all the deeds that they have done...forsaking me and serving other gods...Now then, obey their voice.

~1 Samuel 8:8(portions)-9(a) (ESV)

At this "acceptance stage" (at which, I humbly believe, much of Western Civilization now finds itself), God almost seems to acknowledge that in allowing us the right to choose obedience or rebellion, He concedes that, for the time being, He has handed us the ability to bring grave judgment on our own lives and nations.

But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land...I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you, life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore, CHOOSE LIFE, that you and your offspring may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days,

~ Deuteronomy 30: 17, 18(a)-20(a) (ESV, emphasis added)

As Western countries appear to formalize and finalize the final stages of The 4 National Apostasies, we are reminded of the Hebrew tradition of divorce request. See the definition below from Wikipedia.

A get (/ɡɛt/; Hebrew: גט, plural gittin גיטין) is a divorce document in Jewish religious law, which must be presented by a husband to his wife to effect their divorce. The essential

part of the get is very short; the text is "You are hereby permitted to all men", which means that the wife is no longer a married woman.

At this stage, a nation would no longer be operating under a Godly Covenant or Judeo-Christian Mosaic lawfulness. We would be "free" to pursue our lust for other gods. It is akin to the time when the Shekinah glory departed the Temple in Ezekiel 10. Make no mistake, God HATES divorce. However, Jesus Himself said it is permitted where there is unrepentant adultery. Here, is what I imagine, God's divorce writ might look like:

"Whereupon you have persisted in breaking covenant, you leave Me no other alternative than to provide you with this written notice.

Whereas you have:

- 1) Slaughtered our innocent children*
- 2) Embraced and sanctified perversion*
- 3) Publicly rejected Me and replaced Me with others*
- 4) Cursed those whom I loved.*

Even now, I ask you to cease and desist. But if you persist, please be apprised that you will be turned over to your own devices (Psalm 81:12) and you will be "Ichabod" (1 Samuel 4:21) on the Final Day of Atonement.

*Signed your Faithful Husband,
~Yahweh"*

His Final Plea:

"Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to Me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning." So, rend your hearts and not your garments, and return to the LORD your God. For He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in loving devotion. And He relents from sending disaster.

~Joel 2:12-13 (Berean Study Bible)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, in Jesus' Name, we hang our heads in shame and sorrow as we watch our nations begin to reap what they have sown. Individually, we may not have participated in the 4 National Apostasies of Innocent Slaughter, Sanctification of Perversions, Removal and Replacement of the One True God from the public square and Betrayal of the Throne of David. However, through inactivity and apathy, we have allowed our society to reach this bitter end. We REPENT and confess that we have failed to resist the devil's agenda and now we are reaping the stark and chaotic

results. Please remember Your promise to pursue us, even in the Valley of Sorrows, so that we might not lose hope. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, Yeshua, in Whom we place our blessed hope.

~Amen

*Therefore, behold, I will allure her,
and bring her into the wilderness,
and speak tenderly to her.*

*And there I will give her her vineyards
and make the Valley of Achor (Valley of Sorrow) a door of hope.*

*And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth,
as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.*

~Hosea 2: 14-15 (ESV, parenthetical phrase added)

Day #14 ~ Counting the Omer

Labor Intensive

The Daily Grind

Look, the wages you withheld from the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of Hosts.

~ James 5:4 (Berean Study Bible)

In scripture, the number 14 is associated with Deliverance and Salvation. It is the time just after the trials and the intensive labor, in which we anticipate God's intervention to deliver us. Here are some biblical examples:

~ Noah had to wait a total of 14 days (twice sending out the dove) to see that the waters had receded and there was new life growing again (Gen 8:9-12).

~Jacob was required to work 14 years in order to obtain the wife of his favor, Rachel (Gen 31:41).

~The tribe of Benjamin and the tribe of Judah, each got 14 towns each in order to bring life anew in the Promised Land (Book of Joshua).

~The apostle Paul encouraged the ship's crew to eat on the 14th day of the storm, so that they could make it safely to dry land after the shipwreck (Acts 27:33).

As we count the Omer between Passover and Pentecost, Yahweh desires that His People are tested and tried so that they may stand strong. There is an upcoming persecution that we must face and without "Olympic trials" we would not be able to endure the "Olympian event" that is coming.

We may slowly begin to have a small inkling of what Jesus must have experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane just before his crucifixion. According to scripture, He was in such intense mental agony that it seemed as if He was sweating great big drops of blood.

"And being in anguish, He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground."

~Luke 22:43-44

The Word "Gethsemane" literally means "oil press". It is generally accepted among Biblical scholars that oil represents the Holy Spirit in Scripture. We are the "olives" and the stress of persecution is the "press." Hopefully, what comes out of us during times of intense pressure is the Holy Spirit. Some people, including me, have other things come out of them during times of intense pressure--ugly, unspiritual things such as expletives, rage or despair. Like "Extra Virgin Olive Oil," we may need extra processing or "pressing" to get us ready, as virgins, to receive the Bridegroom with oil in our lamps.

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair.
~2 Corinthians 4:8 (NIV)

There is a famous speech given by Winston Churchill before the House of Commons in the days just before the outbreak of England's war with Germany in WWII. Most people believe we are at the threshold once again of another Great War. With the new nuclear dimension possibilities, just the thought of it is unimaginable. I sweat great big drops of blood spiritually just thinking of it. Churchill's words are eerily prescient and still applicable to the world events today.

"We are in the preliminary stage of one of the greatest battles in history...the air battle is continuous, and many preparations have to be made here at home. I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat. We have before us an ordeal of the most grievous kind. We have before us many, many long months of struggle and suffering. You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word: Victory. Victory at all costs - Victory in spite of all terror - Victory."
~Winston Churchill

Today, in the world, there is yet another epic battle going on. This one may be more deeply entrenched in the unseen realm or "parallel universe" (for lack of a better term) than the obvious enemy of Hitler and the Third Reich. There is a struggle between Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, Justice and Injustice. If we lose this battle, we will be defeated from within. Societal collapse will not be at the hands of a foreign entity pounding our cities with the latest weapons of mass destruction (although that may still be the physical result of our disobedience on temporal planet Earth), it will instead be caused by national suicide from our own egoistical hands.

For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.
~Ephesians 6:12 (NLT)

At this time of this writing, the American House of Representatives has refused well over THIRTY TIMES to ban infanticide. Most nations that claim to cherish liberty and democracy, including Israel, refuse to "let My People go" and continue to harden their

hearts on the most vulnerable and innocent among us. It's mind-boggling to realize that, after all the chronicles of their historic persecution, even Jews today are killing Jewish babies as in the days of Egyptian slavery and King Herod through the horrific sin of abortion!

This is what the LORD says: "A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

~Jeremiah 31:15

The rest of Western Civilization should hide our faces in shame for importing this hideous practice to Israel from our pagan idol worship of Self. History shows us what happens to countries that insist on enslaving an entire segment of their population. The Civil War was the worst American bloodshed on our soil. The "civil war" of abortion far surpasses that bloodshed *ten times!*

In Europe, we see the beginning of the coming flames scorching the land as the landmark church of Notre Dame has burned down. Incredible symbolism, indeed. Do we have the ethical fortitude to survive the challenges ahead? Unfortunately, with the new emerging brand of "Democratic Socialism" whose main ideals are "*Me First*" and "*Gimme, Gimme*"---all of Western Civilization may soon well yet resemble Europe after WWII...

incensed rabble and burned out rubble.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, these are serious times that have come upon us. You have given us many years to REPENT of our National sins yet, like Pharaoh, we have continually hardened our hearts. To this very day, Your ears still hear the awful sound of the innocent being slaughtered and their blood is crying from the ground. We know Your Word tells us there will be wrath and anger for those who are self-seeking, who reject Your Truth and follow evil. As we begin to feel the first of many plagues that will come upon our land, curses guaranteed in Your Holy Word to stubborn, disobedient nations, save those of us who are willing to REPENT and EXIT this land of Egypt. There may be a long walk through the desert first along with many trials, tribulations and obstacles to overcome, but we fix our eyes on the Promised Land. Strengthen us for the journey. Your Word indicates that we may anticipate many miracles up ahead such as manna from Heaven, water springs in a dry land and clothing that does not wear out. Even so, it will be a long and arduous trip. As we build up our Godly character through REPENTANCE, help us to have the fortitude and faith to enter in. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, our Great God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

~Amen

Day #15 ~ Counting the Omer

Rest Assured Or Sleeping on the Job?

Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

~Matthew 11:28-29 (Berean Study Bible)

We come to Day #15 in Counting the Omer. In scripture, the number 15 signifies "rest." The Festival of Booths, also known as the Feast of Tabernacles, is a day of rest. It is celebrated on the 15th day of the 7th month. While there are many examples of the number 15 signifying "rests" in scripture this one is clearly the most important.

Prophetically, it represents the Coming of Christ. He is our "booth" and shelter. It symbolizes the Millennial Kingdom when the world will have rest from sin. This occurs immediately after the final Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, which is the holiest day of the year, or in modern terms, temporal and spiritual Israel's "National Day of Repentance!"

Throughout history, Christ followers have always been at war with the Enemy in the spiritual world. Peace should always be our ultimate prayer. Yet, what type of peace should we pray for...peace at all costs? The Bible clearly warns of a false peace. When we are taught to pray for our governments, we often hear this segment of scripture:

Therefore, I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority

~1 Timothy 1-2:2 (a) (NKJV)

Very rarely, is the rest of the scripture quoted:

that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

~1 Timothy 2:2 (b) (NKJV)

Are we currently living at peace? Perhaps you may be personally enjoying some peace right now because no one is actively attacking or molesting your individual family, friends or children in the physical realm. However, are babies in the womb allowed to live at peace? Are impressionable young children allowed to live at peace in a secular

world that insists they accept the sanctification of perversions in homosexual "marriage," transgenderism and "gender fluidity?" Are Christians allowed to live at peace in all the nations?

Neville Chamberlain showed us what a selfish peace looks like when he attempted to placate Hitler with the strategy of "peace for our time." His policies would come at the cost of throwing future generations into an unimaginable global tyranny, the proportions of which we cannot fathom. Thankfully, others heeded the call to stand firm and evil was eventually defeated.

It is with this spirit of boldness that I present the following information. It is with the understanding that true peace only comes through peace with God Almighty and not compromise with the Enemy of our souls.

Recently a video was released by the Vatican. In this video, you will see a thinly veiled worldwide call for "syncretism" which is simply a fancy word for compromise. Jesus is presented along with "allah" and "buddha"...as just one of many. Jesus is the Lord of lords, the King of kings, the Name above all names, under which EVERY KNEE MUST BOW and EVERY TONGUE CONFESS as the Lord of all. He doesn't share His Glory with false gods or demons. This atrocious video attempts to place the King of kings at the same level (or even lower!) than false demon-gods.

At first glance, an undiscerning heart may think: *"Well isn't that so nice? Everyone is getting along."* We could even queue the Beatles song: *"All You Need is Love"* as the background music for this video. However, what does the Bible say TRUE LOVE is?

Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you.

~John 15:13-14 (NASB)

Perhaps even more unsettling were Francis' comments at the May 14th, 2020 meeting in Rome seeking "global unity" of all religions in educating children and calling for a "new humanism." Here is just one of the many disturbing quotes:

"To achieve these goals, we must have the courage to place the human person at the centre." The corresponding news headline stated: *"Pope to Build New Humanism."* It was stated as if "humanism" was a good thing!

Never forget...Jesus Christ, the Son of God is the central focus, not mankind. This type of teaching harkens back to Galileo when the Roman Catholic Church refused to accept that the earth (mankind) revolves around the sun (Son!) and not vice versa.

Protestants are not exempt from this apostasy either. As one example, it was reported recently that a Lutheran denomination plans to publish a Bible version omitting the word "Israel" from the Holy Word of God.

And if anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

~Revelation 22:19 (Berean Study Bible)

So then, what is the result of this bowing down to syncretism and compromise? It means, we are not able to do what God commands! We must follow the final words and mandate of Jesus Christ Himself to go onward throughout the entire world with the Great Commission.

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

~Matthew 28:19-20 (Berean Study Bible)

While everyone in the human race is an "offspring of God" in the sense mentioned in Acts 17:29 (Greek word "genos"), if we do not follow the Great Commission the people of the world will be unable to become true "sons and daughters" of God. We are to help them become children of God as mentioned in John 1 (Greek word "teknon")...those who are intimately related to God.

He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

~John 1:11-13 (NASB, underline added)

Notice how quickly this compromise leads to further disobedience and rebellion. In 2015, The Vatican issued this formal position regarding the Jews.

"The Church is therefore obliged to view evangelisation to Jews, who believe in the one God, in a different manner from that to people of other religions and world views. In concrete terms this means that the Catholic Church neither conducts nor supports any specific institutional mission work directed towards Jews." (December 10, 2015 Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews)

Consider the injustice of this for a moment! The Jews provided us with the most precious gift in the entire Universe...our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who affords us the richness and treasure of a relationship with Him. And now, in return, we will not share Him with them so that they may also have this blessing? No true Christian should

ever agree to such a thing! This is in direct rebellion to Christ's final command before the ascension! Yet today, we are seeing many ministries agree beforehand NOT TO SPEAK OF CHRIST when they enter relationships with various Zionist organizations. We must minister salvation in Christ Jesus/Yeshua to every single person, Jew or Gentile.

But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

~Matthew 10:33 (KJV)

To paraphrase Charles Dickens, I believe we are now living in the best of all times and the worst of all times. We are living during a time of the Great Harvest and yet it will be a time of intense spiritual warfare, played out on both Planet Earth and in the Heavens. Neville Chamberlain is an earthly example of how cowardly compromise results instead in NO PEACE and ultimately in World War. Syncretism and watered-down religion is the spiritual shadow picture of this cowardly compromise. This time it has much, much more serious consequences. It wars against God Almighty and it results in eternal destruction.

For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

~1 Thessalonians 5:3 (KJV)

As we watch Bible prophecy unfold before our very eyes, let us follow Jesus' command and work towards the ONLY PEACE THAT MATTERS...

The Shalom of Christ

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, please remind us that there is no rest outside of the Shelter of Your Wings. We are commanded to go and make disciples of all nations, not to compromise with demonically inspired false teachings. All wisdom begins with the knowledge of the One True God. There is no Godly wisdom in worldwide syncretized religions which only result in more global chaos, disorder, and confusion. We must not be yoked with darkness. There is no agreement between believers and unbelievers. Give us the courage to stand up against this call for a "one world religion" and keep us from the uncleanness of allying with the world. We once again state with boldness that there is NO SALVATION under heaven or earth, by which men might be saved, other than the Name above all names, Jesus Christ of Nazareth in Whose Name we pray.

~ Amen

Day #16 ~ Counting the Omer

Crop Failure Sowing the Wind

But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

~Luke 22:48 (KJV)

The number 16 in scripture signifies God's Love. We all know the famous John 3:16 verse that begins with: *"For God so loved the world..."* Furthermore, there are 16 different names and titles of God in scripture with each attribute outlining His enduring love and mercy. Many people will agree with this statement, which is scriptural: *"God is Love."* What most people often do not realize is that God's Judgment is also love. Every facet of our Father God is loving. Just as any good parent would not raise a child without any restraint or discipline, God corrects those whom He loves.

But when we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.

~1 Corinthians 11:32 (Berean Study Bible)

God's Chosen People, the Israelites, had a series of 16 Judges from the time they took possession of the Promised Land up until King Saul. Until we fully recognize that the true definition of Love involves both God's Grace AND His Judgment, we will not be in proper relationship with Him.

Recently, a well-known Christian couple with a home improvement TV show had an opportunity to speak out on the grave dangers of homosexuality and "gay marriage." Instead, after the controversy raged, they put out a lukewarm statement of "building bridges" and "loving everyone." It was the same old tired worn phrases of "tolerance" and "inclusivity." It reminded me of this lyric from an old Duran Duran song:

"You Kill Me with Silence"

That same week, a popular gospel singer was kicked off the Ellen DeGeneres Show. For those who don't already know, Ellen is a militant lesbian activist. Apparently, Ellen didn't get the "tolerance" and "inclusivity" message. When will we learn that the devil is not inclusive unless he is planning on including you into HELL? Clearly, the devil's "tolerance of sin" and intolerance of Truth is not loving.

Then, just what is the definition of Love? It seems today that secularists and modern-day Christianity have muddied this to the point where most people cannot adequately explain it anymore. We know what the Bible says. Most everyone is familiar with 1 Corinthians 13. However, CHRIST is the physical embodiment of love in the flesh. So, it's extremely important to get this right. If we follow Christ, we will be like Him:

Love CARES
Love HURTS
Love CRIES
Love ANGUISHES
Love PLEADS
Love WARNS
Love SACRIFICES

Yet today it seems, Love has been redefined as "the absence of opposition and/or silence in calling out sin." Instead, this is the definition of "indifference," which is the utter antithesis of love. This disparity is most clearly shown in the way many Christian denominations are attempting to reach out to abortion-minded people and homosexuals. Somewhere on this pathway, they have lost the plot. Love's ultimate goal is to desire the HIGHEST GOOD for the other person. We are to assist people in coming out of their sinful lifestyles, as many have successfully done in the past, through the power of the gospel message which begins with REPENT. If you are truly Christ's disciple, you know, down to your inner core, that enabling abortion and/or continuing in the homosexual lifestyle cannot possibly be the highest good for anyone. These "choices" are rife with mental, physical and spiritual destruction. They bring no life, only death.

Recently, I received email messages from two well-respected Christian organizations. The first one asked me to pray for abortion doctors so that they might experience more of God's love, mercy and kindness. The second asked me to pray for pro-abortion legislators so that they might experience "the goodness of God." I had to drop to my knees in tortured anguish at this mischaracterization of God's goodness.

Abortionists and Politicians have ALREADY experienced the love, grace, mercy, kindness and long-suffering patience of God. They currently live in a society that offers the most prosperous, peaceful, healthy, blessed, educated and egalitarian culture ever to exist on planet earth in all of recorded history. This begs the question: How much more "love, kindness, goodness and patience" does one need in order to repent?

This is Christian political correctness gone mad. If these well-intentioned intercessory requests mean we are to pray for even MORE restraint of God's hand of correction, I humbly believe we are praying in defiance of God's will. Should the WWII German Church have prayed for God to allow more time for Josef Mengele and Adolph Hitler to

change course? How many more innocents must die? History allows us the unique opportunity to see the end result of looking away from those in bondage. Instead, we must pray for the captives to be set free. This may not be the most comfortable situation for us personally, but that is the very essence of true Christianity.

Even a sinful, imperfect parent knows that a completely undisciplined child will eventually become a sociopathic, tyrannical brat. Western Civilization continues to overturn almost every sensible abortion restriction and continues to pursue extended perversion sanctifications. We have not shown much repentance in our legislation on the sanctity of life and/or the releasing children from the mandated schooling in perversity.

Yes, there have been "pockets of repentance" but the law of the land remains the same and the devil's agenda keeps marching "forward" as we continue to compromise with evil. Abortion is now readily available UP TO THE DUE DATE. Little babies, already born, are now being left to die. Mandated school curriculum requires LGBTQ+ indoctrination. Truly this is a clear repeat of previous pagan cultures. One might ask:

Are we having love yet?

This discussion can go on ad nauseum but Jesus called us to rightly discern the times we are living in:

He replied, "When evening comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,' and in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.

~Matthew 16:2-3 (NIV)

Here's God's definition of love. This is the type of love that I pray abortion activists and legislators will soon experience...

Those whom I love I reprove and discipline. So be zealous and repent.

~Revelation 3:19 (NASB)

Despite the nonsensical hashtag #LovesLove...love is correction. We must brace for impact as we are about to see the other side of God's love...the disciplining side. If we don't start warning people of God's coming Judgment, we are simply...

"Loving" them to DEATH.

In meekness [BOLDNESS under control] instructing those that oppose them; if God perhaps will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

~2 Timothy 2:25 (Webster's Bible Translation/parenthetical emphasis added)

Prayer:

Abba, please help me and other church leaders to shed "Churchianity" which seeks to bring honor, glory, and growth into OUR ministries and OUR coffers. May we only advance Your Kingdom of Heaven. For the majority, it is not, first and foremost, about advancing the Kingdom of Heaven. We remind ourselves that Judas betrayed the Lord with a KISS. Let us not repeat his grievous error and confuse the meaning of the word Love with fleshly acts that bring about no eternal change. Let us not sell out our fellow humanity for 30 pieces of silver. We REPENT of placing the idol of Mammon before you God Almighty, in our hearts. Tear down our idols, Lord. Teach us to have an eternal perspective which builds up treasures in heaven where the moths cannot eat it, nor rust corrode it. We pray this prayer in the Name of Jesus Christ, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Name above all names.

~Amen

Day #17 ~ Counting the Omer

Victory Garden Ploughed Under

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

~1 Corinthians 15:24-25 (KJV)

BibleStudy.org has this to say about the number 17: *'In the Bible the number 17 symbolizes "overcoming the enemy" and "complete victory."*

Have you ever watched a horror movie where the villainous bogeyman just keeps coming back again and again? No matter how many times he is hit, shot, bludgeoned or locked up, you can be sure that when you least expect it, a scary, gnarled hand with sinister fingernails will rise up in one last evil attempt before being fully defeated. I had this same hair tingling sensation reading about current global politics.

In America, we see the rise of anti-Semitism in Congress and in the media. Rep. Ilhan Omar, a Democrat from Minnesota, tweeted *"it's all about the Benjamins"* when describing a Jewish political interest group. This was a subtle slur against the Jewish tribe of Benjamin. Another tweet commented on how Israel has supposedly *"hypnotized the world."* In a speech to a leftist group in Washington, DC she stirred up the crowd to oppose Pro-Jewish politicians *"the political influence in this country that says it is okay to push for allegiance to a foreign country."* This might seem somewhat silly or even humorous but not in light of her questionable connections. Her social media pages are rife with "friends" who have a clear anti-Israel bias, and even Palestinian terrorist connections. Perhaps one of the strangest video clips is her self-professed infatuation with the terrorist organization known as Al-Qaeda.

Amazingly, the Jews are now being blamed for the corona-virus epidemic with astounding headlines such as these:

**New Report says Coronavirus Pandemic is fueling Anti-Semitism
Experts: Coronavirus Brings Spike in Anti-Semitic Sentiments**

Don't all rational people remember the atrocities of the Holocaust?

The most recent historical example we have of virulent anti-Semitism gone mad was the Nazi Third Reich. This should evoke depths of evil that we, as a global population, would not like to plumb again. Who, in their right mind, would willingly CHOOSE to elect people who espouse this ideology with all the backward perspective we have of history? How is this even remotely possible in democratically elected, first world nations?

Germany, before the rise of the Nazi Third Reich, was considered the center of advanced society and culture in Europe. I'm sure the same can be said of America, France and England. In Germany today, as incredulous as this may sound, there is now talk of a "Fourth Reich!"

With each new attack on synagogues, and sketchy elected officials who are openly anti-Semitic, this feels like a bad recurring dream. Until we fully grasp that Jews are the "canaries in the coal mine" we will not understand the depth of this wickedness and what it truly indicates. Not only should we "never forget" that 6 million Jews were killed in the Holocaust from an evil that is still hard to fathom, we should also "never forget" that while they may have been the first to go, there were SIXTY MILLION deaths in WWII (*ten times* this amount)! So, obviously we cannot afford to go back to sleep on this issue.

The Jews have always been an example to us as God's Chosen People. They might be the first ones on the front lines to feel the effects of this spirit of lawlessness, but it is the first whiff of a deep malevolent death agenda that is dangerous to the entire global horizon. Much like the Zyklon B gas used in the Nazi Death Camps, the "Jewish canaries" might be the first indicator that something has gone wrong but, make no mistake about it, this destructive force will be coming soon to a country near you.

It is easy to feel overwhelmed at the thought of resisting this evil because it is pugnacious, recurring, and it keeps returning just when we thought mankind has become "enlightened" enough not to repeat history. However, Satan is a notorious "shape-shifter." He transforms from a Nazi emblem to a rainbow flag, from Nebuchadnezzar's golden statue to the Statue of Liberty. He will transform himself into an "angel of light" idol at which he demands all must bow down. We must not be fooled by innocuous sounding names such as "democratic socialism" or "labor party" which delude the clueless into bondage as surely as rats to a piece of cheese in a trap.

Here's what I believe are the ingredients brewing in the cauldron of this political stew:

First, let's start with a base of entitlements, the main ingredient of: SLOTH
And this is so tasty, that the people want more and more: GLUTTONY
Next let's stir in irresponsible taxing and spending: GREED
Add a generous amount of lack of concern for your fellow citizens: HATE or WRATH
Mix in an intense desire for political power and legislating perversions: LUST

Add a pinch of class warfare: ENVY

And then top it all off with the final, ultimate ingredient: PRIDE. It comes automatically with a national attitude that thinks: *"This can't possibly happen here."*

If you are a student of theology, you will quickly recognize that these are all the "ingredients" of the Seven Deadly Sins. No wonder they are called "deadly". They do indeed lead to actual DEATH with chilled fixings.

But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

~James 1:14-15 (NKJV)

As in the days of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, we will soon be asked to bow down. Most everyone around us will be doing it and there will be intense pressure "to go along to get along." However, as surely as the line to the boxcar, this acquiescence ends in death. Do not think your country is immune because your particular idol promotes "liberty," "equality" and "fraternity" of mankind. These are the same words used during the French Revolution which resulted in massive slaughters and horrific violence against people of faith. It was ushered in by the "Age of Reason" which has shown us is not reasonable at all. Soon enough there will be anti-Christ figures on the scene demanding global compliance. They might be dressed in white, they might have an odd cross symbol on their attire or an armband, but one thing is for sure: They will fall as surely as God reigns.

Don't fall with them.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we stand on Your Word that promises that You will reign until You have put ALL enemies under Your foot. Please forgive us for any way in which we have not trusted in Your Authority and Victory. Thank You for protecting Israel. Your Holy Word promises curses upon those who curse Israel. Let us have a holy fear of God as a reminder to not touch the apple of Your Eye. As we pray for the peace of Jerusalem, let us not fall under any delusions of a false peace. Fill us with a heart of wisdom to discern those who wish to devise crafty plans. Plough under those who wish to harm Your people. With repentance, raise up a godly harvest of believers. In all things, let us be guided by the promises in Your Word for Israel, both temporal and spiritual. We look onward to the final victory in Your Kingdom which shall have no end. We pray this prayer in the Name of Yeshua our Mighty King.

~Amen

Day #18 ~ Counting the Omer

Double Bind

Slave Wages

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty.

~2 Cor 3:17 (KJV)

In Jewish Gematria, the Hebrew word "chai," which means "life" has a numeric value of 18. Yet in scripture, the number 18 is also associated with bondage. Here's two examples:

So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years [IN BONDAGE]. But when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised them up a deliverer.

~Judges 3:14-15a (KJV/parenthetical and underline emphasis added)

And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this BOND on the sabbath day?

~Luke 13:16 (KJV/underline and emphasis added)

Thus, how do we reconcile these two seemingly opposite meanings? How is "being bound" also associated with LIFE?

Interestingly, the Two Pillars of the Holy Temple were each 18 cubits high. Many people have tried to venture theological theories of what these two pillars represent. As with all of God's Holy Word, I think they may represent many things. Pillars can be likened to arms, such as the two arms of Moses which had to remain aloft for victory. Pillars also represent the strength that holds up buildings or strong foundations. Without getting too lengthy for our daily devotionals, a case can easily be made that the Two Pillars are also representative of Judeo-Christian based societies and nation states such as Israel and America.

It stands to reason that if we base our nations on the Mosaic Law of scripture and the Liberty that comes from Yeshua the Messiah, we are both "bound" AND "alive" simultaneously. Any removal of either pillar, the Old Testament Law (Government) or the New Testament Grace (Liberty), will result in an unstable building indeed. Once we start removing these two pillars from our governing laws, destruction of the Temple is not too far behind.

If there is one thing the devil is really "good" at, it would be his ability to redefine the meaning of words. It probably has something to do with his hatred for THE Word, the Holy Word of God. He twists and crafts words and meanings of phrases to repurpose them for his own evil use. Sadly, this sounds a lot like what we hear from our legislators and pulpits also.

For instance, now we have "women's health care" instead of publicly funded child murder, gay "marriage" instead of the sanctification of perversions and "non-binary gender" instead of the undeniable science of male/female sexes.

I think the term "religious freedom" is one of these hidden oxymoronic phrases. On the surface, it sounds so nice. If we took a survey, I'm sure most people on the planet would give the concept of religious freedom an initial "thumbs up."

But...what EXACTLY does religious freedom really look like in the real world? How does it actually play out in real life? Let's start by taking back the definitions of actual words. Here is the dictionary definition of "religion" and "freedom."

Definition of Religion: *"the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal god or gods."* (Dictionary.com)

Definition of Freedom: *"the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint."* (Dictionary.com)

Once we understand the correct meaning of these words, we easily recognize that we do not and cannot, nor have **ever** had "religious freedom."

Remember the true definition:

"Belief and worship without hindrance or restraint."

It is the stuff of unicorns and fairy tales. It is impossible. It cannot ever exist as one religious belief would automatically restrict or negate another's religious beliefs.

Here are some examples of "religious activities" by some of the most common religions on the planet:

Honor killings...female genital mutilation...amputations for crime...burning of wives at their husband's funeral...public stoning for adultery...public whippings...dropping babies from a rooftop...corpses are exposed in remote places to be devoured by vultures and wild animals...

Wow. You might think these are some really strange religious practices, right? Yet, these are some of the widespread practices of Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism...the TOP THREE other religions in the world besides Christianity.

But hey, that "religious freedom" thingy, right?

So, obviously, we can't be clueless and simply promote "religious freedom" with no qualifications on what this exactly means. What then should we support?

The most successful countries in the history of the world have been so incredibly blessed because they were founded on the principles of Mosaic Law and the Holy Word of God found in the Old and New Testaments. The Two Pillars, one might say. So, if we just speak vaguely boasting about how our country promotes "religious freedom," without taking the time to correctly define this term, then we are talking spiritual nonsense. We are instead promoting chaos and disorder which is from Satan. His sulfuric mouth is saying "freedom" but he really means LAWLESSNESS. From a dictionary perspective it would mean:

"no restraint of any aberrant practice whatsoever."

As Christians, we have a further mandate from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He didn't tell us to "go and spread religious freedom throughout the world." He said "go and make disciples" for Him. The devil knows that if he can "neutralize" the Judeo-Christian based countries and radicalize the demonic-inspired "religions" he will gain control and be able to persecute the saints.

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, "I will return into my house from whence I came out;" and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the LAST STATE of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

~Matthew 12:43-45 (KJV/emphasis added)

Thus, if any politician says he wants "religious freedom to flourish"...he is either cluelessly or knowingly speaking the language of anti-Christ. It is the language of *lawlessness*.

Let's take back the REAL meaning of "freedom of religion" instead of the false politically altered meaning of "religious freedom" which is more like the definition of "anarchy:"

an·ar·chy' anərkē/ (noun):

a state of disorder due to absence or non-recognition of authority (ALMIGHTY GOD). absence of government (GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT) and absolute freedom of the individual, regarded as a political ideal. (Dictionary.com/parenthesis added)

Once we go down this path, there will be no more liberty. Instead be prepared to...

SLAVE AWAY

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for Your Holy Word and all the rich wisdom that is found therein. Your Word is truly inspired and divine. Give us a heart of wisdom that values this treasure that was given to mankind in order to be a light unto our feet and a guide unto our path. Please forgive me for failing and losing my way by not following Your Light. Help me to assist others in finding the Light through sharing Your Holy Word. I REPENT for not spending more time with you to be a better vessel shedding your Light. When we "turn off this Light," we lose our way. Like blind men leading the blind, we will soon find ourselves in a ditch. Do not shut off the Lampstands of your Two Witnesses but instead give us a fresh pouring out of Your Holy Spirit so that we may have a heart of wisdom. Please start with me, Lord. Inspire us to REPENT for any times we have foolishly taken Your Laws and Your Ways out of the government of our societies and for assuming a "neutral" mishmash of folly would keep us stable. Forgive me for my apathy in thinking that someone else would clear this all up in our National Laws. As we rapidly see our countries wobbling on our silly sinking sand foundations of "man's reasonings," please give us a chance to REPENT and RETURN to the Rock of our Foundation. We pray this prayer in the Name of Yeshua, the Name above all names.

~Amen

Day #19 ~ Counting the Omer

Burning the Chaff

Hot Mess

For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth--as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"--yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.~ 1 Corinthians 8:5-6 (ESV)

For Day #19 of Counting the Omer, we are reminded that the Northern Kingdom of Israel was ruled by 19 kings, before being conquered by the Assyrians. Obviously, their earthly kings could not save them. Furthermore, Isaiah 19 is a Prophecy for Egypt, serving as a reminder for Israel not to put their confidence in the power of other countries but to keep it rightly placed in the power of God.

In a similar message for churches today, we have sadly fallen under the spell of false religions, practices and doctrines. We have failed to be like the Bereans who constantly checked the scriptures to "see if it was so." Thus, many Christians, are functionally Biblically illiterate and have been attracted to religions and practices that can only be described as "alternate spirituality."

Perhaps you yourself have been obliviously involved in practices such as "prayer tunnels," "grave sucking," "prayer soaking," and the 7 Mountains doctrine of Dominionism (man's earthly religious rule without requiring the Second Coming of Christ). Maybe you thought you could mix in a little yoga, Buddhism, pagan rituals or idols with the One Truth of Jesus Christ.

Some of these practices may, on the surface, sound super-spiritual. They may hold out the promise of more intimacy and with God and more power in His Kingdom. Or perhaps you are deceived with a false "unity" message that purports to join all of mankind in a single fraternity no matter what they believe.

How are we to know? First, and foremost, if daily Bible study is not part of your regular practice, there is no more time to delay. We are entering battle time that is more challenging than any other era in Church history. Daily Bible study is an absolute MUST for Christians everywhere as we prepare to engage in a time of persecution and tribulation unlike anything the world has ever seen.

I think the majority of Christians easily understand how Hinduism (many gods), and Buddhism (god of self) is clearly not something we want to count among a religion with ties to Christianity. Those who love Christ focus on Him alone and not multiple idols or the worst idol "god" of all: YOU. However, when we start getting into Islam, there are many deceived Christians who believe that "allah" is simply another name for the God of the Old Testament. Even Pope Francis has further promulgated this view by "praying" with imams at mosques and in the Vatican. First, let's dispel the notion once and for all that Islam is compatible with Christianity.

The simplest way to do this is to remove the false belief that "allah" is the same god as our God Almighty of the Old and New Testament. In order to believe in the "allah" of Islam, you must first DENY JESUS CHRIST.

Here is the verse in the Quran that says it most plainly and is clearly blasphemous to our Lord and Savior Yeshua:

"Say: "Praise be to Allah, WHO BEGETS NO SON, and has no partner in (His) dominion" ~Sura Al-Isra 17:111 (emphasis added)

This blasphemy is written on the ceilings and walls of mosques everywhere. Furthermore, this Quranic verse contains a double lie. As we should know, Jesus is the Son of God, begotten by the Father and through Him we are the children of God:

He has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: 'You are My Son; today I have become Your Father.'
~Acts 13:33 (Berean Study Bible)

But furthermore, the scripture tells us that one day we, the Church, the Bride of Christ, will share in His rule and dominion:

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 Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.
~Revelation 20:4 (KJV)

For now, we "occupy" until He comes, which means to "hold tenaciously" or "hang tough." I think another good meaning is: "hold the fort." It does not mean to rule and reign without Him. It is only after His Second Coming that will we rule and reign beside Him.

If we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He will also deny us.
~2 Timothy 2:12 (Berean Study Bible)

So, PLEASE, once and for all, let's put aside the foolish notion that we can incorporate demonically inspired religions into our Christ-centered walk.

Make every effort to present yourself approved to God, an unashamed workman who accurately handles the word of truth.
~2 Timothy 2:15 (Berean Study Bible)

Our God is One God, not many gods (Mark 12:29). Our God is Supreme, reigning over us and we are not Him (Romans 9:20). Our God is the God of the living, not the dead (Mark 12:27). Our God, in the person of Jesus Christ, came to save us (John 3:16). He is not simply a prophet but God Himself (Col 2:9). Our God left an empty tomb and has conquered death (1 Corinthians 15:57). There will be no lasting man-made peace on this planet until He returns (Titus 2:13). He won't show up in secret (Matt 24:23), He won't show up by being summoned in a ritual (John 4:24), the Lord Himself will appear the same way He left (Acts 1:11), every eye will see Him (Rev 1:7) and nothing will ever be the same on planet Earth when He returns (1 Thess 1:10). HALLELUJAH!

Therefore, My people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.
~Isaiah 5:13 (KJV)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, how humbled we are to have You as our God. You are loving and kind and came down in the flesh so that we might have a High Priest mediating for us at all times. No other so-called "god" is able to do what You have done. That's why there is no other Name under heaven and earth by which mankind may be saved other than the Holy Name of Yeshua of Nazareth. All other attempts to reach you are false and will result in eternal death. There is only ONE WAY and that Way is narrow. Sadly, Your Holy Word says only a very few will walk in that pathway. Embolden us and strengthen us as the world spins crazily out of control. Those who love You understand and recognize that You are in control of our lives and we are protected under the Shadow of Your Wing. In the meanwhile, help us to see the gift of repentance to cleanse us as Your Bride and overcome so that we might reign with You in Your Eternal Kingdom. We pray this prayer in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth who has ALL authority on heaven and on earth.

~Amen

Day #20 ~ Counting the Omer

Adulterated Crops

Bad Moon Arising

How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? For the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man.

~Jeremiah 31:22 (KJV)

In scripture, Jacob had to wait 20 years to be set free from the control of Laban to obtain the Bride of his choice (Genesis 31:38-41). Israel was oppressed by Jabin, king of Canaan, for 20 years until God raised up Deborah and Barak (Judges 4-5). The number 20 signifies reaching the point of redemption after a period of bondage.

Perhaps you've seen the cutesy little video making the rounds on social media. An adorable young boy brings Twinkies to a homeless woman and they share some fellowship together. At the end of the video, they both conclude that they have "seen God."

In the Hindu religion, the acolytes make the Namaste sign when they greet each other. It is two palms pressed together and pointing upward, along with a slight nod and bow towards the other person. You've probably seen this gesture dozens of times on Awards Shows and emojis. On the surface, it seems like a harmless acknowledgement to another person. However, what does it really mean in the spiritual world? It literally means: "I bow to the god in you." Think about that. This one little gesture incorporates idol worship, Narcissism, Luciferian pride and manages to break multiple commandments in one shot!

The scripture commands us to be wise as serpents and gentle as doves. We are to be aware of the devil's schemes. When we see a repeated theme over and over again in the secular world (and, sadly, in the church world also), we need to test the spirit behind it.

Up above, we quoted Jeremiah 31:22. It is a very esoteric scripture and many people are often perplexed by it. As some would say: "It's a riddle wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma." The scripture becomes much clearer to us when we understand the role that we are to perform in God's Epic Drama. We, the Church, are the female, the woman in this drama. Throughout the entire bible, Israel and the Church are described as a woman. Nowhere in the Bible is The Woman described as God! We are the

weakness. He is the strength. We are the void. His Holy Spirit fills our void.

I realize this concept is more difficult for men to understand than it is for women. However, once you fully grasp the imagery that God has already laid out for us, as He woos and wins us over, we will no longer fall victim to false teaching.

A woman encompassing a man is a highly intimate shadow picture. While in every marriage, the Two shall become One (in ecstatic union)...the Two never become each other!

This is spiritual transgenderism and spiritual perversion!

Yet, this is the very message that false teachers are beginning to preach. Taking cues from the devil in the Garden, this teaching is "almost correct"... "close, but no cigar." False teachers will say: "But didn't God say...?" The prevailing false teaching is that we are CHRIST INCARNATE. We are the Second Coming.

Obama once said: "We are the ones we are waiting for." It made such a horrific impact on me, I cut it out and posted in on my desk as a reminder of what NOT to ever think of myself. It makes perfect, creepy sense in the spiritual world.

Thus, we see the rise in so-called "Marian apparitions" gaining popularity on the earth. This is a manifestation of the increased interest in goddess worship and another demonic attempt to deflect attention from the only Name under Heaven and Earth by which mankind may be saved...YESHUA. The *real* Mary would have none of this idol worship. All six statements made by Mary in scripture point to the magnification of God and submission to the Messiah. If you really admire Mary of the Bible, you will listen to her scriptural admonition to "Do what He says" instead of doing what these false apparitions say. Remember, Satan does not return with a pitchfork and horns but as an "angel of light."

And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

~2 Corinthians 11:14 (Berean Study Bible)

DO NOT BE DECEIVED as Satan gets more and more desperate in his magic tricks.

The second beast was permitted to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that the image could speak and cause all who refused to worship it to be killed.

~Revelation 13:15 (Berean Study Bible)

The real Truth is this: The Church (The Elect Lady/The Bride/The Virgin) is the helpmate of Christ, not Christ Himself. That is the spiritual meaning of Jeremiah 31:22 when it states a Woman (The Church) shall "encompass" (the Hebrew word means

"walk around" or "encircle") a Man. Thus, the Church's mission is to encircle Christ just as the Moon (Church) orbits the Sun (Son). God gave us the majesty and wonder of the circulatory systems in the Heavens to help us understand His Majesty and Wonder. We are to look at the Moon circling the Sun and do likewise if we want to remain on the proper pathway! The Moon does not have any light of its own, it can only REFLECT the Sun's (Son's) Light.

Now...let's see how this lines up with scripture.

They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the SAME WAY as you have watched Him go into heaven."

~Acts 1:11 (NASB/emphasis added)

For the Lord HIMSELF shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first

~1 Thessalonians 4:16 (KJV/emphasis added)

So, we look for Jesus to return in His Father's Glory but, in the meanwhile, the Glory of the Man (Son of Man) is the Woman. We, the Church, must glorify Christ. We must not attempt to steal His Glory. Like the Moon, we must radiate it. He is the Light of the World and we reflect that Light. Let us not forget what part we play in this Epic Drama.

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

~Rev 12:17 (NKJV)

And I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse; and HE that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness HE doth judge and make war.

~Rev 19:11 (KJV/emphasis added)

We give all glory and honor and praise...

TO HIM.

Prayer:

Lord, teach us to read, meditate, and ponder on Your Holy Word so that we might be able to become workman approved, unashamed and ready to fight the good fight with the Sword of the Spirit. The devil is like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Like all destructive animals of prey, he looks for the weak first. I REPENT, Lord, for not spending more time with You in Your Word. We have no excuse when we spend more time watching TV, attending movies, reading secular junk and going to

sports events than studying Your Word. We are malnourished and unprepared to engage in the spiritual deception that is descending upon the planet at an alarmingly rapid rate. Please pour out your Holy Spirit as you promised in these Last Days to enable us to resist the devil and charge onward to advance Your Kingdom and radiate Your Light. We pray this in the Name of Jesus Christ, the Name above all names, the King of kings and the Lord of lords under which every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is the Lord of all.

~Amen

Day #21 ~ Counting the Omer

Ground Prep Sheltering in Place

Go, my people, enter your rooms and shut your doors behind you. Hide yourselves a little while until the wrath has passed.

~ Isaiah 26:20 (Berean Study Bible)

On day #21 of Counting the Omer, we reflect on the number 21 in scripture. In 2 Timothy 3, Paul the apostle lists 21 sins that will be evident in the last days. He calls these days "perilous times" due to these 21 sins. These are: lovers of self, lovers of money, braggers, prideful, blasphemers, parent rebellious, unthankful, unholy, unnatural/perverse affections, ungracious, false accusers, no self-control, fierce, hate those who are doing good, betrayers of close family/friends, hard-headed, haughty, lovers of pleasure, God rejecting, look godly from the outside, deny God's Truth and power.

Paul calls the Church to REPENT of these, to turn away from these sins (2 Timothy 3:5). Many in the church today keep preaching a grace, grace, grace and more grace message. However, in order to save as many people as possible, God eventually sends Judgment. God's Judgments are *merciful*. They are intended to turn people away from their sins and towards righteousness.

On the 21st day of December, 2012, there was a global rumor that the world was scheduled to end, due to the Mayan calendar evidence. The fever pitch of paranoia was so severe that the U.S. Government (through NASA) felt it was necessary to issue this statement:

"The world will not end in 2012...and credible scientists know of no threat associated with 2012."

Wow...As someone at that time wryly and succinctly noted on Twitter: "I wasn't really worried about it until the government told me NOT to worry--NOW I'm really worried!"

Around that same time, a popular TV news Channel aired a special report. It portrayed a captivating, albeit non-scriptural, documentary on the current fascination with Doomsday scenarios. According to the report, much of the human race is living under the imminent feeling that the proverbial hammer is about to fall. Highly "educated" PHD

professors were interviewed, all concluding with the most outlandish theories I have ever heard in my life. These included speculations about aliens from outer space and a black-hole time continuum. No wonder all knowledge outside of the Bible is deemed to be utter nonsense:

*Where is the philosopher? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age?
Hasn't God made the world's wisdom foolish?*
~1 Corinthians 1:20 (Holman Christian Standard Bible)

Then, I had another eye-opening revelation: Besides ruining their present life, these doomsday preppers were not going to be successful in preserving their future life either. For instance, the EMP prepper would be dead in a nuclear attack. The nuclear attack prepper would not be fully prepared for an EMP disaster. ALL would be destroyed by an earthquake or tsunami flooding. How in the world can you successfully doomsday prep for an unknown disaster? What about multiple, simultaneous disasters like the one in Fukushima, Japan in 2011? The Japanese people experienced an Earthquake, Tsunami and Nuclear Meltdown all in rapid succession! Obviously, this was a real scenario played out in front of our very eyes on TV. Doomsday Prepping, therefore, becomes completely absurd and impossible when confronted with the very real possibility of an unknown variable.

The Truth is this, as we read the news today, it is obvious that every one of us must accept the reality that today could possibly be our last day on the planet. For us "doomsday" doesn't have to be a nuclear attack, a natural disaster or a civil war. This may sound depressing, but it is the Truth.

Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.
~James 4:14 (NKJV)

Did you ever see a movie where everyone dies in the end? I usually hate those movies. Yet, in the earthly realm this is true for both believers and unbelievers:

And as it is appointed unto men to die once, but after this the judgment.
~Hebrew 9:27 (NKJV)

Truly, truly, I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a seed; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
~ John 12:24 (Berean Study Bible)

But...then God has a surprise ending for those who put their trust in Him:

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; the one believing in Me, even if he should die, he will live.

~John 11:25 (Berean Literal Bible)

What an incredibly good analogy for the Christian life. If we are to focus on the next life, the "things above," and not on things of the earth, then we should not fear what is up ahead, we should be excited about it. Jesus told us to "build up treasure in heaven" where it cannot be corroded nor dissipated. So, what does modern man's doomsday prepping look like? Is it a savings account? Vacation Home? 401K? Pension plan? Even some nice sounding things such as "family" and "friends" cannot ultimately offer you the shelter you seek. In the fallout of this recent pandemic, we will continue to see some serious economic devastation. Wall Street is no sure shelter either. When these things are stripped from us, it is only then that we can truly appreciate what Jesus meant as to "pick up your cross" and follow Me. If we follow Him, He was publicly shamed, stripped of everything, mocked, ridiculed and betrayed.

Sukkot, or the Festival of Booths, is a Feast in which God's people were required to construct fragile abodes in order that they might be able to see the sky through the palms and branches that comprised their covering. This was to remind them, that any manmade structure would be flimsy indeed. We are to be reminded...There is NO SAFE PLACE except under God's protection.

For some people, this repentance requirement will be very obvious: give up your idols, your fleshly sins, your sexual perversions, your money worship, your faith in government and earthly heroes to save you. For others, it will be more "bone deep." Stop relying on your works, your own flesh for righteousness. We do not have what it takes within ourselves to save ourselves. Only the POWER that comes from Christ through the Holy Spirit (dunamis) has any ability to do this. Once we get ourselves OFF the stage and accept our utter fallenness and futility without Christ, we cannot truly appreciate what He has done for us on the Cross. WE ALL NEED CHRIST. Even the "best" among us. Sometimes thinking you are righteous is the hardest case of all to crack as shown by what Jesus said to the Pharisees:

Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

~Matthew 23:33 (KJV)

Yet Jesus had mercy on even the Pharisees and Sadducees that ultimately repented and followed him such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.

How will we escape the coming Wrath? HOW INDEED? I feel this in my own self.

Spoiler answer: CHRIST, CHRIST, CHRIST and CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

So, don't wait until disaster strikes. Do the only truly effective "doomsday prepping" right now...

Drop to your knees and repent.

You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble.

~Psalm 32:7(a) (Berean Study Bible)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, as we approach these perilous times, help us to rightly recognize the signs of the times in order to be spiritually prepared. There is no "doomsday" for those who love You, only the promise of an eternal life beyond our fondest thoughts and notions. Strengthen us through REPENTANCE to do the Harvest Work that will be required of us as good and faithful servants of the Most High so that when You return, you receive Your rightful return on the investment in us. Let us not be like the wicked, evil and lazy servant who buried his talent. These will continue to be trying times but through You we are more than conquerors and with the Power of the Holy Spirit we will endure to the end and overcome. In the Name of Yeshua, pour out your "megas dunamis" power to equip Your remnant so that the power of evil may be fully defeated.

~Amen

Day #22 ~ Counting the Omer

Direct Sun Light Well-Watered

Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.

~ Ecclesiastes 11:7 (KJV)

"Well come on and let me know...Should I stay or should I go?"

~lyrics from "The Clash"

We've reached Day #22 in Counting the Omer. Throughout scripture, the number 22 is associated with light. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet which were used to compose the Old Testament which is a "lamp unto our feet and light unto our path." (Psalm 119:115). In Matthew 6 verse 22, Holy Scripture states:

The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. (Berean Study Bible)

Today we see more and more evil every day in the form of a "darkness covering the earth and a deep darkness the people." (Isaiah 60:2). There's a core visceral sense that we are, indeed, entering "dark times." Thus, there has been a marked increase on social media chatter regarding the various "Rapture" views.

What exactly is "tribulation" and where does it appear in the Bible? Should we expect, teach and welcome the idea of NO end times tribulation for the faithful? Let's go to the ultimate source...God's Holy Word.

When researching this information, I typed the word "tribulation" into Strong's Concordance. I found there are 22 references in the Old and New Testament! So, I humbly propose that God intends to give us some light and clarity on this issue today if we earnestly seek the Truth.

In this world of "fake news," it is popular to just pluck the narrative that we like and discard any other evidence in order to bolster our preconceived notions. In order to avoid this, I will briefly touch on all 22 verses. The scriptural evidence will show that NOT ONE single verse on tribulation confirms the false belief that Christians will not experience it. I exhort and encourage you to take out your Bible and review all 22 verses again after you read this. Buckle your seat-belt of Truth.

Let's begin. First let's examine the meaning of the word "tribulation" in both the Hebrew and Greek. It means: "narrow, tight, straits, distress, adversary, foe, enemy, oppressor, pressing together, affliction, distress, compressed, to press (as grapes), to press hard upon."

Now on to the 22 verses to enlighten us:

1) Deuteronomy 4:30: Scripture says "When" not "if" when describing God's people experiencing tribulation.

2) Judges 10:14: God chastises idolaters and says "go ask your gods for help" during their tribulation, which suggests that believers get help during their trials and tribulations.

3) 1 Samuel 26:24: David asks for deliverance from tribulation by being merciful to another during his tribulation.

4) Matthew 13:21: Tribulation will only be endured by those whose roots are deep. The shallow shall not endure.

5) Matthew 24:21-22: End time tribulation will be so severe, that unless God cuts that time short...NO ONE WOULD SURVIVE IT. He specifically mentions "the Elect" of God. If we believe that we are not to experience any end times tribulation at all, why would God have to "cut it short" for the sake of the Elect?

6) Matthew 24:29-31: Jesus does not return until AFTER the Great Tribulation.

Let's take a pause right here. To me, this is very "cut and dry." I cannot understand how anyone is reading this to mean that the Church will not be here during the Final Tribulation when Jesus has not arrived yet in His Second Coming!

Let's continue:

7) Mark 13:24, 26: *"In those days, AFTER that TRIBULATION, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light... THEN they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory."* (NKJV/emphasis added)

8) John 16:33: Yeshua instructs us to maintain our peace during tribulation, as He has overcome the world.

9) Acts 14:22: We MUST go through tribulation in order to enter into the Kingdom of God.

10) Romans 2:9: Tribulation PLUS Anguish will be upon every soul that does evil. First to the Jews and then to the Gentiles. This suggests we are spared from ANGUISH alone if we repent now.

11) Romans 5:3: We GLORY in tribulation because it produces the Fruit of Patience. WOW! We rarely hear that preached anymore!

12) Romans 8:35: No tribulation will ever separate us from the Love of Christ (described as: distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword).

13) Romans 12:12: During tribulation, be patient and continue in prayer.

14) 2 Cor 1:4: God comforts us in tribulation as we comfort others.

15) 2 Cor 7:4: We are to be JOYFUL in tribulation.

16) 1 Thess 3:4: VERILY ~ WE SHALL SUFFER TRIBULATION (no way to spin this verse!).

17) 2 Thess 1:6: We endure tribulation, THEN God pays back (recompenses) those that trouble us.

18) Rev 1:9: The Blessed brethren (Church) is our companion in tribulation.

19) Rev 2:9: Revelation Church of Smyrna is described as facing tribulation, which makes them spiritually rich (although they are monetarily poor).

20) Rev 2:10: For some of us, tribulation may include PRISON and POSSIBLY EVEN DEATH.

21) Rev 2:22: Great Tribulation will afflict the adulterous Church.

22) Rev 7:14: Those who pass successfully through tribulation shall serve God and dwell with God in Heaven around His Throne.

So, to sum up, what does God's Holy Word say about tribulation?

As sincere Christians, tribulation should be expected, it will increase our faith, it will give us opportunities to exhort and comfort others, it will be experienced by all prior to His Second Coming, it is necessary for us to undergo, it will allow us to see our enemies receive recompense, it will increase the bonds of Unity for the Church, it will make us spiritually rich, and it will be the defining criteria of those serving before God's Throne.

All 22 verses, say absolutely NOTHING about getting a Disney Rapture FastPass or a special Golden Willy Wonka Rapture Ticket. This is simply childish and immature theology albeit not surprising based on the "Christian-lite" preaching that has been "tickling ears" for decades now.

Let's re-phrase this: In essence, when we say we want or expect NO TRIBULATION, we are hardening our hearts against God's Holy Word. We are really saying: We don't wish to grow up, we don't think there is any benefit to further purification, we don't wish to assist any others into the Kingdom, and we don't wish to offer comfort to the suffering.

ISN'T THIS THE VERY "ANTI-ESSENCE" OF CHRISTIANITY AND THE CHURCH'S FUNCTION?

Finally, let's look what the Apostle Paul has to say on the matter of "staying" or "going."

I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.

~Philippians 1: 20-26 (NIV)

We must go *through* tribulation so that we grow in Christ and, at the same time, be an example to non-believers so that many will come to repentance and enter His Kingdom. Tribulation is not only inevitable but, with the purification of the Holy Spirit, a BLESSING, to grow towards Christ and birth others into the Kingdom.

For to you it has been GRANTED on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.

~Philippians 1:29 (NKJV/emphasis added)

Tribulation is a precious gift, A SHARED EXPERIENCE, which causes us to love Him and each other all the more. Those who depend on a false "cheap grace" instead of true repentance risk missing the fullness of Christ and His eternal rewards. Those who patiently wait for His return, acknowledging their need for faithful obedience, fulfilling all

of the King's expectations and requirements; those who are zealous to repent and follow His path of purity; those who endure and overcome...

They will become full-fledged citizens of God's Eternal Kingdom.

"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My Throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His Throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

~Revelation 3:21-22 (NKJV)

Prayer:

Most High God, Creator of Heaven and Earth, Master of the Universe, it is to You that we bow our knee. You require us to be a holy people as You are Holy. Open the eyes of Your Church to receive this timely and necessary instruction. Stiffen our backbones as we "gird up" for the current spiritual battle. Put a righteous desire upon our hearts to be salt and light to a dying world. Thank you for being with each of us as we go through trials, tribulation and persecution. Let us willingly embrace, and not shy away from, suffering as we follow in the footsteps of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. You said that each of us must pick up our own individual cross in order to follow You. You taught us that whoever tries to save his own life will lose it and whoever loses his life for Your sake will find it. Through REPENTANCE may we abide in You and seek Your covering. While our flesh would like to have this cup pass from us, Your ways are higher than our ways, help us to say: "Not my will but Thine be done" as did our precious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ in whose Name we pray.

~Amen

Day #23 ~ Counting the Omer

Sickle Ready Ripe Amber Waves

*Proclaim this among the nations:
"Prepare for war!
Wake up the mighty men,
Let all the men of war draw near,
Let them come up.
Beat your plowshares into swords
And your pruning hooks into spears;
Let the weak say, 'I am strong.'"
~Joel 3:9-10 (NKJV)*

The number 23 has long been associated with death. A prime example of this is found within scripture in Psalm 23. "*Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death*" is probably one of the most well-known verses in the Bible.

In our ongoing harvest analogy, many people do not realize that crops appear to be dead when they are ready for harvesting. They turn amber when they are ripe. The song "*America the Beautiful*," mentions the "amber waves of grain" referring to this farming reality. "Harvest-ready" means the green tissue within the plant has ripened and turned brown. This must occur otherwise the grain will have too much moisture and a short shelf life. In fact, if crops are harvested too soon, they will become moldy and not usable as a food source.

Once again, I am in awe of God's scriptural analogies. The Word speaks in analogies of harvesting people and we must be ripe and ready for harvesting.

And as soon as the grain is ripe, he swings the sickle, because the harvest has come.
~Mark 4:29 (Berean Study Bible)

Only once we appear DEAD TO THIS LIFE will we be ready. If this harvesting were to occur before we have reached this stage, we will have a "short shelf life" and be ridden with incurable soul rot. We will not be a source of life-sustaining food for others.

The devil always has a counterfeit to a true spiritual reality. The Hammer and Sickle has long been associated with Communist/Marxist ideology. In Nazi Germany, the sign

above the Death Camps was "Arbeit Macht Frei" or "Work makes Free." Earthly utopian societies never succeed. It is man's humanistic and evil version of building another Tower of Babel. However, the works set before the Church, that God appointed us to do from long ago, truly DOES help set people free!

For we are His workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for GOOD WORKS which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

~Ephesians 2:10 (Berean Literal Bible)

If we refuse to do His Work, does this mean that God's plan will fail? Of course not! Make no mistake about it, God will raise up SOMEONE ELSE to do His Work but the disobedient person who refuses to do His Work will perish along with their family!

Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, BUT YOU AND YOUR FATHER'S HOUSE WILL PERISH. Yet who knows whether you have come to the Kingdom for such a time as this?

~Esther 4:13b-14 (NKJV/emphasis added)

These 50 days of devotionals are intended to deepen our walk with Christ by removing old sin strongholds through repentance. In doing so, we receive the full abundant-life power of the Holy Spirit. It's a time also to confess our nation's sins, such as the slaughter of innocents.

We have been living in the valley of the shadow of death with this sin in almost all nations. The killing of innocents is the first in a series of major national sin issues which bring the Lord's Judgment. Despite knowing that we are incessantly breaking one of the Lord's Commandments, 3,000 live babies a day in this nation alone are killed. As this practice continues to grow in scope and intensity, we as taxpayers are paying millions to anti-life agencies such as Planned Parenthood to keep the murders coming.

Every single unique, amazingly created Human Being is a walking, talking, thinking, breathing testament to God's incredible Glory. Every time a baby is born, we are witnessing a miracle that screams GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST! New life is an affront to the evil forces of the universe which seek to silence this testimony in any way that they can.

Join me in repenting of any apathy thinking someone else will make all this happen while we sit on the sidelines. For too long we have murdered babies, allowing the spirit of death to permeate our lives.

It's time to follow God's Instruction to heal this nation:...*"if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."*
~2 Chronicles 7:14 (NIV)

As we repent and call for His Life to spread throughout this nation the promise of Psalm 23, verse 3, personally and as a nation will come alive:

"He restores my soul, He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."
(NKJV)

On this 23rd day of counting the Omer, we thank You Lord for Your presence. On our knees we cry out for Your Mercy Lord---heal our land!

Prayer:

Almighty God, we acknowledge You as the Maker of Heaven and Earth and Giver of Life. All of Creation attests to Your Majesty. You have created mankind in Your Image. All murderous and lying spirits ultimately seek to eradicate evidence of Your Holy Creation. They seek to raise up their human secularist "wisdom" and exalt it over the knowledge of You. We ask that you strike down these abominations O Lord. Raise Your mighty arm against those who would murder the most vulnerable among us in the womb and now even after birth. YOU are the only answer to Life's problems, and You have come to bring us LIFE and LIFE more abundantly. We pray this in the name of the Name above all names, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, our Saviour, Yeshua, who died and rose again so that we may LIVE.

~Amen

Day #24 ~ Counting the Omer

Cream of the Crop

Making a Prophet

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?

~Matthew 16:26 (NKJV)

The number 24 is truly an amazing symbol in scripture. 24 signifies the priesthood and the assisting office of prophecy. Here are some "fun facts" about the number 24:

~King David divided up the responsibilities for the music in the Temple in 24 courses (those who would assist the priests and those who would serve as priests).

~There are 24 elders around the Heavenly Throne. Some theologians believe these 24 elders serve as God's "holy counsel" in governing the universe.

~The repentance prophet, John the Baptist, has a birthday historically celebrated on the 24th day of June.

~Jesus' Name in Strong's Concordance is categorized with the number G2424 (look it up!). Truly He is the "Prophet of prophets" and the Lord of all. Our Great God and King.

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word "prophet"? Our modern view of prophets probably evokes an image of some barefoot, ragged looking individual, carrying a sandwich board sign that says:

***Repent
Now
The End is Near***

It's become a caricature, a joke, a cartoon. This individual is usually depicted as a crazy homeless person completely out of touch with reality. We envision someone with long, dirty scraggly hair to be scorned and given wide berth while crossing the sidewalk.

However, is this an accurate Biblical portrayal of a prophet? What exactly is a "prophet" according to the Bible? Actually, they were really quite simple and uniform in their message:

- 1) They remind people of God's Laws: *"Here's the boundaries, people!"*
- 2) Their words are intended to wake up the nation so that they look around and notice their dire circumstances: *"Hey---You guys are really off track and out of bounds!"*
- 3) They call for people to turn away from sin and repent: *"Quick...Get back over here!"*
- 4) They warn of the consequences for NOT doing so: *"It's all fun and games until someone gets hurt!"*

That's it...really nothing spooky contrary to contemporary opinion. In fact, the Bible says everyone who has truly accepted Jesus Christ as The Messiah should be a "prophet."

For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

~Revelation 19:10(b) (KJV)

So, in a sense, this message is sort of like a prophecy for the world. We are WAYYY out of bounds, on the wrong track, in need of a quick turnaround and soon we are going to get hurt. You may be thinking: "What makes you think you are qualified to give this opinion?" I guess I'm just as qualified as the long list of losers God has had to work with in the past. Here's a few examples:

"O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue."

~Exodus 4:10 (Moses/NKJV)

"But Lord, how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family."

~Judges 6:15 (Gideon/NLT)

"Who am I, and what is my family or my father's clan in Israel, that I should become the king's son-in-law?"

~1 Samuel 18:18(b) (David/NIV)

For some say "Paul's letters are demanding and forceful, but in person he is weak, and his speeches are worthless".

~2 Corinthians 10:10 (Apostle Paul/NLT)

I think I finally realized what God's "qualifications" were. He is simply looking for people who:

- 1) Love Him.
- 2) Love His commands.
- 3) Are quick to REPENT when he points out our many failings.

So what's the difference between a person or nation that occasionally sins and people who are "lost in sin?" In order to explain this, let's explain the difference between "regular" (for lack of a better word) and "presumptuous" sins:

Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Then will I be blameless and innocent of GREAT transgression.

~Psalm 19:13 (NKJV/emphasis added)

Here's a definition of "presumptuous" sins:

Presumptuous (Merriam-Webster dictionary definition): "overstepping due bounds."

Literally, you and I are PRESUMING on God's patience when we overstep His known boundaries in Law. Presumption means you wake up each morning and knowingly plan to commit sin. You make room in your life for these sins. You work your schedule around these sins. In essence, you bow down to sin. This is where the modern Christian Church has failed miserably. We were taught: "grace, grace and more grace." Do you know that this phrase is not actually in the Bible? We've heard it so many times in church, some of us just assume that it is Holy Scripture. Yes, the Bible says grace is abundant. But to quote Paul:

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? GOD FORBID!

~Romans 6:1-2(a) (KJ 2000 Bible)

So, there are many people out there who are calling themselves "Christians" when really, they simply believe that God exists.

You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror.

~James 2:19 (NLT)

True repentance is evidenced by a distinct turning away from sin and a holy fear of God. As long as we live on this planet, we will be a sinner struggling with sin. However, there is a vast difference between "slipping up" and an arrogant, presumptuous attitude that says:

"Today I PLAN on sinning. I PLAN on being disobedient. I PLAN on not doing what God wants me to do. I PLAN on meeting my adulterous affair for lunch--it is scheduled at noon. I've noted it in my calendar. In fact, I have made room for this sin for the rest of my life."

This type of attitude is NOTHING at all like the Apostle Paul's lament:

Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me...What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

~Romans 7: 21(b) & 24(a) (NIV)

When we sin, we must be QUICK TO REPENT! If we willingly choose to not do this, each and every time, our heart hardens just a little bit more. The next "tap on the shoulder" from God gets louder, rougher and more painful just like the ramping up of the judgments in Revelation. It's not because He enjoys sending judgment. it's because WE are getting blinder and deafer by the minute with "eyes that cannot see" and "ears that cannot hear." He doesn't want to see us encounter the pain and suffering that goes along with sin. Before we know it, a symbolic "baseball bat" to our noggin is not enough to get our attention anymore.

I've always struggled with the Biblical concept of "unpardonable sin." It seems at odds with everything else in the Bible of God's incredible love, patience, goodness, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, grace, etc. However, after a long, and sometimes painful, spiritual journey, I now understand what the "unpardonable sin" is. It is a slow building of "hardness of heart" that can no longer be penetrated by Truth or Light. It's a "tipping point" to a "reprobate mind." Once we have chosen that path (not God closing the door on us--but us closing the door on God), there truly is no turning back.

So now on to the Church analogy: Are we just sinners or "presumptuous sinners?" With our hard-heartedness towards abortion, sanctifying of perversions, removal of God from the public square and pressuring Israel to give up her land...what is the answer? Since the Garden of Eden Fall, we have always been fallible sinners. May I humbly suggest that now we are *purposeful* sinners?

If the Covid pandemic has taught us anything it is this: We don't know if we have 100 years left or one minute left on this planet. It may be too late to turn some nations around on a governmental level. However, as individuals, we still have the option to repent personally. This year is shaping up to be a difficult year on many fronts. Similar to Moses' trek up the mountain, there's going to be a "whole lot of shaking" going on.

We need to stop looking for a prophet to come from Mount Sinai with wild hair, blazing eyes and carrying the Ten Commandments before we REPENT. Perhaps you have falsely put your trust in some "angel of light" apparition to save you. Maybe the message can come from the most unlikely of places...you and me. Today, take it from a run-of-the-mill, ordinary, very fallible human being.

**Repent
Now
The End is HERE**

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, as we begin to recognize more and more each day the brevity of life, please help us to set our minds on things above and not on things of the earth. If we truly believe Your Holy Word, we will have a reverent fear of the Lord which includes living an obedient life that glorifies You. When we purposefully wallow in sin, this does not bring You glory but compromises our witness to a lost and dying world. Teach us that REPENTANCE is the only pathway to relationship with You. Hardened hearts must be softened in order for You to grow Your Harvest of righteousness. As princes and kings fall, and nations that don't turn to You collapse, we look onward to a Kingdom that has no end ruled by the Prince of Peace, Yeshua, in whose Name we pray.

~Amen

Day #25 ~ Counting the Omer

Genetically Modified?

Half Baked

Ephraim compromises with the nations; he's a half-baked cake.

~ Hosea 7:8 (International Standard Version)

*If I knew you were comin' I'd've baked a cake,
baked a cake, baked a cake.*

If I knew you were comin' I'd've baked a cake

Howd-ya do, howd-ya do, howd-ya do?

~Silly Song Lyrics from 1950's

We've reached the halfway point today in Counting the Omer! There cannot be a better place to pause and reflect because throughout scripture the #25 is associated with repentance. In Hebrew, the #25 is comprised of the two Hebrew letters: "kaph" and "hey." "Kaph" literally means "palm." The ancient formation of the letter "kaph" resembles an open palm which "bends" and "curves." It is from this pictograph that "kaph" gets its meaning of bending to another's will, submitting under the hand of a Master, tamed and subdued. The Hebrew letter "Hey" means "Look" or "Behold!" Together, they descriptively indicate the act of REPENTANCE. When we repent, there are two words in scripture: "metanoia" which has a similar meaning such as to "Look" or "Behold" (make a mental note of) your current sinful state and then the word Shuv, which means to TURN, bend, curve, submit to the will of Almighty God under the palm of His mighty and merciful Hand. What a beautiful picture image for repentance!

As we continue to Count the Omer, we are reminded that this tradition is based on Leviticus 23:15. It is a day by day reminder of the Living God's miracles connecting the time between the Exodus Passover and receiving the Word, the Ten Commandments. It was fifty days after Passover that the Law was given to Moses on Mt. Sinai. After this Old Testament foreshadowing, Yeshua was sacrificed as the Passover Lamb, and then fifty days after Passover His followers in Jerusalem received the Living Word, the indwelling Holy Spirit on Pentecost. So, 50 days from the original Exodus to the Giving of the Law on Mount Sinai (Moses the Deliverer ~ a shadow picture of Christ) and then 50 days from Last Supper (Passover) to the giving of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost...the fulfillment of the Old Testament shadow-picture. Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Law is engraved upon our hearts.

Today, much like the Israelites during the Exodus and the First Century Church, those who love God are once again "on the run." History teaches us that there are 5 Stages of Christian persecution:

- 1) Stereotyping
- 2) Vilifying
- 3) Marginalizing
- 4) Criminalizing
- 5) Physical Assault/Death

For students of history, we can see this exact trajectory in the making of the Jewish Holocaust during WWII. Caricatures and cartoons of the Jews, at first seemingly harmless, were the first sign that the German society had turned the corner in its insidious ideology. From stereotyping, it is not a big step to vilifying. After vilifying, marginalizing (removing from the public square, from the marketplace) is the next stage. Those of us who will not bow down to an evil agenda won't be able to buy and sell. Many, all over the globe, are already experiencing criminalizing from jackbooted laws and fines. The final stage is: BEATINGS, JAIL and DEATH.

Don't think it can happen here? Think again.

Surely, with the evidence in the news, we are rapidly reaching Stage #5. Much of this persecution is coming from the LGBTQ+ perversion agenda. Some recent examples include the courts allowing a divorced parent to pursue transgender treatments (including puberty blockers and potentially more radical surgery) for a 7-year old child, even when the other parent objects. In the State of Oregon, a 15-year old can get hormone treatments and sex change surgery without parental approval or even notification! Can you imagine the horror of your child taken into custody by the State and then returned to you with their God-given body parts butchered?

These rulings should shed some "wake up" light for every liberty-loving person in the world. Freedom of speech and freedom to worship Christ without restraint were the very same freedoms our forefathers fought for and came to these shores for. We have fallen asleep in the darkness.

In America, unless you have been living in a cave, you may have also heard about "Sweet Cakes by Melissa" a Christian bakery that has been forced to shut down because of their unwillingness to celebrate perversion in the form of their artistic cake-making abilities. The other "cake case" by Jack Phillips made it all the way to the Supreme Court. He also had refused to make a "wedding" cake for a man on man party observance. While he was mostly victorious in the Supreme Court case, the persecution

did not stop. Immediately, he was accosted again and asked to create a "gender transition" cake which started a whole new round of legal battles for him.

As an apostate Mega-church "pastor" and liberal progressive recently heretically suggested:

"Maybe they should just ask themselves, 'What would Jesus do?' I think he'd bake the cake."

Really? John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ's ministry was beheaded rather than reverse his position on Herod's scandalous marriage.

Now Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, for John had been saying to him: "It is not lawful for you to have her."

~Matthew 14:3 (NIV)

To suggest that Christ Himself would take a position LESS than His Repentance preaching predecessor is patently absurd and unbiblical. John said he wasn't fit to untie Christ's sandals.

John answered their questions by saying, "I baptize you with water; but someone is coming soon who is greater than I am--so much greater that I'm not even worthy to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandals."

~Luke 3:16(a) (NLT)

Unlike the silly song lyrics posted above, we must ask ourselves this question: If we REALLY knew Christ was coming...would we bake the cake? Would we sanctify and participate in the celebration of perversion? In scripture, the Baker was ultimately executed by Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, while the Cupbearer was spared and restored. (Genesis 40).

Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your position, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cupbearer.

~Genesis 40:13 (NIV)

However, things didn't go very well for the Baker:

Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head and impale your body on a pole. And the birds will eat away your flesh."

~Genesis 40:19 (NIV)

It's utter folly to think that the modern "Egyptian" land of secularism and false idols will treat you any kinder. If our devotion to Christ cannot withstand the squeezing pressure of this initial rising tide of persecution, we will die at the hands of the government, just like the baker. Those of us who are keenly aware that Christ is coming back soon as a Mighty Judge, will NOT "bake the cake."

We are to be like the cupbearer, bringing forth the sweet atoning cup of Christ's blood by showing people the Light. That path requires us to pick up our cross like our Master Yeshua through personal sacrifice and preach REPENTANCE. We don't simply look forward to being restored to an earthly king's court position, but we look for a position restoration with the King of kings. It's not going to be a "piece of cake" serving Christ with our whole hearts. There will be trials, tribulations, and persecutions:

But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. On account of My name they will deliver you to the synagogues and prisons, and they will bring you before kings and governors.

~Luke 21:12 (Berean Study Bible)

If you've cleansed your "vessel" with the Holy Spirit through daily repentance, you'll be able to take full advantage of this Truth:

Therefore, settle it in your hearts not to mediate beforehand on what you will answer, for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.

~Luke 21:14-15 (NKJV)

Remember, the devil has NO ORIGINAL IDEAS. All he can do is pervert something or counterfeit God's originals. God originally offers us a "genetically modified" transformation. We become flesh and blood sons and daughters of the Most High and then we are transformed into His likeness to spend all eternity with Him!

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

~2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.

~1 Corinthians 15:51-53 (ESV)

I personally believe that the anti-Christ will offer a counterfeit “genetic modification” also. Perhaps an implant in the skin which causes lesions and boils.

So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and loathsome, malignant sores broke out on those who had the mark of the beast and worshiped its image.

~ Revelation 16:2 (Berean Study Bible, underline emphasis added)

So take your pick...eat the cake first and ruin your appetite for the Main Meal?

And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb."

~Revelation 19:9(a) (ESV)

We must grow up and eat the meat of God's Word. We will eventually be rewarded with the sweetness of God's eternal promises served with His goodness and mercy.

But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained their senses to distinguish good from evil.

~ Hebrews 5:14 (Berean Study Bible)

If we REALLY believe He is coming again and coming soon, would we bake the cake? Either way we will eventually get our...

JUST DESSERTS

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, in Jesus' Holy Name, open our eyes to see Your line in the sand, Your dividing line between good and evil. We bow to Your plumbline, not the evil and perverse ways of the world. May we have the boldness to fear You more than offending people in order that we might be effective in teaching Your Truth. May standing up for Your righteousness in public become a hallmark of Christians worldwide. In humility, help us to correct those in opposition to You so that they may REPENT and know His Truth, escaping the snare of the enemy of our souls. We pray this in the powerful Name of Yeshua, who has all authority in Heaven and on Earth.

~Amen

Day #26 ~ Counting the Omer

Power Tool The Gospel Truth

And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

~ Luke 17: 17,19 (KJV)

As we continue counting the Omer from Passover to Pentecost, we move onward to Day #26. 26 times in Psalm 136 we find the scripture verse "For His Mercy endures forever." The two Hebrew letters for the number 26 are "kaph" and "vav." The symbolic picture is an open hand with a nail. 26 pictorially signifies the gospel message of the Cross by Yeshua's hand being nailed to it. Thus, 26 is the power of salvation which comes from the Gospel message.

Why did Jesus have to die on the Cross? Many will say the obvious answer: "To die for our sins." Yes, surely that is true. We do not have the necessary capital to atone for our bottomless pit of sin. However, today that message is quickly morphing into a quick fix "universalist" false message.

The 136th Psalm is also known as "The Great Hallel" or "great praise" and historical evidence shows it was probably said at Passover during Jesus' time on earth. It is truly a litany of the miraculous salvation God has done for us. Once we grasp a deep hold of this gospel Truth, we REPENT. Repentance involves a mental and physical turning point, a heart change to true belief, confession and a public witness as we work out our salvation with fear and trembling to the finish line and overcome. None of these can be taken out of the equation for Salvation to occur. When we don't "follow through" we DENY the POWER OF SALVATION.

We become a "walking dead" witness instead of a thankful, living witness. Throughout Jesus' physical time on Earth, He gave us the temporal type and shadow of His spiritual healing. Everywhere He went, people were RADICALLY CHANGED. Lepers were cleansed fully, crippled and paralyzed legs walked straight, blind eyes were opened, deaf ears could hear, the dead were raised to new life. Why then would the Power of the Holy Spirit not involve a RADICAL CHANGE in someone's behavior? It does! Any other message being preached is a lie bordering on blasphemy.

Paul speaks of this in 2nd Timothy:

This know also, that in the last day perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those who are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but DENYING THE POWER THEREOF: from such TURN AWAY.

~2 Timothy 3:1-5 (KJV/emphasis added)

So, what exactly IS the Gospel Message? I think if we took a poll today and asked the average person, it might come out looking something like this:

*Jesus loves everyone
God wants you to be blessed
Don't worry, be happy
Simple incantation for salvation*

While there are some grains of Truth in all of these statements, they are NOT the gospel message that Jesus actually taught. So, what exactly DID Jesus preach? Let's look at His own words. For starters, what was the *very first* message He gave?

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, REPENT, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

~Matthew 4:17 (KJV/emphasis added)

Wow. He didn't waste any time warming up the crowd with an ear-tickling message! Let's see what else He had to say when He preached, maybe He got a little bit more "affirming" as he went along.

The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they REPENTED at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

~Matthew 12:41 (NKJV/emphasis added)

How about His disciples? Didn't Jesus have a special, happy, upbeat, non-repentance message just for them? Here's what he said to the 12 disciples:

I tell you, no; but unless you REPENT you will all likewise perish.

~Luke 13:5 (NKJV/emphasis added)

Yikes! Aren't there any "seeker friendly" messages here?

I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who REPENTS than over ninety-nine just persons who need no REPENTANCE.
~Luke 15:7 (NKJV/emphasis added)

Great, So, we only need to repent once, right?

Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; REPENT and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place--unless you REPENT.
~Revelation 2:4-5 (NKJV/emphasis added)

Can I still continue to live a sin-filled life due to grace?

And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not REPENT. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they REPENT of their deeds.
~Revelation 2:21-22 (NKJV/emphasis added)

Oh boy. I thought I didn't have to think about repentance anymore. I mean, I went up to the altar once in 1978.

Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and REPENT. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.
~Revelation 3:3 (NKJV/emphasis added)

But, Jesus loves me so I don't have to repent anymore. Do we need to get all worked up about this?

As many as I might love, I rebuke and discipline; therefore be zealous and REPENT.
~Revelation 3:19 (Berean Literal Bible)

The Gospel Message preached by Jesus Christ was, indeed, very simple:

Repent
Believe
Confess
Walk (be a LIVING WITNESS)

Scripture tells us we must endure and overcome In order to be a living witness throughout all of eternity!

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My Voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me. To him who OVERCOMES I will grant to sit with Me on My Throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His Throne.

~Revelation 3:20-21 (NKJV/emphasis added)

So, let's heed Jesus' preached message and REPENT NOW for the Kingdom of God is at hand.

Because of the multiplication of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

~Matthew 24:12-14 (Berean Study Bible/underline added)

Prayer:

In Jesus/Yeshua's Holy Name, we confess that we have not followed Your Word, Lord. Please forgive us that we have failed to use Your gift of repentance to cleanse our old sin patterns. Forgive us for not being zealous to repent, for being apathetic, for not opening the door to our minds and hearts in daily prayer to invite You in to dine with us, encouraging us to cleanse as Your Bride. In Your Mercy and Wisdom, help us to return to Your Covenant and Your Divine plan. Move on the minds and hearts of our leaders to see the spiritual warfare in which we are engaged and which can only be won through REPENTANCE and OBEDIENCE to your Moral Laws. Move nations to call for a National Day of Prayer, Fasting and REPENTANCE.

~ Amen

Day #27 ~ Counting the Omer

Suit Up

Those are Fightin' Words

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this world's darkness, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ~Ephesians 6:12 (Berean Study Bible)

"Onward Christian Soldiers, marching as to war..." ~19th Century Hymn

Today is Day #27 of Counting the Omer. In scripture, the #27 is associated with the preaching of the gospel message. If #26 represents the gospel message itself, we can think of #27 as "putting a face" to the message. It would symbolize preachers and teachers of the gospel message who assist people in "crossing over" from unbelief to faith. Faith with no action is dead. Those with faith must engage in spiritual warfare. If the devil isn't fighting against you, maybe you aren't much of a threat to his kingdom of darkness.

The name "Joshua" is really the equivalent of "Yeshua" in the Hebrew. In Joshua 1:1, Joshua's name appears for the 27th time. In this passage, we see the Israelites, under Joshua's direction, crossing the Jordan into the Promised Land. The Old Covenant is a temporal shadow type of the spiritual New Covenant. In the Old Covenant, Israel fought their battles with the literal sword. In the New Covenant, we fight our battles with the Sword of the Spirit. We are to conquer the world for Christ and accomplish the Great Commission with this Sword.

Remember the old Sunday School hymn "Onward Christian Soldiers?" I'm sure you sang that if you were raised in church as a child. It always sounded so quaint. After all, what was there to fight about? No one was oppressing Christians during the 1960's and 1970's in our idyllic little suburbs of Western Civilization. As kids we simply accepted these lyrics as some corny metaphor for "soldiering" on in good works. For the most part, we were harmoniously living together with other religions and races in a democratic country offering the most liberty in recorded history. No one wanted to go to "war" with our fellow citizens.

Yet, have you ever watched a movie plot that starts out all sweet and dreamy, but slowly... very slowly, as the drama progresses the creepy tension rises? Remember the movie Fatal Attraction? The adulteress seemed normal enough in the beginning, but

gradually the depth of her madness increased in dramatic intensity throughout the film. The viewer actually begins to feel sorry for Michael Douglas--the disloyal husband! Just a little "fling with sin" and, before you know it, you have the family pet rabbit boiling on your stove.

I think this is a good analogy for the social climate we face today as devout believers. For Christians and Jews, the moral turn in our countries are a somber referendum on our future. As we are shoved "Forward," we are slowly beginning to realize the true impact of this hideous Leftist ideology. Will we be shepherded like dumb sheep into a God-less society where we are forced to compromise our deepest held beliefs?

In formerly Judeo-Christian based nations around the free world, persecution against Mosaic Law values are slowly, yet steadily picking up steam. I'm not talking about in oppressive Islamic or Communist countries. Sadly, this persecution is taking place in former freedom-loving countries such as the United States, Canada, Belgium, England, France and Australia, just to name a few. Here's just a small sampling of news headlines found in the past year among literally hundreds of examples:

United States: *Democrats Block Bill to Stop Infanticide--Refuse Care for Babies Born Alive*

Canada: *Government to Begin Seizing Children of Parents who Oppose Gender Transition*

Belgium: *Statistics Show Euthanasia rising by 27% per Year*

England: *Man Arrested for Street Preaching*

France: *Anti-Semitic Attacks are up 74%*

Australia: *Labor Party to Ban Free Speech in Next Election*

Before being martyred, the Christians in first century Rome were given one last opportunity to appease the state. If they were willing to make a public sacrifice at the altar of the gods, they could get their sentence overturned. Instead they chose to face the lions and got ripped apart in a bloody sport as their fellow citizens cheered and clapped. Their unflinching resolve was true evidence of unswerving faith in Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

Despite my deep trust and faith in God, it is very disconcerting to see the people on the front lines capitulate under the cover of political correctness. Sort of like the canary in the coal mine--will we also succumb to the "gas" of the surrounding culture? When will I or my loved ones face the pressure to step on this minefield?

The western social schizophrenia continues to slowly increase in intensity. We worship at the altar of "tolerance" as the intolerance of Judeo-Christian values heats up with each passing day. Like the choice given to the Roman martyrs, Christians will soon be asked whether they are willing to compromise their faith in order to appease the state. Will they give in to the temptation to make a "public sacrifice" on the altar of the human secularist gods? At what point, like the foolish husband in Fatal Attraction, do we recognize that we are in deep, deep trouble?

Make no mistake...whether you acknowledge it yet or not...

WE ARE AT WAR.

Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring-those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus.

~Revelation 12:17 (NIV)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, Your Holy Word reminds us that we are to be properly "suited up" for war. We can no longer afford to engage in the culture wars without being fully attired in the spiritual armor that You require or we will simply become another casualty. As Satan and his forces continue to push forward, we need to retake the land that was lost and move onward. The very first item we must put on is TRUTH. Unless we are girded about with Truth, we will not prevail. We begin by telling ourselves the Truth first...that we individually need to REPENT before we can assist anyone else. Then we shod our feet with the gospel of peace. There is no peace except under the Name of Yeshua, the Prince of Peace. We must raise the shield of faith to extinguish all the fiery darts of the wicked. Our head gear is the salvation You provided through Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the only Name under Heaven and Earth by which mankind may be saved. Lastly, but certainly not least, we raise the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, which no demon in hell can stand against. Help us to march onward to reclaim the entire world in obedience to Your command to "go and make disciples of all nations." You would not command us to do something if it were not possible and all things are possible for those who love You and are called according to Your purpose. We pray this prayer in the Name of our Great God and Savior, Yeshua.

~Amen

Day #28 ~ Counting the Omer

Fertile Fields

Choose Your Predestination Wisely

I call Heaven and Earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live. ~ Deuteronomy 30:19 (KJV)

The #28 is an interesting number in both scripture and in life. The Gospel of Mark references scripture from the Old Testament 28 times. There are 28 mentions in the Bible where Jesus Christ is described as the sacrificial Lamb who takes away the sins of the world. 28 scripture verses give a direct exhortation telling us to "Praise ye the Lord." The longest books in the New Testament, are Matthew and the Book of Acts each with 28 chapters. (*Interesting Fun Biblical Fact: Matthew has 28 chapters but less words than the Book of Acts thus making the Book of Acts the longest in the New Testament!*). The average female menstrual cycle is 28 days.

At first glance, these may seem like completely unrelated topics. However without these "28's," there would be no clear linkage of the Old Testament in the Gospel Books (Law/Prophecy fulfillment), no Heavenly sacrifice (Lamb), no praise (Hallelujahs), no acts (Works) and no cleansing cycle (Renewal/Repentance) all of which are necessary for fertile and productive ground. We must have *all* of these working together in order to understand the message of Salvation. May I make a bold statement? Without these 28's there would be no temporal or eternal life! Thus, it would follow that DEATH would result if we do not recognize the importance of these quintessential 28's. Any teaching which lacks obedience, recognition of Christ as Messianic fulfillment, sacrificial living, praise, action/works and cyclical cleansing through repentance offers NO LIFE.

How do we reconcile this Truth to the teaching of predestination? How do we understand that we have been given Free Will while also accepting scripture which states God's "elect" people have been "chosen," and "set apart" from the beginning of all time to enjoy Eternal Life with Him?

Jesus prayed for unity for those who were His. This was His final prayer before the Cross (John 17). We can be 100% sure that Jesus' prayer was answered and will continue to be answered. Lest we fall prey to Satan's schemes for a "One World Religion," there cannot be unity unless there is oneness in the Spirit through Christ:

"I pray for them. I DO NOT PRAY FOR THE WORLD but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours."

~John 17:9 (NKJV/emphasis added)

And we recognize this oneness of Spirit in this manner:

"And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them."

~John 17:10 (NKJV)

Christ is GLORIFIED by those who belong to Him. Period. If there is no Christ exaltation, there can be no oneness of spirit. Whenever anyone or anything else is lifted up over the abiding single, narrow Way of Christ...that religion or group of people are NOT His. They are "out of order" and in disunity with the Body of Christ. Very simple. Is exalting Christ first in our lives? If not, we need to refocus on Him.

Church schisms really began in earnest at 431 A.D. at the Council of Nicea. The "Reformation" further revealed this split with the advent of Martin Luther's posting of his 95 Theses to the Catholic Church door in 1517. The end result of schisms have splintered Christianity into dozens and dozens of factions. Multiple denominations still split hairs about doctrine, sacraments, and methodologies. The very first major split in 431 A.D. was over the exaltation of Mary, utilizing the phrase "Mother of God" instead of "Mother of Christ." We clearly see that a shift of focus off Christ automatically resulted in splits, schisms and disunity just as Jesus stated.

A similar analogy to Church schisms is found in the Old Testament when Israel splintered into two Kingdoms. The Northern Kingdom was known simply as Israel, while the Southern Kingdom was called Judah. (1 Kings 16:21). This division, much like the continued denominational splits, had the effect of weakening the Israelites overall against their enemies. In the spiritual world, we battle not against flesh and blood but the ultimate enemy, Satan.

Sadly, Luther eventually dissolved, at the end of his life, into writing rambling, vengeful anti-Semitic rants in his book "On the Jews and Their Lies." Luther is also the spiritual father of the heretical "Replacement Theology" mindset that claims Gentiles have replaced Jews as God's chosen people.

Doesn't this amaze you? Think about it: The man who is credited with being the spiritual father for most Protestant denominations is also the SAME person who wrote a book that the Nazis often used to justify their evil anti-Jewish philosophies! The enemy of our souls has utilized this to further estrange the Jews from the Truth of their Messiah.

Like ALL of us, Luther was a "mixed bag" of polar opposites--Evil and Good fighting for the upper hand. This thought brings me to my knees more than any other. That such

opposing forces can reside in one individual man is nothing short of truly sobering. I sincerely pray: "Lord, Help me not to skew Your Message and, in doing so, become an unwitting tool for the Enemy." Nothing, absolutely nothing, strikes more terror in my heart than this: The possibility, that by lack of maintaining an exceedingly close relationship to God, become a "useful idiot" for Evil. Such is the seed in all of us...the seed for Great Good and the seed for Devastating Harm.

I humbly believe that much of modern-day Christianity has lost the mystery, majesty and wonderment of God. We have become self-focused instead of God-focused. Do you remember the Disney movie Mary Poppins? She had some very inexplicable behavior. When the butler demanded an explanation: "Miss Poppins, please DO explain yourself!" She replied: "Why, I never explain anything." Just how do you fully explain the mysteries of God?

Spoiler/Answer: We cannot.

We can ponder, expostulate, theorize, reflect, meditate, but we must not make this mistake: We cannot ever have God all figured out. In fact, this is the very first sin!...desiring to eat from the Tree of Good and Evil/the Tree of Knowledge. If we were ever able to figure out God, we would BE God. This is impossible and one of the major root causes of sin...Pride. Humbly accept that for much of your life, your spiritual requirement is like this line from the famous Alfred, Lord Tennyson poem Charge of the Light Brigade:

*Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do & die*

There is quite a bit in the Bible about volition, will and submission by man to God's calling. The virgin Mary is quoted as saying: "May it be unto me as you have said" before He proceeded with His Sovereign plan. That scripture is there for a reason. It is important that we get into agreement with God!

Now back to Predestination and "The Elect." While studying this topic, I was led to research one of the most powerful forces of nature: Ionic Bonding. Ionic bonding is what occurs when the negative charge of electrons is attracted to and joined up with the positive charge of protons. The increasingly powerful vortex of tornadoes can be explained by ionic bonding. In explaining ionic bonding Wikipedia states: "Each successive ionization energy is markedly greater than the last."

Our relationship with God is like this. We lay down, he picks up. This process continues until we, in conjunction with God's power, become a "tour de force" for great good. At some point, there is no reversal of this bonding. The energy to bond exceeds any

outside forces. I contend, therefore, that our only job, each and every day, is to lay our lives down. Submit. Period. Lay it down...God will pick it up. Lose your life...you will find it. Sacrifice yourself and you will live. In doing so, we become a powerful force for good. A force to be reckoned with. Perhaps we are not supposed to fully understand the mysteries of God--just accept them by Faith and, in the process, have our Faith grow. God cannot be reduced to a formula or a process. God is not constrained by a Time disadvantage of seeing only from the present (like us). He sees all from beginning to end.

Thus, Predestination and Free Will are a symbiotic mystery of two interrelated concepts leading to ETERNAL LIFE. God chooses his Elect (+) and man submits by his own Volition (-). Where exactly we reach the tipping point or "point of no return" is not able to be scientifically dissected. In the meanwhile, we embrace the "28's" of obedience to His commands, sacrificial living, praise, acts/works and cyclical cleansing (repentance).

So, do we bond to Christ our Bridegroom or does He bind to us? Do we Choose or are we Chosen?

The answer is...

YES

O Jehovah, thou hast persuaded me, and I was persuaded.
~Jeremiah 20:7a (ASV)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, Help me refocus on You, today and every day. Help me to purpose in my heart to focus on Christ daily so that I will never miss Your Message. Through this focus, may I never become a "useful idiot" for evil and stony ground. I confess I have created idols, especially focusing on myself. Help me remove these idols by listening only to Your Message so that I will be a fertile field. Help me to exalt You first in my life. I lay my life agenda down as You help me die to the old self-idol of "me." Please lift me up through Your Holy Spirit and Your Holy Word as my guide to advance Your Kingdom. Thank You for new life in You alone. In Jesus/Yeshua's Mighty Name I pray.
~Amen

Day #29 ~ Counting the Omer

Against the Grain

Leaving a Bad Taste

This Book of the Law must not depart from your mouth; you are to recite it day and night, so that you may carefully observe everything written in it. For then you will prosper and succeed in all you do. ~ Joshua 1:8

The Holy Word of God is truly fascinating. It is a complex work of synchrony so deep that its riches cannot be fully plumbed in any one lifetime. For instance, the number 29 in scripture is associated many times with departure. Here's just a few examples: Noah's name was mentioned the 29th time after he and his family departed from the ark. The 29th mention of the name Jacob was when he departed from his parent's home. Joshua was mentioned for the 29th time when he commanded the Israelites to depart and take possession of the Promised Land. When the people asked Jesus to depart their coasts after He had healed the demonic, it was the 29th time His Name was mentioned in the Book of Matthew. For the 29th mention of the Apostle Paul in the Book of Acts, he was assuring the jailer that the prisoners had not departed after the earthquake and dissuaded him from committing suicide.

Today, on Day #29 of Counting the Omer, it is clear from scripture that "departures" can be evil, transitional, or moral. One departure we never want to have is the departure from biblical Truth! Lately, there has been a disturbing rise of interest in modern churches regarding two heretical doctrines which depart from the Truth: Preterism and Dominionism. Here are the definitions:

Preterism: Preterism is a Christian eschatological opinion which teaches that SOME (partial Preterism) or ALL (full Preterism) Bible prophecy has already taken place, including all of the Book of Revelation.

Dominionism: Also known as "Kingdom Now," this theology states that Christians are destined to take back 7 Cultural Mountains of power and influence from Satan. These so-called "7 Mountains" are:

Arts & Entertainment

Business

Education

Family

Government
Media
Religion

An easy way to remember these two doctrines can be stated tongue-in-cheek like this:

Preterism... *"Revelation was so yesterday."*
Dominionism... *"Perfecting the Tower of Babel"*

This verse is often quoted as support for their theological opinions:

"Occupy until I come."
~Luke 19:13 (b)/KJV

In Greek the word "occupy" has a meaning more like: "hold the fort until I return" or "carry on with your business." Scripture does not tell us that we are destined to take over the entire world and its systems. The systems and governments of this world are Satan's domain and we should not covet them. We are to bring salt and light into our culture and pray for our leaders to enact godly policies, but coveting this world is not our assignment. Satan even used the kingdoms of this world as the final temptation of Christ!

Again, the devil took Him to a very high MOUNTAIN [cultural mountain?] and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. "All of this I will give You," he said, "if You will fall down and worship me." "Away from Me, Satan!" Jesus declared. "For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.'"
~Matthew 4:8-10 (Berean Study Bible/, emphasis added, parenthetical question added)

Revelation tells us that when God pours out His Wrath, the MOUNTAINS were no longer found:

And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.
~Revelation 16:20 (NASB)

Preterism and Dominionism are two heresies teaching the churches to become more resistant to the idea that Jesus should dare come back to reclaim His Vineyard in order to rule and reign. Some are having too much fun eating His grapes and drinking His wine. The very phrase "Kingdom NOW" should be a red flag to biblically literate, Truth-based Christians!

Jesus answered, My Kingdom is NOT of this world: if My Kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but NOW is My Kingdom NOT from hence.

~John 18:36 (KJV/emphasis added)

And I heard a loud voice saying in Heaven, NOW is come salvation, and strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

~Revelation 12:10 (KJV/emphasis added)

The Bible tells us that the Christian road is narrow, tight, and constrictive. There will be tribulation, persecution and for some prison and death. The scripture teaches nothing about us scaling all the "Cultural Mountains" so we can become "Kings of the Mountain." This sounds more like some childhood game gone berserk on a grand scale.

In a toxic mixture of these two heresies, some factions of Christianity are now slowly beginning to teach that Christ has fully been embodied in us. They are declaring that the transformation, which is supposed to occur at the last trumpet in a twinkling of an eye, is now fully complete. Yet, scripture clearly says "the Lord Himself" will return and that He will NOT be found in the inner rooms or desert. He warned us in advance not to believe it when many say they are the Christ.

For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.

~1 Thessalonians 4:16 (KJV)

So, if they tell you, 'There He is in the wilderness,' do not go out; or, 'Here He is in the inner rooms,' DO NOT BELIEVE IT.

~Matthew 24:26 (Berean Study Bible/emphasis added)

"And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in My name, saying, I AM CHRIST: and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them."

~Luke 21:8 (KJV/emphasis added)

As if the proliferation of these two heresies were not damaging enough, there is a third and final heresy underway that mirrors Satan's final rush at the Throne of God. It is an offshoot of these two bad doctrines. While Preterism attempts to destroy our blessed hope in Christ's return and Dominionism attempts to tell us that we don't NEED Christ to return...Mix these two toxic doctrines together and you get Lucifer's desire before the Fall:

"I will ascend to heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God. I will sit on the Mount of Assembly, in the far recesses of the North. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."

~Isaiah 14:13(b)-14 (Berean Study Bible)

This heresy will try to teach that Jesus' Second Coming is us! We will slowly begin hearing a rising clamor of false teaching that we are the Second Coming! I don't know what they will eventually call this, however, may I be so bold as to suggest a few titles for this final apostasy?

"The Second Coming Soft Landing"

or perhaps

"Second Coming-Lite"

It is the ultimate final audacity...the one that gets us booted in the backside because, in the spiritual world, it is the equivalent of "rushing at the Throne" with an attempt to unseat God Almighty and scale His Mountain. Of course, this will never happen and can never happen, but the spiritual implications will be literally earth shaking.

This is the obvious expected ending to the spirit of narcissism which has pervaded many churches today. It is the logical conclusion of the "Best Life Now" mega-church teachings. There's a very fine line between knowing who we are in Christ and thinking we are God. It's the selfsame final "line crossing" that got Lucifer booted out of Heaven!

"Nevertheless, you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit."

~Isaiah 14:15 (NASB)

Thus, Preterists, Dominionists, and false Christs will both ultimately fail for one very good reason: THEY DESIRE TO USURP THE THRONE OF GOD. We already know how that story ends. Preterism, Dominionism and the new heresy of declaring that we are God is simply man itching to grasp global power.

He will oppose and exalt himself above every so-called god or object of worship. So he will seat himself in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

~2 Thessalonians 2:4 (Berean Study Bible/underline added)

This is the "botch of Egypt" described in Deuteronomy 28:27. It will prosper for a season as all sin does.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires and will turn away their ears from the Truth and turn aside to myths.

~2 Timothy 4:3-4 (NASB)

This "tickling," according to the verse in 2 Timothy, is likened to those desirous of having their ears scratched like a dog or cat purring contentedly as they get petted. They want THE APPROVAL OF MANKIND WORLDWIDE or a mega-"pat on the head." The Greek word in this scripture is not translated best as "tickle" but more closely as a desire to have an itch scratched. When we research Bible verses for the word "itch" in Strong's Concordance, there is only one verse. It is listed among the curses in Deuteronomy for disobedience.

The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with emerods, and with the scab and with the ITCH whereof thou canst not be healed.

~ Deuteronomy 28:27 (KJV/emphasis added)

The word "Emerods" here translates to "hemorrhoids." Ouch.

Instead, God says he's going to give them an itch somewhere else. "The botch of Egypt" is located somewhere in the lower nether regions deep within the bowels. I humbly believe that the explosion of the homosexual agenda is a spiritual sin condition that mirrors this insatiable backside itch. Sadly, the next verse says:

WHEREOF THOU CANST NOT BE HEALED.

Let us repent and ask the Lord to help keep us alert through His Holy Word. These heresies can be dangerous to our spiritual health. As Christ's Bride, we must keep oil in our lamps and not get...

TICKLED TO DEATH

Because of rebellion, the Lord's people and the daily sacrifice [prayers of repentance?] were given over to it. It prospered in everything it did, and Truth was thrown to the ground.

~Daniel 8:12 (NIV/parenthetical question added)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, In Jesus/Yeshua's Holy Name, help me to focus only on You and Your Word. Let it not depart from my mouth as you instructed Joshua. I don't want my ears tickled. Teach me to love Truth. I pray for Your Holy Spirit to give me the most priceless gift, the Mind of Christ. Assist me to depart from any false teaching that does not line up with Your Holy Word. Help me to turn to You every day in repentance,

*keeping oil in my lamp and awaiting Your soon return as our Bridegroom. I pray this in the Name above all names, the King of kings, the Lord of Lord's, Yeshua/Jesus Christ.
~Amen*

Day #30 ~ Counting the Omer

Broken Vessels

Sweeten the Pot

Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

~ Psalm 68:13 (KJV)

On Day #30 of Counting the Omer, we recognize the deep biblical significance of the number 30 in scripture. The Aaronic priests were dedicated at the age of 30 to serve in the Temple. Both Jesus Christ and John the Baptist began their ministries at the age of 30. Thus, 30 signifies temple vessels that are ready to be used for the ministry work of the Lord.

There is an important concept in evaluating antiques and antiquities known as "provenance." What exactly is provenance? Provenance is the concept by which items, even those that may ordinarily be considered seemingly worthless, become a valuable treasure through association with history or a famous person. The item gains luster or value, over and above its inherent value, because of this association. Collectors want to know if an item was ever touched by a great man or woman or used in an important historical context.

Michael Flanagan, a Baltimore dealer of antique American furniture and one of the appraisers on the popular *Antiques Roadshow*, has this to say about the concept of Provenance:

"Provenance is important because objects are almost never singular, Provenance separates the special, almost sacred objects of the past from the ordinary ones."

He describes provenance as an object's "itinerary through time." For instance, pens and inkwells from the 1860's may be readily found, but the exact one used by Abraham Lincoln to sign the Emancipation Proclamation is on display in the Massachusetts Historical Society. It is of inestimable value.

The Bible has a similar concept. God has created all of us as potential vessels for use in His Kingdom. We can live our lives in a very ordinary, non-descript manner OR we can align ourselves and our lives with Christ and gain His luster.

When a potter makes jars out of clay, doesn't he have a right to use the same lump of clay to make one jar for decoration and another to throw garbage into?

~Romans 9:21 (New Living Translation)

I think Mary Magdalene is a prime example of someone who started out very ordinary but ended up with great "provenance" due to her association with Christ. Was she the Woman caught in the act of adultery? While the Bible does not specifically state this, many theologians believe this may have been Mary Magdalene. Mary may have also been the woman depicted in the Bible who anointed Jesus with precious perfume oils.

When the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, He would know who is touching Him and what kind of woman she is--that she is a sinner."

~Luke 7:39 (NIV, underline emphasis added)

He knew. She was a "crackpot," an earthen jug, discarded by society. In addition to the woman caught in adultery, other theories postulate that Mary Magdalene was the daughter of the Gentile woman who only asked Jesus for "the crumbs under the table" like a dog. Like a dog, she was content to be at the feet of the Master. Jesus had mercy on her and cast a devil out of her daughter.

She loved much because she was forgiven much. Scripture tells us that Mary Magdalene ultimately had seven demons cast out of her (Mark 16:9). I think this number was highly significant as there are Seven Deadly Sins. To be a true follower of Christ, we need to allow all of these sins to be expunged from us. Her face down posture at Jesus' feet is reminiscent of repentance prostration.

She became an "Apostle to the Apostles." She was the very first person to witness Jesus' resurrection and then commissioned by the Lord Himself to go and spread the Good News. What an incredible honor! Yet when she went to embrace Jesus, He said "*Don't cling to me.*" This verb is similar to the word "cleave" or in a more modern vernacular "Don't attach to me just yet."

"Don't cling to me," Jesus said, "for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to My God and your God.'"

~John 20:17 (NLT)

At first, this Bible story always bothered me. Why did Jesus tell Mary Magdalene not to touch Him yet in the very next scene we see Thomas sticking his hands and fingers all over Jesus?

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and look at My hands. Reach out your hand and put it into My side. Stop doubting and believe."

~John 20:27 (Berean Study Bible)

Obviously, something deeper, much deeper is going on here. Mary Magdalene is a shadow-type of the True and Faithful Church which is always depicted as a woman in Bible revelatory knowledge. She literally followed Jesus to the Grave (Cross and Tomb) and BACK (Resurrection). She remained a "loyal dog" even when everyone else, including the disciples, scattered like lost sheep. She was clearly a favored, close companion of Christ.

Now, I'm not going off into some wacky DaVinci code apostasy or blasphemy claiming she was married to Jesus. Yet, the Devil always has a seed of Truth when he spreads his blasphemous lies. I believe that Mary Magdalene was the first post-resurrection flesh and blood representative of the Bride of Christ in the New Testament. As such, she, as the very first representative of the gospel-preaching Church, was symbolically betrothed to Jesus.

As a representative of the Bride of Christ, Jesus had very good reason for saying "Don't cling to Me yet." It was not yet time for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. It is reminiscent of His comment to His mother Mary:

And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."

~John 2:4 (ESV)

He had not ascended yet, and like any good Jewish husband, He needed to first go and prepare a place for His Bride which is shown in a shadow-type through Jewish wedding customs. Thomas, on the other hand (pun intended), was a doubter. Doubters poke their hands or pierce Christ's Body (heart). This too describes the Church...the unbelieving Church. Jesus admonished Thomas that he had lost out on an important blessing due to his unbelief:

Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

~John 20:29 (Berean Study Bible)

The "wedding night" is coming soon. Soon Mary (aka the Bride of Christ) will get her fondest desire...to join with Christ in an ecstatic union. Some will be like Mary Magdalene the Bride, those invited to finally cleave in this ecstatic union. Some will be guests, heavenly witnesses to this ecstatic union. Sadly, others will be locked out of the party, weeping, wailing and gnashing their teeth.

"There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the Kingdom of God."

~Luke 13:28-29 (NIV)

Interestingly, the relic bones of Mary Magdalene are believed to reside in a small Benedictine Chapel in the South of France. They are treasured possessions there. The location you may ask? The region known as Provence. It is comprised of the same Latin Root as...

Provenance.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

~2 Corinthians 4:7 (KJV)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I want to be as close as possible to You and to take on Your character. Often my vessel resembles a cracked clay pot with old sin strongholds. Please break me and re-mold me in Your image as I confess my sins and REPENT to refocus on You. I want to be ready for the marriage supper of the Lamb, the banquet of the Bride. May it be a "spiritual wedding night" with You, Jesus, the Bridegroom when we may finally cleave to You for all eternity. Cleanse me, as you cleansed Mary Madgalene, of 7 demons, the 7 deadly sins. Thank you for Your Mercy and Love. We pray this pray in Jesus' Holy Name.

~ Amen

Day #31 ~ Counting the Omer

Pruning Hook

Right Swing

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

~2 Corinthians 10:4-5 (NKJV)

As we reach Day #31 in Counting the Omer, we are reminded that the number 31 is associated with "rightful sonship" or "proper authority" in scripture. The 31st time the name Isaac is mentioned it was when Isaac became the father to Esau and Jacob. In Joshua 12 verse 24, we see that the total number of overlords or "kings" that the Israelites conquered, to take their rightful possession of the land, is 31. Josiah, a very righteous king in the Old Testament, reigned for 31 years. We, the Church, receive our power, authority, and rightful positioning when we follow and love God's righteous ways.

Once again, we see that there really is no greater written work in the entire world than the Holy Bible. I have yet to go looking in there for an answer and come out empty. The stories are rich in symbolism and surprisingly pertinent to every aspect of our modern lives. One particularly interesting "sonship" story is found in Acts 19. For purposes of narrative illustration, I am quoting today from The Message Bible:

Some itinerant Jewish exorcists who happened to be in town at the time tried their hand at what they assumed to be Paul's "game." They pronounced the name of the Master Jesus over victims of evil spirits, saying, "I command you by the Jesus preached by Paul!" The seven sons of a certain Sceva, a Jewish high priest, were trying to do this on a man when the evil spirit talked back: "I KNOW JESUS AND I'VE HEARD OF PAUL, BUT WHO ARE YOU?" Then the possessed man went berserk--jumped the exorcists, beat them up, and tore off their clothes. Naked and bloody, they got away as best they could

~Acts 19:13-16 (The Message, emphasis added)

Now you might wonder how this is applicable to our modern-day Christian understanding in Western democratic nations. It's not every day we get to see demon-possessed people going berserk in the streets, right? Ummm...wait a minute.

Yet we go right on doing the same thing as the seven sons of Sceva. They were the sons of a Jewish High Priest. By all rights, they should have had some serious authority over this demon-possessed maniac. He should have trembled in the face of not one, not two but SEVEN SONS of an ecclesiastical powerhouse confronting him directly. They even presumed that if they recklessly threw around the name of Jesus, surely that should be the "magic charm" that would solve the problem.

Interestingly, the word "Sceva" is a Hellenized version of the Latin word "scaeva" meaning "left-handed." I believe the Biblical imagery here is one of picking a fight with one-arm tied behind your back and striking out at a problem from the wrong angle.

Today, we see many politicians and church people trying to confront deep-rooted demonic problems in their nations just like the sons of Sceva. They may be highly placed in positions of respected authority in both government and churches. However, they are not going into battle properly armed. Instead, they rely upon magic incantations about rights, civil liberties, and some poorly defined universal morality. Others may even be picking up on leftist code words of "tolerance," "fairness", and "social justice" thinking this might give them the upper-hand.

However, we don't battle against reasonable entities that want to sit down and have a spirited debate with us in the name of governmental rights. Here's what the Bible tells us we battle against:

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.

~Ephesians 6:12 (KJV)

Anarchists and tyrants are fond of saying: "Don't take a knife to a gun fight." While I don't agree with this sort of character, it *is* important to go in properly armed:

Therefore, put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

~Ephesians 6:13-17 (NIV)

So, who is your Father? If you are like the sons of Sceva, you are relying on the flesh and you will have a poor outcome.

Thus says the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD.

~ Jeremiah 17:5 (KJ 2000 Bible)

If God is your Father, then we are to confidently confront the societal demons as the rightful heir to His Authority. Pick up the right weapon, the Holy Word of God. Aim with accuracy, using sight with the plumb-line of Jesus Christ. Have a solid steady firm footing, standing on the Rock of Ages. If you fight with anything less, like the sons of Sceva, you just might end up the victim of a powerful...

LEFT HOOK.

Because you rage against me and because your insolence has reached my ears, I will put my hook in your nose and my bit in your mouth, and I will make you return by the way you came.

~Isaiah 37:29 (NIV)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, help us to be properly armed in the spiritual battles we now must face. Teach us to stand on the Holy Word of God, the Rock of Ages. Enable us to speak the Truths of scripture publicly and without fear of man. As we walk as Your ambassadors, putting on the whole armor of God, You strengthen us to withstand the wiles of the enemy in this evil day. Let us each learn to REPENT daily and confess our sins as we remove old sin patterns and any strongholds that weaken our walk with You. Let us boldly tear down the evil cultural strongholds of innocent slaughter, sanctification of perversions, secularism in our public square and betrayal of the Throne of David. We pray this in the Name above all names, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Name of Jesus Christ/Yeshua through Whom we obtain authority over all demonic influence.

~Amen

Day #32 ~ Counting the Omer

Make Hay While the Sun Shines

Midsummer Madness

I will tear down the winter house along with the summer house; the houses of ivory will also perish, and the mansions will come to an end," declares the LORD.

~ Amos 3:15 (Berean Study Bible)

Hopefully, by Day #32 of Counting the Omer we have all gained a great appreciation for the authenticity, authority, and beautiful synchronicity of scripture. The repeat significance of numbers throughout God's Holy Word seems woven masterfully as a validation subtext for those who already believe. The number 32 is written as "Lamed Beth" in Hebrew. Lamed signifies authority and "beth" is "of the house or household." Thus, the #32 signifies the authority we have through our Covenant with Christ.

In Ancient Israel, "Counting the Omer" signified the start of the barley harvest and ended with the beginning of the wheat harvest. Likewise, after Pentecost comes the "summer harvest." After the staple of the grain harvests, or as some may say, "the Bread of Life," the continued harvests were comprised of seeds and vegetables considered of lesser significance. This summer harvest included the "fruit of the vine" such as grapes, olives, dates, figs, pomegranates, and other fruits.

Does anyone remember that creepy 1997 film entitled: *I Know What You Did Last Summer*? The whole movie was premised on the spine-chilling idea that there was a malevolent force fully aware of your secret, private moves. Such is the stuff horror movies are made of. What if there was a flip side to this? What if, instead of evil spying, there was an all-knowing, all-loving, Sovereign force that watched our every move with benevolent interest? Envision a Comforter, Friend, close Brother who always wants our ultimate good. I doubt I could sell this idea to Hollywood. The plot is too improbable for them.

In our Christian walk, are we behaving like "watchmen" or "watchers?" Watchers are those who simply observe the evil going on around them or, even worse, participate and encourage it. Watchmen are those who WARN people of the evil going on around them. This is an extremely important difference. It is the difference between Life and Death.

But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

~Ezekiel 33:6 & 9 (KJV)

Do we really know God? If we identify as Christians, we might be tempted to just quickly answer: *Of course!* But...Do we REALLY know God? *Uh...what are you getting at?*

In an intimate relationship, there is really nothing more satisfying than when someone "gets us." Our best friends and faithful spouses "understand us." For the relationship to be successful, this is requirement. The same is true of God. To be in a successful covenantal relationship with Him, we need to "get Him." We need to truly KNOW WHO HE IS and what He desires.

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.

~ Jeremiah 29:13 (Berean Study Bible)

How can one do this, we may ask? Fortunately, God gave us a "Handbook" or a study manual. If we take the time to study His Word, we can get to intimately know Him. Too often we have a shallow relationship with Him not unlike a teenage crush. When we think that His Purpose is to make us feel good, send us gifts, and follow us around like an adoring puppy, then everything is good. When the relationship develops into something more than surface level, we tend to take a few steps back and think: *WHOA God...Down Boy.* This attitude borders on blasphemy. I need to recognize this in my own life as well.

Take a moment to meditate on WHO God really is. This awesome God is the God Who covenants with us:

Therefore, Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, now that He has died to redeem them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

~Hebrews 9:15 (Berean Study Bible)

Here is a comprehensive list of all the compound Biblical names of God in the Bible:

Jehovah-Ezer: The Lord our Helper

Jehovah-Jireh: The Lord our Provider

Jehovah-Mekeddeshem: The Lord Who Sanctifies

Jehovah-Nissi: The Lord our Banner Who goes before us

Jehovah-Rapha: The Lord our Healer

Jehovah-Seba'ot: The God of the Heavenly Army Hosts
Jehovah-Shalom: The Lord our Peace

But these two really sum it up:

Jehovah-Shammah: The Lord is Omniscient, Omnipresent, All- surrounding
Jehovah-Roi: The Lord our Shepherd, The God Who SEES ALL

When Moses asks Him for a Name from the burning bush He simply answers: "I Am Who I Am." In another translated version it more purely says: "I Exist." Whew. That sends pleasant chills down my spine. He is the quintessential Essence of Life. Until we get a complete revelation on just WHO it is that runs the Universe, we cannot fully grasp this stunning conundrum:

What is man that you are mindful of him?
~Hebrews 2:6(a) (Berean Study Bible)

The next time you drop to your knees, begin with the acknowledgement of just Who it is you are talking to. It is an amazing privilege to boldly speak to Him.

Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with Praise.
~Psalm 100:4(a) (KJV)

So, what did WE in America do in summers past? We, the United States of America, upheld Roe v. Wade (Planned Parenthood v. Casey, June 29th, 1992), voted on the redefinition of marriage in our Supreme Court (Obergefell v. Hodges, June 26, 2015), removed prayer and bible reading from our schools (Engel v. Vitale, June 25, 1962), (Abington School District v. Schempp, June 17th, 1963). We also betrayed Israel with The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action more commonly as the "Iran nuke deal" on July 14, 2015. Thankfully, the United States withdrew from this horrific "deal" recently under President Trump. However, many believe much damage was already done.

Thus, in summers past, we rang ALL FOUR warning bells of National Apostasy Sins!

- #1) Innocent Slaughter
- #2) Sanctification of Perversions
- #3) Removal and/or replacement of God Almighty in the public square
- #4) Betrayal of the Throne of David (Israel and, ultimately, Jesus Christ).

Obviously, the "summer house" mentioned in Amos 3:15 is not looking very pretty. What about our "winter house?" Ominously, on Jan 28, 2020 The Trump "peace plan" was announced which included a requirement for Israel to, once again, give up God-ordained land for "peace." Did we not learn anything with the failed Clinton Oslo

accords? *Just days later*, the United States got hit with a plague. Immediately following this ill-conceived “peace plan” in January 2020, transmission of the devastating COVID-19 virus was first detected in America.

God help us, do we never learn from history? When we go against God's Holy Word, we are under a curse and not a covenant. So, I don't know what you will be doing this summer, but I pray that with God's help, it will be high season for...

REPENTING.

On the appointed day, Herod donned his royal robes, sat on his throne, and addressed the people. And they began to shout, "This is the voice of a god, not a man!" Immediately, because Herod did not give glory to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

~Acts 12:21-23 (Berean Study Bible)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, what a privilege it is to speak directly with the Creator of the Universe through our covenantal relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We boldly approach Your Throne and ask for Mercy as we REPENT of these serious sins of national apostasy. Let us quickly turn away from this evil path lest, like Herod, we be struck down by an angel of the Lord. We confess that we have placed government in a position of "god-like" control to enact laws that are no longer moored to your Rock-Solid Foundation. Help us to recognize that no nation or people can continue in this rebellion and they must return to the unchangeable Moral Law outlined in Your Holy Word. As we REPENT personally, help us individually to each be a light to our fellow citizens in proclaiming that no nation in the history of mankind can survive without You as its King. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, the King above all kings, the Lord above all lords, Jesus Christ/Yeshua, our Messiah and Savior God.

~ Amen

Day #33 ~ Counting the Omer

Dark Side of the Moon

Your Days are Numbered

*See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, which are based on human tradition and the spiritual forces of the world rather than on Christ.
~ Colossians 2:8 (Berean Study Bible)*

Day #33 is a special day of Counting the Omer. In Jewish tradition, the 50 days of Omer counting is typically considered a time of semi-mourning except for Day #33. The reason why Day #33 is considered a day of "sadness interruption" has been obscured over time. However, Day #33 is traditionally recognized as the day when a horrible plague, which killed thousands of Jews, finally ceased. According to medieval history, this day (now known as Lag B'omer) became a happy day that interrupted the sadness of the Omer period for 24 hours. Lag is comprised of the Hebrew letters "lamed" and "gimel" which have a numerical gematria value of 33. Thus, the name "Lag B'omer" literally translates to the 33rd day of the Omer.

In Christian tradition, it is well accepted that Jesus was crucified at age 33. While this was, of course, a time of deep sadness for the disciples, it was also actually the greatest event in the history of mankind to stop the plague of sin. Thus, 33 signifies a dark time...a time of death or a dark tomb BUT also signifying great life potential. Think of Day #33 as the time of burying a seed in the ground before it sprouts. Think of #33 as "the worst of times yet the best of times."

Few people recognize that Mary Magdalene went to the tomb of Jesus WHILE IT WAS STILL DARK. Most people think of Jesus rising on "Easter morning"...but scripture tells us He was already risen in the darkness!

Now the first day of the week [SUNDAY] Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, WHILE IT WAS STILL DARK, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

~John 20:1 (NKJV, parenthesis and emphasis added)

Remember, it is darkest just before dawn. Thus, when Mary arrived on that Sunday morning, Jesus was already risen, and the tomb was empty. Jews mark days from sunrise to sunset not in the modern way we mark days from midnight to midnight. This would indicate that Jesus was resurrected on the Sabbath (Saturday) which would

make excellent theological sense. The Sabbath represents REST. Jesus is our SABBATH REST. The seventh day means COMPLETION. Mission accomplished. Thank you, Yeshua!

When we contemplate our own death, most people would find that "dark" and depressing. However, scripture teaches us to number our days aright.

So, teach us to number our days, that we may present a heart of wisdom.
~Psalm 90:12 (Berean Study Bible)

It further tells us that we are like a puff of smoke or a vapor.

You do not even know what will happen tomorrow! What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.
~James 4:14 (Berean Study Bible)

Repeatedly, Holy Scripture reminds us to focus on the BREVITY of this life.

*LORD, make me to know my end,
And what is the measure of my days,
That I may know how frail I am.*
~Psalm 39:4 (NKJV)

Atheists, on the other hand, focus on this life as all that there is. Statistics and polls show that the number of people claiming to be atheist keeps increasing each year. Recent books written on this topic have become best-sellers.

Now, I've always had a difficult time understanding Atheism. Even if someone is not very spiritually minded, it takes a huge amount of faith to look at the precision orderliness of the universe and make the mental leap to a conclusion of random development. It's like throwing a handful of metals and materials against the wall and then expecting to create a precision Swiss watch. No matter how many trillions of times you do it--plain common sense says it just won't happen! Maybe that's why the Bible wastes precious little breath on Atheists. In fact, there is only ONE statement in the Bible to address this idiocy:

The fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God."

It is stated twice in scripture perhaps for double emphasis on the ridiculousness of this position. (Psalm 14:1 and Psalm 53:1 ~ KJV). Apparently, from God's perspective, it's such a ludicrous thought that no further explanation is necessary. Atheists can go back to their random development theory of the Swiss precision watch. We'll see you in Infinity...or not.

In the well-known poem by Dylan Thomas, the first stanza states:

*Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.*

At the root of an Atheist's angst lies a deep anguish over the realization that, sooner or later, despite their self-proclaimed "superior intellect," they too must face Death. They are not going "gently into that good night" but instead "rage, rage against the dying of the light" kicking and screaming the whole way.

One of the most famous Atheists, Christopher Hitchens, wrote obsessively about poet Dylan Thomas. Apparently, Hitchens also experienced this "raging against the dying of the light." He ultimately got esophageal cancer, lost his voice and died a premature death in 2011. He wrote a book entitled "Mortality" which documented his cancer struggle. It is interesting that his own mortality was the most important topic foremost on his mind at the end of his life. Why, as an Atheist, would he even care about his mortality or think others would bother to read about it? Based on his own philosophy, Death should have been a welcome and pleasant rest for him.

You see, Death is the great equalizer and at the core of an Atheist's soul (although they don't believe that they actually have one), they truly think that they are smarter and better than everyone else. The Atheistic movement even arrogantly calls its members the "Brights." Since, they believe they are smarter than others, it PAINS them deeply that their own "brilliant" doctrine requires that they will ultimately cease to exist. This, in their thought process, is simply NOT FAIR. Even their clouded minds recognize that "ceasing to exist" is not a natural state for the complexity of mankind created with a body, mind and soul. Only when we understand that we are spiritual beings, do we recognize this normal longing for significance and meaning. Animals don't wake up every morning wondering if their life will make an impact on the world or where they end up in the afterlife. There is only ONE common thread found in EVERY culture ever studied through archaeology, anthropology, cave drawings, manuscripts, art, etc. and that is:

BELIEF IN A HIGHER POWER

It's pre-programmed into our DNA. When we look into the mirror of our souls and minds, we clearly see the unmistakable fingerprint of our Creator.

We find that one of the common tenets of Atheism is an obsession with Earth preservation, or as I like to ironically point out: "Creation Worship." According to many Atheists, "surplus" people are wasting precious resources from their Mother Earth. Look no further than global warming protestors, animal activists or the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) to see an ugly close-up of this unfettered anger. They save chickens and hug

trees with aggressive activism, yet the slaughter of millions of humans doesn't rate a blip on their radar screen. In fact, they *welcome* it. Scratch the surface of every Atheistic society and you will always find approval of mass genocide. This position is a logical result of Atheism. It makes perfect humanistic sense if you believe there is no God or afterlife. Since this temporal life is all that they have to look forward to, any desecration of their ONLY EXISTENCE causes uncontrolled fury!

For God's sake (oops, they mean for Pete's sake), this is their only home so don't you dare mess with it!

So, the biblical statement that reminds us: "our days are numbered" is either very ominous sounding (to the atheists) or a great and wonderful promise to God's People. God numbers the very hairs on our head.

And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.
~ Matthew 10:30(a) (Berean Study Bible)

He knows every single day of our life beforehand.

Your eyes saw my unformed body; all my days were written in Your book and ordained for me before one of them came to be.
~Psalm 139:16 (Berean Study Bible)

When we are in a dark place, we look onward to the dawning of that new eternal day. This is how the First Century Church was able to praise Him in the prison cells, in their crucifixions, in their dark times of persecution. If this life is all there is, then even scripture tells us, *we do indeed have a right to be depressed!*

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.
~1 Corinthians 15:19 (KJV, underline added)

But Praise God Yeshua has risen from the dead so that we also may experience life after death!

But now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.
~1 Corinthians 15:20 (NKJV)

Despite all their deceptive speech about organized and polite society without requiring God's Laws, Atheists actually promote that we are no different than creatures in the animal kingdom. But the one major rule of the animal kingdom is "kill or be killed." In that respect, the animal kingdom is much more honest than an Atheist's supposed

utopian God-less fantasy. Animals openly structure their lives around territorial prowess, limited resources, random mating, and survival of the fittest.

So, when we come to think of it, Atheism, which says we are no different than other creatures on the planet, is becoming fully actualized in the current state of Western Civilization. Our nations have now become fixated on a death culture, random sexual matings, no particular moral code, and a constant state of territorial combat.

It becomes quite clear that without a belief in the One True Almighty God...

we become like animals.

I said in my heart, "Concerning the condition of the sons of men, God tests them, that they may see that they themselves are like animals."

~Ecclesiastes 3:18 (NKJV)

Prayer:

Only the utterly foolish man says that You do not exist. Your Creative fingerprint is readily seen by everyone and praised by all who desire to know You. It is obvious that a Power greater and higher than puny man has designed the orderliness of the Universe. We are awestruck at the work of Your Hands. Help us to acknowledge the brevity of this fleshly existence while at the same time understanding the importance of the work You have called us to do. Remind us that this life is our wilderness testing so that we may be included in Your Epic Drama. I pray that others join me in REPENTING that too often I have failed to acknowledge the brevity of this fleshly existence. May we number our days accordingly. I pray this in the Name of Jesus Christ, the Name above all names, the King of kings and the Lord of lords under which every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is the Lord of all.

~Amen

Day #34 ~ Counting the Omer

Field Day

Lord of the Harvest

When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, "By what power, or in what NAME, have you done this?"~ Acts 4:7 (NASB, emphasis added)

In God's word the number 34 is related to the naming of a son. We find that the 34th time Abraham's name is mentioned is when he named his son Isaac (Genesis 21:3). We see this "naming of sons" concept again in Numbers 34 when the princes of Israel are named according to the portion of their land inheritance:

And ye shall take one prince of every tribe, to divide the land by inheritance. And the names of the men are these...

~Numbers 34:18-19(b) (KJV)

Since the scripture teaches us about the importance of naming names, we must do likewise. However, today we see a strange shift among some ministries, particularly among those which purport to be mission outreaches to Israel and the Jewish people, to purposefully STOP mentioning the Name of Jesus.

One recent email I received, only vaguely mentioned the coming "Messiah" along with a politically correct message that surely God won't turn anyone away, right? Another one only speaks of everyone sharing the same "God." While Jews and Christians, do indeed, call upon the same God, only ONE NAME offers Salvation.

Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: FOR THERE IS NONE OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN AMONG MEN, whereby we must be saved.

~Acts 4:10-12 (KJV/emphasis, underline added)

That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth.

~Phil 2:10 (KJV, underline added)

Jesus Christ commanded us to "GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS" (Matthew 28:19) which is The Great Commission. If we attempt to do this without mentioning His Holy Name, our message will have no spiritual power. Unless we NAME HIM, we are setting up the Jewish people for accepting a false anti-Christ message instead.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, even to the end of the age.
~Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV, underline added)

For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, of the the holy angels.

~Luke 9:26 (KJV)

But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.

~Matthew 10:33 (KJV)

If ministries continue down this treacherous path, faithful Christians need to start "naming names." Let's start by naming the Name above all names...Jesus Christ, Yeshua, The Son of God. He is the Divine Perfection who died on the Cross for our sins. I'm not ashamed to say WHO He is. He's coming again to the Mount of Olives and those who refuse to acknowledge Him will not be saved.

By this you will know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ as come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and is already in the world at this time.

~1 John 4:2-3 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

In our first devotional Book, "*River & Streams in the Desert ~ The Forty Forties of Scripture*" (WestBow Press), we opened with the following dedication. It is perfectly appropriate for our message today on Yeshua and His Glorious Name. Please allow us to share it with you again:

Yeshua

You are the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace, The Word made Flesh, The Lord of Glory, The Resurrection and the Life, the Creator of all things, our Lord and Savior, God of the whole Earth, God made manifest, The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Highest, The Lord of Hosts, Mighty in Battle, our Righteousness, the One Who is, Who was and

Who is to come, the Upholder of Everything, the Everlasting God, The Beginning, the End, The First and the Last, The Messenger of the Covenant, The Messiah, The Deliverer, The Lamb that was slain, The Bridegroom, the Good Shepherd, The Way, The Door, The Truth, The Bishop of our souls, The Branch, The Vine, The Tree of Life, The Bread of Life, The Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the Valley, The Light, The Bright and Morning Star, The Day-Spring from on High, a Refuge from the Storm, The Horn of our Salvation, The Rock of Ages, Our Fortress, Our Strength, Our Refuge, Our Redeemer, The Builder, The Foundation, The Chief Corner-Stone, Our Ransom, Our Great High Priest, Our Mediator, Our Intercessor, Our Advocate, Faithful and True, a Faithful Witness, The Holy and Just One, The Head of the Church, man and all principalities and powers, The Author and Finisher of our Faith, The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, our Shield, Lord of both the dead and the living, Lord of the Sabbath, Lord of Peace, The Glory of Thy people Israel, The Righteous Judge who shall reign forever and ever, King of the Jews, King of the Saints, King of all the nations, King over all the Earth, King of Righteousness, King of Peace, King of Glory, King crowned with many crowns, a King that reigns forever, Fairer than the children of men, A Brother born for adversity, A Friend that stays closer than a brother, A Friend that loves at all times, Your Countenance is as the Sun, You are altogether Lovely, You were Obedient, Meek, Lowly, Guileless, Tempted, Oppressed, Despised, Rejected, Betrayed, Condemned, Reviled, Scourged, Mocked, Wounded, Bruised, Stricken, Smitten, Crucified, Forsaken, You are Merciful, Faithful, Holy, undefiled, Separate, Perfect, Glorious, Mighty, Justified, Exalted, Risen and Glorified. You are my Portion, my Maker, my Husband, my Well-Beloved, my Savior, my Hope, my Brother, my Helper, my Physician, my Healer, my Refiner, my Purifier, my Lord, my Master, my Example, my Teacher, my Shepherd, my Keeper, my Feeder, my Leader, my Restorer, my Resting-place, my Meat, my Drink, my Peace, my Wisdom, my Righteousness, my Sanctification, my Redemption, Emmanuel, God with us, The Lord of lords, King of kings, the Name above all names.

My All in All

*There are many more things that You are. If all of them were written down, I suppose that not even the world itself would have space for the books that would be written.
(John 21:25)*

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, Creator of the Universe, Leader of all Nations: We humbly beseech you to hear our prayers. Our nation and, indeed, the entire planet is in a state of spiritual chaos and disorder. Trusting in You, we thank You for shaking what needs to be shaken. Start with me first, Lord. I REPENT. Lord, today help me replace my old sin patterns of my life with the Truths of Your Holy Word. As a nation, we are apostatizing rapidly and drifting far away from our Judeo-Christian heritage. In the name of "democracy" and "equality" we have instead invited in false idols and pagan gods. In the name of "choice" we have slaughtered millions of innocents. In the name of "tolerance"

we have sanctified sinful perversions. In the name of "social justice" we have squandered our children's inheritance. In the name of "fairness" we have embraced human secularism and abandoned allies. In the name of "peace" we have negotiated with evil. Now, in the Name of Jesus Christ, the Name above all Names, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, we pray that you would touch hearts throughout this nation and the world. For those who may have participated in these abominable practices, we pray that they would REPENT, BELIEVE, CONFESS and WITNESS You to others. May repentance spread in Your Bride, starting with me, Lord. May our public humbling and sincere repentance awaken us. Help us to complete the Great Commission mandate as Your Bride, igniting the passion of all mankind to choose Jesus Christ as our Lord.

~Amen

Day #35 ~ Counting the Omer

Wind Harvest Caught Red-Handed

Set the trumpet to thy mouth. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord, because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law.

~ Hosea 8:1 (KJV)

In Hebrew, the #35 is written with the letters "lamed-hey." These two Hebrew letters have a numerical gematria value of 35. Hebrew letters are rich with symbolism. If you have never taken the time to study them, I urge you to take some time to do so. "Lamed" is the tallest written Hebrew letter. As such it signifies "authority" or "highest rule." It is centrally located in the Hebrew alphabet and it is preceded by the letter "kaf" meaning "palm," "hand" or "grip." It is followed by the letter "mem" with several meanings of "waters," "people," "nations," "languages," and "tongues." Hebrew scholars say that if you put those three central letters together, you get a meaning of "King of kings" or "highest Throne of the Kingdom." Along with "lamed" the second letter of #35, "hey," means "behold." Thus, the number 35, indicates "behold the Highest, ultimate Authority over all the world!" One might say #35 indicates: "He's got the whole world in His Hand!" This is our Blessed Hope. When the world appears to have gone stark, raving mad and seems to be in total chaos and disorder, remind yourself today, on Day #35 of Counting the Omer, that #35 symbolizes our blessed HOPE and remain in His Peace.

Where do we place our hope today? Do we place it in earthly kings or the Highest Authority? Abram (prior to his ramped-up spiritual name change to Abraham) made this statement:

But Abram replied to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the LORD God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, that I will not accept even a thread, or a strap of a sandal, or anything that belongs to you, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.'
~Genesis 14:22-23 (Berean Study Bible)

He made an oath to God not to take so much as a shoelace from the "king of Sodom" so that no glory might go to that wicked government for his increase. If only we would understand this concept today as we cry for "big daddy" government to provide all of our needs while we eschew the only Good Provider, Almighty God. As Christians, we are

not to place our hope in earthly government! The best we can "hope" for is that they leave us alone unmolested and allow us to live in peace while freely serving God.

First of all then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be offered on behalf of all men, for kings and all those in authority, so that we may lead tranquil and quiet lives in all godliness and dignity.

~1 Timothy 2:1-2 (NIV, underline emphasis added)

AFTER his spiritual name upgrade from "Abram" to "Abraham," we see his hope realized in the Child of promise! Isaac means "laughter," so there is great joy when our hope in God is actualized.

In the Book of Joshua (which is the same name meaning as Yeshua), after the 35th mention of his name, this verse shows us to place our hope for tomorrow in God.

Then Joshua told the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you."

~Joshua 3:5 (Berean Study Bible)

This verse was stated just before the nation of Israel was about to cross over the Jordan River into the Promised Land after struggling in the wilderness for forty years. This is the earthly example of an eternal promise. It is a shadow-type of our final blessed hope that all Christians should have as we "cross over the River Jordan" (pass from this life) and then pass over into the Promised Land (Eternal transformation). It is God's final vindication of our faith.

When Barack Obama campaigned for President, he promised Americans "Hope and Change." Sadly, he delivered on the second part of this promise. He vowed to "fundamentally transform" America. To date, he has radically succeeded. Like a true anti-Christ figure, his words sidle up to biblical promises like a snake-in-the-garden fraud. Deep within our souls we yearn (hope) for transformation (change).

O wretched man I am! Who will deliver me out of this body of death?

~Romans 7:24 (Berean Literal Bible)

Obama plucked that heartstring with his evil counterfeit siren song. Unfortunately, instead we are now reminded of Dante's inscription on the gates of hell: *"Abandon hope all ye who enter here."* Obama told us to "hope" in ourselves. In one speech he even creepily stated: "We are the ones we seek." Shudders. We should only seek the Holy One. The only Blessed Hope with eternal value.

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

~Titus 2:13 (KJV)

Now we have his logical successors, the openly Socialist/Marxist wing of "progressives" touting the "Green New Deal." Like Roosevelt's "New Deal" overreach of government control, it promises us that if we place our hope in government, the entire world will become a utopian garden of Eden.

"Green Deals" are not all that they are touted to be. Apparently, wind farms, supposedly environmentally friendly are found to be systematically executing protected Bald Eagles by the droves. Dozens upon dozens of American Bald Eagles were found dead at wind energy sites over the past several years. Sometimes, the symbolism in these news stories is just too much to bear. In our rush into Marxist government, we may very well find our freedoms and republic are slowly becoming extinct. Much of the Green Deal is nothing more than re-vomited Marxist utopianism and Communist ideals. If we would simply pick up a history book, we would learn that government is the #1 mass serial killer in all of history. We need to stop putting our hope in a known serial killer. Governments are run by mankind. There is much wisdom in this famous quote: "Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely." What does the scripture tell us about the hearts of ALL of mankind?

But Jesus did not entrust Himself to them, for he knew all men.

~John 2:24 (Berean Study Bible)

We basically hoped that revamping the same old tired Red Marxist and Socialist ideas would result in a different outcome. These foolish arguments of "fair share," "wealth distribution," and a Utopian type existence have been tested before with abject failure as the result. They are not green but red with the blood of the many dead citizens of Marxist societies gone before it. They are as RED as sin.

In 1936, Margaret Mitchell wrote a famous novel depicting the fading glory of the Old South after the Civil War. In *Gone With the Wind* the two main characters Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler, are a combination of both villain and hero. By the end of this epic tome, the reader is rooting for them to win the battle against their selfish natures. With their dawning realization that their divided country had entered a changed era, they recognized that they would both have to REPENT of their selfishness in order to survive. Interestingly, both of these character names have the shaded meaning of the word "red" (Rhett ~ "ardent" or "fiery" and Scarlett ~ "deep red").

"Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool."

~Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV)

There is a saying about the definition of insanity. It is doing the same thing over and over again and hoping it will have a different result. America can be likened to a rocket propelled into exalted status because we were originally founded on biblical values. Similar to a rocket that has run out of gas, we will soon begin to see our engines and ascent stall. Remember the "Wile E. Coyote" cartoons of old? After he ran off the cliff, there was a moment of suspended animation before he began his rapid descent into the valley below. Any hope that we place in the "wisdom" of mankind will ultimately be unfounded:

Thus says the Lord: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord."

~ Jeremiah 17:5 (ESV)

Jesus Christ is our only sure Solid Rock Foundation

So, this is what the Lord GOD says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; the one who believes will never be shaken."

~Isaiah 28:16 (Berean Study Bible)

As we continue Counting the Omer, let us remember we must continue counting on God Almighty. Then, and only then, will our hope be restored and will we be able to accomplish the Great Commission to change the world's course off its present march towards utter destruction.

Along with the pandemic virus plague, our civil liberties appear to quickly be "Gone with the Wind." When will we wake up and realize that we need to put our faith in Christ in order to survive the "winds of change" in this New World Chaos? If not, much like the symbolic imagery of the American bald eagle, we may simply...

WIND UP GONE.

He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, it will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?

~Matthew 16:2-3 (KJV)

Prayer:

Abba Father, In Jesus' Holy Name, Help us not to fall for the same old lie from the same old snake. We may think it is a "new deal" but instead it's the same old poison apple. Once we have bit into it, it is too late. Help us to put our faith in Christ alone and not earthly utopian schemes and plans. Help us to REPENT and turn to You individually and collectively across our own nations and across the world. Help us to fulfill Your Great Commission by making disciples of others in the ways of the Lord and not in the ways of progressive socialistic democracies. We pray this prayer in the Name of the Highest Authority, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Name above all names, Yeshua/Jesus Christ of Nazareth our Lord and Savior.

~Amen

Day #36 ~ Counting the Omer

Bad Seed

No Sympathy for the Devil

in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

~ 2 Corinthians 2:11

The number 36 is an interesting ordinal in scripture study. The gematria or numbering of the Hebrew word "Chai," which means Life, is 18. Thus, 36 (18 x 2) would signify "two lives" or "two ways." Think of #36 as a sign at the crossroads. As we continue to Count the Omer, let's remember that in our temporal earthly life, we are either bondservants of Christ or servants of the devil. Which path will we choose? Occupying middle ground is only an illusion. Those who think they are "neutral" or serve only themselves are really serving the devil unaware. Even secularist lyricists such as Bob Dylan readily affirm this:

*But you're gonna have to serve somebody, yes you are
You're gonna have to serve somebody
Well, it may be the devil or it may be the Lord
But you're gonna have to serve somebody*

In the 1968 song written by the Rolling Stones, "*Sympathy for the Devil*," Mick Jagger's lyrics gave us a glimpse into the question "Who is really behind all the evil on the planet?" In an interview, Jagger cluelessly failed to understand what his own lyrics confirmed:

*"We have met the enemy and he is us."
~Cartoonist Walt Kelly (Pogo comic strip)*

It is legendarily said that when someone asked theologian G. K. Chesterton "*What is wrong with the world?*" He succinctly answered: "*I am.*"

Satan is miscalculated by most people. Many think he doesn't even exist and, among those who should know better, they falsely believe that he is easy to spot and clearly made manifest. Satan hides, as he always does, like a snake under a rock waiting to strike when the time is ripe. He further disguises himself as an angel of light. In particular, he likes to DESPOIL...to see something beautiful that God has created it, and pervert it.

As the world continues its downward slide into global chaos, Repentance is big on everyone's lips. It will get bigger as it gets darker and make no mistake, we are headed into a time of deep darkness. Correspondingly, The Final Harvest, the Great Repentance that occurs after this Judgment, will be, as the car salesman likes to say....HUUUUUGGGE.

Most people view an "anti-Christ" message as one which will be the total opposite of a Christ message. That is not, however, how the devil works. He sidles up as close as possible to the original, and then makes a carnival fun house mirror image in order to confuse people. He is the author of confusion.

Therefore, as repentance has begun to take root in the hearts of many, Satan is right there with a counterfeit deception attempting to snatch it away in the hopes that he will destroy it before it begins to flourish. Let's understand what true repentance *is* and what it *is not*.

In many so-called "orthodox" Christian churches today, "Baptism" occurs first as a baby, then "Salvation" through the church, then believing publicly acknowledged through "Confirmation," and finally Repentance as "Confession." This is exactly BACKWARDS, which is a hallmark of an anti-Christ message. It is akin to walking up a moving escalator the wrong way. You may feel like you are making great progress. With much wasted energy and effort, and by the grace of God, you might eventually get to your destination but BOY, are you going to be exhausted!

The Bible tells us the very first step into the Kingdom is Repentance. "*REPENT, for the Kingdom of God is at hand*" were the very first words of both John the Baptist and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ when they began their ministries. "Repent" in the Greek and Hebrew means: "To take mental note, to turn around." It's as if someone tapped you on the shoulder:

"Hey you!"...*Are you talking to ME?* "Yes YOU...do you see anyone else in that mirror?"

Then comes BELIEF. Most people think "believing" comes first. However, the Bible tells us that this is the correct order:

and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand. REPENT, and BELIEVE in the gospel."

~Mark 1:15 (NKJV/emphasis added)

Think of repentance as the softening up of the soil (your heart) which is necessary before planting the seed of belief. In fact, the "tap" of the Holy Spirit must occur first by Jesus knocking on the door of our hearts:

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 I will sup with him, and he with me.

~Revelation 3:20 (KJV)

Repentance is answering that door knock. Jesus taught us to keep asking, keep seeking, to be persistent. Would He do any less in saving our souls?

Jesus initiates the process by knocking. We love Him because He first loved us. The Salvation process is already there through the finished work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. We agree to consummate this covenant relationship when we respond to the knock, turn around (REPENT), accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior (BELIEVE), Acknowledge that we have sinned (CONFESS), and then be saved as we walk out and work out our Salvation (WALK/WITNESS) with fear and trembling. We must not quit, and we must overcome to the end. Scripture tells us we must not faint.

Baptism by water is a physical act of our wills announcing to the world we have died to our old self. Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a transformative fire purging of our souls to enable us to overcome and endure to the final end so that we might hear the Lord say: *"Well done thou good and faithful servant."*

Yet today we see Repentance ministries and movements encouraging the church to "repent" for the supposed sins of Captain Cook and Christopher Columbus. They are asking us to Repent for the sins of others such as the evils of colonialism, slavery, racism, etc. What these leaders fail to understand is that we, as individuals, cannot repent for others. We may call out and list the sins of our nations, as Daniel and Nehemiah did, but true repentance still requires a personal act between man and God. Political and religious leaders of nations should continue to call for a National Day of Repentance, but this would still require individual acknowledgement of our own participation and apathy in these sins.

If we are going to repent for sins that occurred in 1492, when Columbus sailed the ocean blue, we might as well repent for Adam and Eve. Man's inhumanity to man has always existed since Cain killed Abel. Once we understand WHERE God's Kingdom comes, then we will have a better understanding of where repentance springs from. Jesus Christ said: *"My Kingdom is not of this World."*

The devil is desperately trying to sidetrack an integral component of Repentance which is individual confession. It is easy "confessing" for the sins of others while ignoring the sins of ourselves! This is why daily personal repentance is so powerful. It creates the necessary mindset for humility to occur. Humility is a profound understanding of your own sin...how WIDE it is, how LONG it is, how DEEP, it is, how HIGH it is. The chasm of your sin creates an impassable gap that can only be bridged by Jesus Christ. Then, and only then, will we appreciate the meaning of this scripture.

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by Faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in Love, May be able to comprehend with all Saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the Love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

~Ephesians 3:17-21(KJV)

We cannot be filled with the "fullness of God" until we empty ourselves with the comprehension of our own individual sin and our inability to overcome it without God's intervention. Too many people think of daily Repentance as a form of self-flagellation. It is not like that at all. We cannot walk in power until we acknowledge the LOG in our own eye. THEN, God says we have the ability and power to help remove the mote in another's eye.

The Log/Mote analogy is one of perspective. Did you ever notice a mirror that states?:

Warning, objects are closer than they appear.

This is how we should feel every day when we REPENT. Then, as we speak to others, we have a keen awareness of how close we are to committing the same exact sins (a deep consciousness of our own fallen nature). Thus the "log" is the same size as the "mote" except when you hold it close to your eyeball to scrutinize it, it is *huuuge*. Your brother's own log should appear as a mote when you become aware of your own propensity to sin. We must stop looking at his sin until we address the sin in our own lives thoroughly.

Now, much of the modern apostasy-driven church takes this to an illogical and faulty conclusion. The popular "Judge Not" drivel is also incorrect. AFTER we address the log in our own eye, the scripture tells us we are then able to assist (not ignore, not tolerate, not dismiss) in removing the sin from the lives of others. This is similar to the warnings issued on a plane flight:

Please put on your own oxygen mask first, THEN you will be in a better position to assist those around you! Thus, the devil is seeking to short-circuit this growing repentance process. First, by removing the need for personal confession, then by creating a false piety of "tolerating" sins of others.

Instead of a true repentance corresponding with the man beating his breast at the altar and saying: *"God, have Mercy on me, a sinner,"* it becomes the Pharisaical mentality of *"thank God I am not like those other sinners."* (Luke 18:9-14). Our Messiah Yeshua has clearly stated that truly only one type of repentance results in our sins being forgiven.

Recently, during a discussion on repentance, someone remarked that repentance teaching "makes people feel bad about themselves." Praise God! That is the very first

step in bringing someone to repentance! Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret. The scripture goes on to say:

but worldly sorrow brings DEATH.

~2 Corinthians 7:10 (Berean Study Bible, emphasis added)

This concept is almost entirely lost today in the "tickle our ears" contest going on in most modern churches. There are entire ministries encouraging followers to state positive affirmations daily such as "I am blessed," "I am talented," "I am strong."

No! We are a MESS. We are BEGGARS. We are SINNERS. We were born children of wrath. Given the right (or wrong) set of circumstances, we will murder our own kin! This has been the way of all mankind since the Fall. God's Kingdom begins WITHIN and not WITHOUT. Until you and I each take a good, long, hard look at our ugly selves in the mirror, true repentance will not occur.

In summary: We are to confess our sins daily. His Mercies are new each morning. We must see clearly in order to remove sin from our own lives. Then, in patience and humility, help others to REPENT of their own sins. (2 Timothy 2:24-26). That's when purifying FIRE comes out of our mouths. At that point, we will clearly see the schemes of the devil and be able to run around his end game.

The Rolling Stones lyrics try to distract us as to Who, Who, Who, is the perpetrator of evil since the dawn of time.

"Pleased to meet you...Hope you guessed my name."

Yes...by now I hope you truly have guessed it. Fill in the blank:

(Your Name Here)

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes, I will give the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone, inscribed with a NEW NAME known only to the one who receives it.

~Revelation 2:17 (Berean Study Bible, emphasis added)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, teach us how to REPENT by focusing first on our own sinful natures so that we might assist others in repenting also. Help us to understand both the depth of our sin and the extravagant price paid by You to atone for our many sins. In doing so, instruct us in Your Holy Word to maintain a proper attitude of humility and holiness. Then embolden us to "go and make disciples of all nations" through Your

approved discipline of Repentance. We pray this prayer in the Name of Jesus Christ, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Name above all names whose very first words of ministry were: "REPENT for the Kingdom of God is at hand." May we answer that call with the help of Your Holy Spirit.

~Amen

Day #37 ~ Counting the Omer

Good Seed Makes a Good Crop

Yah Think?

"All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. ~John 6:37 (ESV)

Today we reach Day #37 of Counting the Omer. 37 in scripture, is the number often associated with "The Word of the Father." Note this verse that begins in John 8:37:

I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

~John 8:37-39 (KJV, underline added)

As we Count the Omer, today we contemplate: Who is YAH and what does He say? Yah is our Father and our Creator. He always was, always is and always will be. His Word endures forever. Unless our words align with HIS WORDS, our idle words will have to be accounted for on the day of judgment.

Today, we often hear people start their theological opinion with...*"Well I think"*....and then espouse a completely non-Biblical viewpoint. Sometimes, when confronted with obvious sin and apostasy in the church, we may hear: "Well, I think God understands everyone's unique situation." Where does this thinking come from, one might wonder? Where does the Bible say that certain sins are only applicable sometimes and that it all depends on the circumstances? That is called Human Relativism, not the Gospel message of REPENT (turn away from *your* way of thinking), Believe, Confess and Walk as a holy witness. It all goes back to a wrong understanding about the nature of mankind after the Fall and God's requirements for holiness.

Some people believe that God will grant a magic "free pass" to openly rebellious, self-professing "Christians" because, after all, God is so loving, kind, and merciful that surely His Word does not apply in certain situations. The Truth is: GOD HAS ALREADY GIVEN EVERYONE A FREE PASS. His Name is Jesus Christ. Once you rip up that Ticket, there isn't another one coming down the road when you continue to live in

unrepentant rebellion. When He sets you free, you are free indeed, not free to continue in sinning but free to bring Him glory.

If we deliberately go on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, no further sacrifice for sins remains, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and raging fire that will consume all adversaries.

~Hebrews 10:26-27 (Berean Study Bible)

Furthermore, the scripture goes on to say that there will actually be LESS MERCY for unrepentant, rebellious sinners under the New Covenant!

He that despised Moses' Law died WITHOUT MERCY under two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?

~Hebrews 10:28-29 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

This entire passage of scripture, when taken in context, clearly states that it will be *much worse* for those who spit on the gift of God's Grace by knowingly and deliberately sinning after receiving Grace through the Blood of Christ, than those who broke the Law! While breaking the Law resulted in temporal death, deliberately, continually, and presumptively sinning under God's Grace results in ETERNAL DEATH! When was the last time we heard this message preached? I REPENT for any time I haven't addressed this strongly enough!

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from THE GREAT TRANSGRESSION.

~Psalm 19:13 (KJV, emphasis added)

pre·sump·tu·ous

/prəˈzəm(p)(t)ʃ(ə)əs/

adjective: **presumptuous**

(of a person or their behavior) failing to observe the limits of what is permitted or appropriate.

~*Google Online Dictionary*

Despite relatively new hyper-grace theological drivel, scripture teaches us that some sins are GREAT transgression. Again, these are *deliberate* sins that *presume* upon God's grace.

There is a book out on the market entitled: *Good or God?* In it, the author raises the question of whether every activity we are involved with is what we should be doing. Perhaps this is a good moral question to raise, except that I really have a problem with

the title of the book. It is an obvious non-sequitur, the ultimate oxymoronic question. In fact, when pondered, it is really rather senseless. It's the equivalent of asking: "*Do you prefer water or H2O? Jesus or Christ?*" God IS Good. There should be no "or" between the word Good and God. If there is no One True God in you, then what you are doing IS NOT GOOD. While, we will never know His ways completely, just as a sergeant, corporal or infantryman doesn't always know what the Commander-in-Chief is planning, we go along with whatever assignment He hands down to us. Then, and only then, can it be deemed good.

"Why do you call Me good?" Jesus replied. "No one is good except God alone.
~Luke 18:19 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

Accordingly, certain theological circles have a recurring theme about the so-called "goodwill" of mankind. This is a critically important concept for us to understand. If we believe that fallen mankind is basically "good," then we are stating that mankind is capable of doing good *without God*. This is not a new concept. It is, in fact, the seed of apostasy found in ALL human secularist thought and atheistic thought.

"I think therefore I am" is the famous philosophical quote by Rene Descartes (whose name, by the way, loosely means "red discharge"). Apostasy and Marxism are the result of his red discharge teachings. Roman government is slowly becoming Socialist/Marxist and Roman religion is slowly heading for the Great Apostasy unless there is radical REPENTANCE! It all stems from this pernicious philosophical thought process. Instead scripture tells us:

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all wither like a leaf, and our iniquities carry us away like the wind.
~Isaiah 64:6 (Berean Study Bible)

The Hebrew word for "filthy rags" is "*iddah beged*" which descriptively connotes "bloody menstrual cloth." A red discharge indeed. If we study up on Descartes' philosophy known as "Cartesian thought," we will find it is based on the so-called "logical analysis" and power of man's reasoning. While the scripture invites us to "reason," we are to reason ONLY WITH GOD'S TRUTH. Without God's ways (Light), we are nothing but an imploding star...a big black hole that will continue to fall inward. We become a Narcissus contemplating our image or a Pagan involved in demonic navel gazing.

Interestingly the Greek word for "Navel-Gazing" is "omphaloskepsis." This word comes from the Greek words "om" (a repetitive mantra), "phalos," (which means phallus, a symbol of man's power), and "skepsis" (an act of looking or examination). We can have another entire article on just the imagery of this alone...mankind constantly focused on what is in his own pants or his own power.

This is also where we also get the word *skeptic* and *skepticism*. It has demonic roots meaning NO FAITH. I find this scripture one of the most unsettling verses in the entire Bible:

Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?
~Luke 18:8(b) (KJV)

Despite what many in the pulpit prattle on about the "goodwill of mankind," there is no such thing! Thus, we get foolish navel-gazing statements such as "atheists have goodwill." Not only are atheists "not good," neither is ANYONE good without Christ. Including me and you.

There is a recent excellent book entitled: *Apostate ~ The Men who Destroyed the Christian West*. While we may not agree with every single one of the author's analyses, the overall point of the book is well taken. "Navel-gazing" men have steered the ship *towards* apostasy and *away* from God. "Doctors of the Church" have "doctored up" the faith. We need to be restored by the Great Physician.

Without being rude, just honest, I should not care what you "think." Similarly, you should not care what I "think." As in Shakespeare's famous query, there is only one thing we should ask: *"To be or not to be, that is the question."* We need to "be" in Christ, The Word. *Then, and only then*, what we have to say has any GOOD in it. Any other position results in the "transgenderism" of sound doctrine, making no distinction between what God says and what humans may say. It attempts to validate a viewpoint simply because you believe it to be so. Furthermore, this thought process promotes the philosophy that no one can hold a straight-forward Biblical opinion because it is too "extreme." There is no left/right, up/down, right/wrong until this concept continues to extend perniciously in attempting to erase the distinction between Christ and His Bride. What remains is only some mushy middle depending on which way a man looks at it.

There is another name for this type of thinking and it is called "Human Secularism." It starts out by thinking that we are so bright that we have a better idea than what the Bible clearly states. Like the "Doctors of the Church" who have "doctored up" the Faith, we keep meditating on our own fallible thinking. We keep turning it around in our hand, admiring it...(My Preciousssssss)...we become so enamored of it we can't let it go no matter how many people tell us that others have fallen from the Heavens by this very position. We must pray daily that we do not fall prey to this type of reasoning. We must always maintain a heart that "gives way" to the Holy Spirit and the Holy Word of God.

So, why is this so incredibly important? Because when we believe in the false goodness of mankind, we look to ourselves to fix our problems. As Obama once stated: *"We are the ones we seek."* Shudders! I cannot think of a creepier statement. Only God can

save us. Instead of Cartesian thought of "*I think, therefore I am,*" we should only wonder what YAH THINKS and this is found in His Holy Word. Let's meditate on this:

He is "I AM", therefore we think.

Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

~Isaiah 55:7 (KJV)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father: Help us to be truthful and honest in all that we do and say. The time has come and is now here that all who truly worship You must worship You in spirit and in Truth, for these are the kind of worshipers You seek. In times past, You may have graciously overlooked our ignorance, but now You call everyone, everywhere to REPENT. You are amassing an army of followers who love You deeply and You told us that those who love You OBEY You. There is no more time left for traitors among Your ranks. They will be exposed and rejected as You purify Your Bride. Pour out Your Holy Spirit "megas dunamis" as we fight this final worldwide battle of good against evil. Fill us with courage as You have already promised us victory and foretold us of the ultimate outcome! Comfort us with the fact that You are with us always, even unto the End of the Age. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, the Name that holds ALL authority in Heaven and on Earth, Yeshua the Christ, our great God and Savior, our Messiah, our Blessed Hope.

~Amen

Day #38 ~ Counting the Omer

Up in Smoke Bonfire of the Vanities

Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to escalating wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.

~Romans 6:19(b) (Berean Study Bible)

On Day #38 of Counting the Omer, we will examine the difference between being a slave and becoming a bondservant. At first glance these two states may appear to be quite similar. Neither is permitted to simply follow their own way. Neither is "free" in the sense of no restrictions on their behavior. Both do the bidding of their master. However, everyone would agree that slavery is not desirable while many people willingly place themselves in the position of a bondservant. We can see this concept when people engage in an apprenticeship position, an educational program and/or military service. They *willingly* place themselves into an arrangement that limits and restricts their ability to act independently.

In Hebrew, the number 38 is expressed by the letters "Lamed" and "Chet." They are derived from a word meaning which connotes: "freshness, green, new." When we are bondservants of Christ, we attach ourselves to Him willingly and then our lives are transformed, and we are enabled to walk in the newness of life.

So, what specifically does God want when we willingly conscript ourselves into His Army? We certainly do not want to make the "Cain mistake" and have God declare our service was unsatisfactory. It would be disgraceful to get court-martialed and then exiled by God Almighty. What does the Bible say? Scripture says we are supposed to bring God "Fire Gifts."

"Offer Fire-Gifts to God."

~Leviticus 23:8 (The Message)

Just what are "Fire-Gifts?" After much research and prayer, I compiled this list from scripture:

Thanking
Praising
Prayers

Obedience
Fasting (Food and/or Activities in our life)
Worshipping (Music/Singing)
Adoring
Glorifying
Magnifying
Meditating on the Word
Giving of our unique God-given treasure and talents.

I foolishly used to think God must be One Big Egomaniac. Why does he need all this attention and "stroking?" Then I finally got a revelation: As with everything God asks us to do, it will ultimately benefit us if we would just stop being so selfish and withholding. When we meditate on how awesome, majestic, magnificent, all-powerful, amazing, wonderful, loving God is--our problems seem puny in comparison!

God spells this out for us in another scripture. He tells us exactly what He wants from us. For today's Day #38 of "Counting the Omer," The Message version again states this in the most easily understandable way:

"So, here's what I want... Take your every day, ordinary life--and place it before God as an offering."

~Romans 12:1-2 (The Message Bible)

God continually has His own "Cosmic Drama" playing out on the World stage. I am constantly amazed at how typecast we all are. Just as history tends to repeat itself, so do certain character types. Are we the black sheep of the family? The wild and crazy one? Maybe sadly, we are playing the part of the village idiot.

The Bible was written partly to display the many colorful stories and characters that would help us to discern the individual roles God has called us to. All of us can relate to the characters in the Bible who, as messy "screw ups," persevered over their character flaws and were able to be greatly used by God. If evil people can be stubborn and resolute in their wickedness, how much *more so*, should we, as God's people, be steadfast and resolute in purity perseverance?

The more we journey onward with God, the more we should realize that we add nothing to this drama, just as an actor does not change the screenplay. God scripted it all. We simply bring ourselves as empty and willing vessels to the audition. Even our vessels are only useful when they are poured out and broken. Perhaps that is where the theatrical slang "break a leg" comes from. In fact, when we empty ourselves, THAT is when God's power becomes the most obvious in us:

But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest on me.

~2 Corinthians 12:9 (Berean Study Bible)

Jacob is one such example. His encounter with the Angel is widely understood, through theological exegesis, to have been an example of a "Theophany" or a symbolic encounter with Christ. Jacob's very name means: "schemer, cheater; one who grabs from behind"--Not exactly an auspicious beginning!

Now why would the Bible give us a story about WRESTLING WITH CHRIST? One would automatically assume this would be a BAD thing, right? I mean, can you imagine this scenario?

"Brace yourself Jesus...I'm comin' for ya."

The ending of this drama shows that Jacob had Jesus (aka God Almighty!) in some sort of a spiritual wrestling hold at one point.

Then He [Christ manifested in a Theophany] said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let You go unless you bless me." And He [Christ] said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed."

~Genesis 32: 26-28 (ESV, parenthetical comments added)

Imagine the confidence to proclaim to God: I WON'T LET YOU GO UNTIL YOU BLESS ME! Wow...how bold of a performance is that? It appears, by this Biblical account, that Jesus was pleased by Jacob's wrestling. It resulted in his name of "schemer" being changed to "Israel" or "One who prevails with God." He won the ultimate academy award.

While we cannot presume to know the final umpire call for humanity, scripture indicates there will be a group of people that go through the fire but all of their earthly works are burned up and they lose their reward.

Each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

~1 Corinthians 3:13-15 (NKJV)

But, the "Kingdom of God" is a different concept altogether. Clearly, there is a group of people who will RULE alongside with God. These people must be overcomers. They cannot be wishy-washy, insipid, non-passionate quitters.

If we endure, we will also reign with Him.
~2 Timothy 2:12(a) (Berean Study Bible)

Jacob PREVAILED and God changed his name to Israel (a shadow picture of those who become God's Elect). We must triumph, we must be overcomers. God wants us to "wrestle" with Him! In other words, we need to wrap our minds around His Word, constantly challenging ourselves (and yes, even challenging Him in a good way just as the Queen of Sheba came to Solomon and questioned him) because He is not afraid to answer us when we have questions.

Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions.
~1 Kings 10:1 (NKJV, underline emphasis added)

Solomon is a "shadow and type" of Christ and the Queen of Sheba symbolizes The Church. I believe God encourages us to bring our doubts, questions, and fears to Him. Too many times we are afraid to "wrestle" with the big questions thinking that deep in our hearts, maybe we will not like His answers or, we foolishly believe God won't measure up.

The Hebrew word for "wrestle" in Strong's Concordance means: "grappled, get dusty, pound small, distill." We become *distilled* when we wrestle w/ God. Distilled means CONCENTRATED PURITY! God wants us to "wrestle" with Him (have familiar relations with Him) to get stirred up mentally and aroused in our spirits until we have our minds meditating on His insights. The scripture also mentions wrestling until the "dawn" as when new insights "dawn on us." Jacob wrestled until the "dawn"--until he saw the Light! Don't let go of God until He blesses you! Let Him touch the "hollow of your thigh" which also means "striking a nerve" to sensitize you.

Interestingly alabaster, when smashed, turns into a powdery dust. Our lives are to be like Mary Magdalene's alabaster jar. We need to be smashed into dust and ashes (repentant) before we can release the sweet perfume aroma of Christ! If you want to be a bondservant for the Almighty, prepare for a "dust up"...some spiritual warfare.

So, what mission or role has God called you to play in His Grand Drama? Are you a Mary Magdalene...a devoted, loyal, faithful friend of Christ? Are you a Peter...an initial failure who, by his repentance confession, went on to become the symbolic foundation of the penitent and persevering Christian faith?

Perhaps you are Joseph...shepherding the Church (Mary) in her time of travail. Don't grudgingly serve your Master. Do your part with true passion, using the Passion of Christ as your role model!

Whatever role God has called you to, do it with all of your might. God only wants one thing from you in this spiritual battle, He wants you to give yourself willingly...give your Fire-Gifts. Bring Him your best sacrificial offering and then...

FIRE AWAY!

Prayer:

Heavenly Father: We have no excuse for apathy and inaction when all around us we see the secular world expending great enthusiasm and energy on evil pursuits. The pursuit of Your Holiness should consume us with the passion that was evident in Christ's Passion. As followers of Yeshua, help us to become willing to sacrifice our lives to Your worthy cause. You are the "Pearl of great price." Once we find You and Your Kingdom, all other worldly pursuits fade and seem of little value in the Light of Your Glorious and Eternal rewards and Kingdom. As we enter a time of testing, help us not to fail the audition. May we be so blessed as to be selected for a role in Your Epic Drama and may we pour out a performance that is worthy of applause from the Hebrews 11 council of witnesses who performed before us. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, the Hero of this earthly drama, Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

~Amen

Day #39 ~ Counting the Omer

Soil Purification

Healing the Land

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and TURN FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will HEAL THEIR LAND.

~2 Chronicles 7:14 (KJV, emphasis added)

In his paper on the significance of the number 39 in Scripture, Dr. Hillel ben David writes this:

"The significance of thirty-nine is that it is associated with purification from an undesirable state and the emergence of a new entity."

While we cannot cover in depth the many interesting correlations for "39" in the Bible, these few points stood out:

40 lashes were the maximum punishment in Moses' Law because anything more was considered to be degrading. This concept is evidenced again in the New Testament when Paul received only 39 stripes:

"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one."

~2 Corinthians 11:24 (KJV)

Another interesting scriptural observation uncovered was that Jesus hung on the cross from the 3rd hour to the 9th hour (3-9).

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

~Galatians 3:13 (KJV)

Thus, in scripture, 39 indicates a CURSED state but one in transition towards purification.

The Book of Daniel (Daniel 9) shows us the need to REPENT both personally and corporately as a nation. While we at The National Day of Repentance have seen some

encouraging signs of individual repentance, there still seems to be a limited recognition of our need for National Corporate repentance and the incredible significance thereof.

In a 2018 speech at the UN by President Trump, one could not help but shudder to think about our inability to accurately assess ourselves as a nation. During his U.N. speech, President Trump specifically called out three "rogue nations": North Korea, Syria and Iran. Allow me to juxtapose President Trump's words against actual, recent American news articles.

On North Korea:

"It is responsible for the starvation deaths of millions of [its own citizens]."

Oregon Senate Passes Bill to Allow Euthanasia by Starvation

On Syria:

"the actions of the criminal regime [of Syria/Assaad] including the use of chemical weapons against his [their] own citizens, even innocent children, shock the conscience of every decent person."

Chemical Abortions on the Rise in U.S.

On Iraq:

"reckless regime - one who speaks openly of mass murder."

Planned Parenthood Reports Banner Year

And "has turned a wealthy country into an economically depleted rogue state"

Trump Raises Debt Ceiling as National Debt Soars to \$20 Trillion

"whose chief exports are violence, bloodshed and chaos"

Planned Parenthood Kills 1 Million Babies in Global Outreach

"the longest suffering victims...are in fact its own people."

U.S. Abortion Clock Reaches 62 Million

America appears to have a plank in its collective eye that is blocking the ability to REPENT! In scripture Peter denied Christ 3 times. In the previous two years before his U.N. speech, the GOP failed 3 times to defund Planned Parenthood when they had ALL

the power to do so...three God-given opportunities to REPENT. Keep in mind all three of these refusals to defund Planned Parenthood occurred *after* the gruesome videos exposing the utter brutality, illegality, and evil slaughter of innocents beyond the moral comprehension of any sense of decency. Those videos made the Nazis look like amateurs in the proliferation of evil. Yet this is what the GOP did when it had the chance to REPENT by defunding Planned Parenthood:

1) The Republicans didn't want to ruin their chances in the next election cycle:

GOP Ryan says "politically unrealistic" to defund Planned Parenthood

2) The Republicans didn't want to risk upsetting voters with a government shutdown during budget time:

Planned Parenthood Funded in Budget Deal

3) Republican Senator John McCain kills defund Obamacare bill with deciding vote:

Senate Gasps Aloud as McCain Votes "No" on Defunding Obamacare

Like Peter blustering and boasting that he would never desert Christ, our talk is cheap. Even after Peter repented, Jesus told Peter he would be bound up by others and forced to go with them.

Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go.

~ John 21:18 (NASB)

Has America repented since these gruesome undercover videos became public? Many of those who identify as "Christian" have lost interest in these horrifying Planned Parenthood videos and are not even following the case anymore. Most have gone back to their TV shows and banal activities which bear no fruit for the Kingdom. Few realize that Christian warrior David Daleiden was convicted in a civil trial on November 16th, 2019. He was ordered to pay \$870,000 in punitive damages to Planned Parenthood. Now he faces CRIMINAL CHARGES! On February 21st, 2020, he was arraigned on nine felony counts. If David Daleiden goes to prison, WE may soon join him. It is time to WAKE UP, CHURCH! Thankfully, Jesus told us this would also give us a great opportunity for witness and testimony to the world!

But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.
~Luke 21: 12-13 (NKJV, underline emphasis added)

After WWII, the Nuremberg Trials publicly tried and convicted those who participated in brutality against humanity. Today, we would fine and imprison those who photographed and exposed Hitler's Death Camps!

Furthermore, I saw under the sun that in the place of judgment there is wickedness, and in the place of righteousness there is wickedness.
~Ecclesiastes 3:16 (NASB)

Try to wrap your brain around this chilling statistic: Israel now aborts 9% of all pregnancies in their country. Abortion has been legal in Israel since 1977. The Israeli government PAYS for these publicly funded abortions. At the current rate of abortions in Israel, how long before the State of Israel may kill more Jews than the Nazis did? Shudders!

Sadly, in April 2020, President Trump uttered The Harbinger curse of Isaiah 9:10. Instead of calling for National Repentance in light of the COVID-19 plague, he instead vowed "we will rebuild" and we will be "just as strong" and "stronger than before." Here's the headline:

Trump Vows "We Will Rebuild"

The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars.
~Isaiah 9:10 (KJV)

And so, unless we REPENT, we will soon walk the pathway of national sorrows. Those who remain clueless to the depth of their own sin both personally and nationally, those with a false sense of self-righteousness, will face destruction.

In the Old Testament, the prophet Nathan came to King David and told him a story about a rich man who kills someone else's beloved sheep. It was a tragic story about the evil of an extremely blessed person who slaughtered innocent life while trying to selfishly preserve his own. Nathan was figuratively looking for an answer to this question:

What should be done with such a man?

King David was furious. Tell me: who this man is so that he can be punished! Like King

David, we may want to see ISIS, North Korea, and Iran bombed into smithereens. We are self-righteously indignant about radical regimes. We want JUSTICE right now! They must be made to PAY!

King David said to Nathan,

"As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this deserves to die! Because he has done this thing and has shown no pity, he must pay for the lamb four times over!"
~2 Samuel 12:5(a)-6 (Berean Study Bible)

The next words of the prophet must have been a bone-chilling revelation to David:

YOU ARE THAT MAN!

Let us recognize this fact: In terms of numbers and the defenselessness and helplessness of our victims, democracies have slaughtered more innocents than Nazis, ISIS and rogue regimes combined. So, let's remove the plank from our own eye so we can see clearly to assist the rest of the world.

"You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."
~Matthew 7:5 (NASB)

Let's repent of our own horrific national sins, THEN and only then will we have the moral authority to confront evil worldwide. We haven't had an officially declared National Day of Repentance in the United States since 1918, over 100 years ago! We must REPENT and return to a nation ruled by God Almighty under His eternal laws.

I will end with another quote of President Trump's U.N. speech:

"it is time for the entire world to join us in demanding that [evil governments and leaders] end [the] pursuit of death and destruction."

Amen...so be it. So be it.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, Almighty God, Maker of Heaven and Earth, Creator and Sustainer of Life, we pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ as we come to You confessing our sins and the sins of our family and our nation. Like Daniel, we confess that we have failed You and have failed in our witness to other people. We are a divided nation instead of one united under Your Providence. We are grieved and we ask You to forgive our sins. Help us repent and change our ways, so that the nation in which we live can begin to live out Your blessed plan for us. Restore to us the years that the

locusts have eaten. We bow before You in shame and penitence. We confess our despicable sin of the slaughter of innocents. We have shed innocent blood throughout our country and we have encouraged other nations to follow us into this horrific evil. We have sacrificed our helpless and defenseless children on the altar of the false god of Molech now known as Human Secularism. Please lift the veil of deception that blinds our eyes to the atrocity of this sin. Help us to embrace Your wisdom and not man's "wisdom." Open our eyes to the suffering that we have caused and give us a contrite, renewed heart. We pray that You "set the captives free" and release us and our children from the bondage of this depraved iniquity. Please heal our hearts and souls by cleansing our land of this wicked sin. Cleanse our immoral blood-shedding of innocents through the shedding of Your innocent Blood on the Cross. We pray this in the Name above all names, the only Name under Heaven and Earth by which men might be saved, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, Jesus Christ.

~Amen

Day #40 ~ Counting the Omer

In the Bull Rushes

Hurry Up and Die

*Why do the nations rage,
And the people plot a vain thing?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together,
Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,
"Let us break Their bonds in pieces
And cast away Their cords from us."
He who sits in the heavens shall laugh;
The Lord shall hold them in derision.*

~Psalm 2:1-4

In our previous devotional book, *River & Streams in the Desert ~ The Forty Forties of Scripture* (A Repentance Devotional by Westbow Press), it stated:

"I don't know about you, but this devotional study has given me a new and deep understanding of what "40" really symbolizes in scripture. It's almost as if, in the spiritual world, once we reach the "40" mark it's..."GAME ON!"

I think most people, even those who would not consider themselves biblical scholars, would easily recognize that "40" represents a wilderness experience in the scriptures. There were 40 days and 40 nights of raining Judgment in Noah's day. There were 40 years of the Israelites trekking through the desert. Jesus fasted for 40 days in the wilderness to build up His resistance to the devil's temptations. At the end of any 40 period, there is the completion of testing and trial. It is when a new day dawns. Those who endure, persevere, and overcome are rewarded with God's fulfilled promises and the Promised Land.

So why do most people hate the desert experience? For those of us experiencing a time of trial, a testing period, we usually cannot wait to get to the end of it. We want to "rush" through God's process of crucifying the carnal flesh. Instead we need to view it as God sees it: a time of purification, a time of refinement. He is working on His Master Peace.

No discipline seems enjoyable at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it yields a harvest of righteousness and peace to those who have been trained by it.

~Hebrews 12:11 (Berean Study Bible)

Since the Fall, all of creation and mankind have been in an inexorable march towards a state of decline. God created a perfect world...harmony and order out of the void. It seems mankind is intent on rushing headlong back into the void. We can see this slow deterioration even in our own bodies as we age. However, there is a marked difference in scripture between "hurrying" and "rushing."

I studied out these two words in the Bible: "Hurry" and "Rush." At first glance, you might expect to find that the meanings are relatively similar. Interestingly, "hurry" in the Bible is more often associated with Godly pursuits while "rush" connotes evil folly. For example, the Bible tells us to "hurry" in the following examples:

Hurry out of Sodom and Gomorrah (sinful state).

~Genesis 19:22

Hurry out of Egypt (bondage/servitude/reliance on man's government).

~Exodus 12:33

Hurry to sacrifice pleasing offerings to God (prayer, service, worship).

~Genesis 18:7; 1 Samuel 9:12

Hurry to confront evil (Goliaths in your life).

~1 Samuel 17:48

Hurry to give God's message to STOP OPPOSING Him (prophetic message).

~2 Chronicles 35:21

Hurry to a place of shelter under God's protection.

~Psalm 55:8

Hurry away from an evil law/decreed (so appropriate today in America).

~Matthew 2:13

Hurry God! We should have a burning desire for God's help to come.

~Psalm 71:12

My personal favorite:

Hurry to the assembly of atonement (Corporate REPENTANCE!).

~Numbers 16:46

...and God saved the best for last:

Hurry to reach the Day of Pentecost (fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit).

~Acts 20:16

"Rush" on the other hand is found in verses like this:

*This are six things the Lord hates,
Seven that are detestable to him:
Haughty eyes,
A lying tongue,
Hands that shed innocent blood,
A heart that devises wicked schemes,
Feet that are quick to RUSH into evil.
A false witness who pours our lies
And a person who stirs up conflict in the community.*

~ Proverbs 6:16-19 (NIV, emphasis added)

Here's another verse about "rushing." It refers to pigs RUSHING headlong into destruction:

He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, RUSHED down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

~Mark 5:13 (NIV, emphasis added)

I believe Jesus told Judas to do his "dirty work" *quickly* because He knew it HAD to happen. This release of evil must precede a God-ordained Masterful work of Redemption. God does not tempt anyone. They are tempted by their own evil inclinations. God simply allows them the free will to rush into evil or hurry to do God's work. If someone chooses evil "rushing," God will still use it for His Sovereign Plan to bring His Glory. The only question is: will we rush and end up like Judas or hurry to do God's will?

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone.

~James 1:13 (Berean Study Bible)

Judas was already tempted by his own desires to make this evil choice. God was simply, in effect, saying: "now get it over with so we can see the Glory of God despite your evil plan."

And when Judas had taken the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Then Jesus said to Judas, "What you are about to do, do quickly."

~John 13:27 (Berean Study Bible, underline added)

With the current slate of spiritual leaders and political candidates worldwide that seem more Socialist and Marxist with each passing day, we can say like Christ said to Judas: "Go ahead and rush to do what you are already hell-bent on doing." Like pigs to their own slaughter, they go ahead and follow their evil inclinations of betrayal. THEN we will see the Glory of God.

The Christian Church has precious little time to waste. Drop the mega-building programs, forget the vain-glorious spotlight and arm your battle stations. As gun rights are beginning to be removed from the public square, we instead are to pick up the spiritual warfare weapon that is closest to us. If you preach, then use the pulpit. If you are a gifted writer, then sound the alarm by social media. If you are financially able, donate to those on the front lines. Anyone can take some time to pray outside of a Planned Parenthood clinic.

So, to you and me and the entire Church...HURRY UP AND DIE ALREADY!

- ~ Hurry up and die to selfishness
- ~ Hurry up and die to cheap grace preaching
- ~ Hurry up and die to false prosperity preaching
- ~ Hurry up and die to watered down, man-pleasing religion
- ~ Hurry up and die to heresy
- ~ Hurry up and die to growing apostasy

THERE IS MUCH WORK TO DO AND MORE TO COME.

Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest."

~Matthew 9:37-38 (Berean Study Bible)

For the evil-minded politicians and wicked power-brokers who are intent on redefining democratic nations into Marxist States by removing our Judeo-Christian Heritage:

WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO DO...DO IT QUICKLY.

Then we will see the Glory of God made manifest.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father: Instill a sense of urgency in us so that we hurry to do your will. May we hurry away from sin, hurry away from placing our trust in politicians, hurry away from

the sinful culture, hurry to offer You pleasing sacrifices, hurry to confront evil, hurry to give Your message to a lost and dying world, hurry to warn people of Your coming Judgment, hurry to find shelter under Your Wing, hurry away from evil decrees, hurry to call upon the Name of the Lord for help, hurry to REPENT and hurry to be baptized with a fresh filling of Your Holy Spirit. Come Lord Jesus, come. Hurry to help us! We pray in the Name of Yeshua, our great God and Savior.

~Amen

Day #41 ~ Counting the Omer

Early Frost

Global Warming or Snow Job?

Be silent before Me, O islands, and let the peoples renew their strength. Let them come forward and testify; let us together draw near for judgment.

~Isaiah 41:1 (Berean Study Bible)

In quite a few verses and occurrences, the number 41 signifies a time period of "separation." This separation is a benefit for the righteous and a terrible reality for those who continue to pursue evil. Jesus separates the wheat from the chaff, the sheep from the goats, the righteous from the wicked. There is only one scripture verse found in the entire Bible with both chapter and verse containing the number 41. In it we see Pharaoh separate out Joseph for special exaltation.

Pharaoh also told Joseph, "I hereby place you over all the land of Egypt."

~Genesis 41:41 (Berean Study Bible)

Joseph's painful separation from his family began the journey towards his exalted reign. Egypt symbolizes the sinful culture around us from which we must ultimately exit. Joseph's rule is a shadow and type of Christ's Millennial reign which occurs on planet Earth first before the Heavenly final Kingdom.

Another example of "pre-advent" separation is found in Matthew 25...and yes, you guessed it, starting in verse number 41!

41 "Then He will say to those on his left, 'Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave Me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, I was naked and you did not clothe Me, I was sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' (Berean Study Bible)

Therefore, before Christ's final arrival or "advent" to snatch away His People to the Promised Land (signified by the #42...stay tuned for the next devotional chapter!) there MUST be a separation (or exodus) first.

Just as in an earthly marriage, the bride and groom must separate from their old lives before they become one. Before we can join our Bridegroom Christ, we must separate

from our former way of living. The closer we get to His return, the more we will feel the pull of this separation.

In today's devotional, we are advising God's people to separate from nonspiritual secular "wisdom." We must not fall under the powerful delusions that continue to come upon the planet in the form of "scientific" misinformation. We must remember that all true science brings glory to God and confirms His Holy Word. Therefore, if there is any counterfeit teaching which is counter-intuitive to God's very first command to "be fruitful and multiply," we must immediately recognize it as a ploy of Satan.

In Shakespeare's play *Romeo & Juliet*, Juliet argues *that "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."* Juliet was stating that the name of something does not intrinsically change the thing itself. It still has the essence of what it truly is. I think this can be applied to the agenda of "global warming," which has now morphed into the more generic-sounding name of "climate change." This name change came about after several brutal winters of Arctic Polar Vortexes which made the "warming" name seem all the more ridiculous. This ideology initially smells so sweet. What right-minded person wants to desecrate the planet with pollution?

However, is this really the true agenda of "Climate Change" activists? I submit to you that Climate Change is the latest ultimate "Weapon of Mass Destruction" devised by Satan. In history, it has never been geo-politically acceptable to simply blatantly state an intention to wipe out entire segments of the population through mass genocide. Therefore, it has always been necessary for the devil to craftily devise a "solution" beforehand that sounds and smells sweet.

Darwin's theories, published in 1859, spawned the Survival of the Fittest philosophy which gave impetus to a whole host of new evil intentions and abominations. Eugenics, for instance, took root immediately following Darwin's published theories in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States in the 1860s-1870s. Coincidence? I think not. Margaret Sanger, the mother of Planned Parenthood, addressed the white man's fear of the growing population of the emancipated Negro. Her theories on Eugenics and birth control were frighteningly stated in her aptly titled book *The Pivot of Civilization*, published in 1922. Immediately following the spread of Eugenics as a philosophy, the proliferation and prosperity of the Germanic Jews gave rise to Hitler's 1930's-1940's anti-Semitism which was cloaked in the desire for "race purity" which is a closely related topic with roots in Eugenics. With upwards of forty to fifty million abortions *per year* globally now, Sanger certainly has "pivoted civilization" right into the depths of hell. Many of these statistics don't include chemically induced abortions which pharmacists estimate 250 million babies since 1973 in the U.S. alone!

"Overpopulation" was the catchword of the day back in the 1960's and 1970's. This Darwinian march "forward" towards genocidal madness continues with this pseudo-

emergency. In recent history, we witnessed China addressing the false doctrine of overpopulation by forcibly strapping women down, drugging them and ripping their babies from their wombs and limiting the allowable number of children per family. Apparently, just a little utopian ideological madness results in large numbers of DEATH.

Meanwhile in Europe?...Belgium continues in its evil penchant for CHILD EUTHANASIA in the name of "mercy." Hollyweirds are still railing against mankind's "Carbon Footprint" as they release carbon in mass amounts over the planet from their private jets. All of this is simply just another rosy-smelling genocidal code word devised by those who, of course, do not have to comply themselves with the "solution." They, the self-identified elite class, selfishly want less people in their way. This black rose may swell sweet on the surface, but the devilish end-result is always the same: DEATH.

Climate Change activists claim that if we simply reduce our "CO2 emissions" we will cure all the ills of the planet. Think about this carefully for a moment. Where does CO2 come from? It is the natural by-product of breathing! Thus, every time we exhale we are emitting CO2. Bluntly stated, Climate Changers want LESS BREATHING on the planet. Satan, the sneaky liar, who comes to steal, kill, and destroy simply wants DEATH and more of it.

In the COVID-19 "crisis," people all over the planet became masked and breathing in their own CO2 and bacteria, yet not one health professional could state that the masks prevented the tiny virus from passing through. Furthermore, fresh air and sunlight are the best protection against fighting this disease as Vitamin D (which comes from sunlight) is shown to be a very effective natural defense. With "I can't breathe" as the mantra for Black Lives Matter, one must seriously reflect on just what is going on here in the spiritual world!

God's people must arise with courage to say that the "rosy" pictures of Red Socialism are not a "Green New Deal" at all. Take a deep breath. Something doesn't smell right. Let's use our CO2 emitters (aka "noses") to sniff out these bogus science fantasies which desire a pseudo-paradise on earth...if only there were less people, of course. Let's tell the world that this ideology...

STINKS TO HIGH HEAVEN

And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty.

~Isaiah 3:24 (KJV)

Prayer:

Almighty God, we acknowledge You as the Maker of Heaven and Earth and Giver of Life. All of Creation attests to your Majesty. You have created mankind in your Image. All murderous and lying spirits ultimately seek to eradicate evidence of Your Holy Creation. They seek to raise up their human secularist "wisdom" and exalt it over the knowledge of You. We ask that You strengthen us to take down these abominations, O Lord, humbly correcting those in opposition so that they may REPENT and know Your Truth. Raise Your mighty arm against those who would slyly support genocide as an answer to any of the world's problems. YOU are the only answer to Life's problems, and you have come to bring us LIFE and LIFE more abundantly. We pray this in the name of the Name above all names, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, our Saviour, Yeshua, who died and rose again so that we may LIVE.

~Amen

Day #42 ~ Counting the Omer

The Great Harvester

Come Out, Come Out, Wherever You are

And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud is sitting One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.

~Revelation 14:14 (Berean Literal Bible)

Olly, Olly, Oxen Free!

~Childhood game catchphrase

We have "arrived" at Day #42 in Counting the Omer. The number 42 signifies "arrival" in scripture. Christ's arrival or "Advent" can be viewed as a rapturous event or coming judgment. This Day will be our Blessed Hope or our Doomsday, depending on which side of the spiritual fence we fall on.

In Hebrew letters, the number 42 is written as "mem" and "beth." The Hebrew letter Mem signifies the flow of water and Bet means House or Household. Thus, to state this another way: 42 signifies the flow of time in the Sea of Humanity until Jesus returns to bring us permanently into His Household.

Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

~Matthew 24:42 (ESV)

We find this concept again in Revelation. The time of tribulation in Revelation is a period of 42 months prior to the Advent of Christ.

The beast was given a mouth to speak arrogant and blasphemous words, and authority to act for 42 months.

~Revelation 13:5 (Berean Study Bible)

To quickly sum up from our previous devotionals:

40 = testing time period

+

2= separation, division

= 42 (Test over, Marking begins).

Spoiler Alert: Tomorrow's Devotional (#43) indicates RESULTS of the Test.

Will we pass or fail?

Remember those carefree days of innocent childhood? Nobody questioned the seemingly nonsensical rules for "Kick the Can" or "Hide and Seek." We just simply accepted that you had to abide by certain precepts and repeat specific sayings to properly play the game. When someone chanted "*Olly, Olly, Oxen-Free!*" you knew it was safe to come out into the open without getting tagged. If you failed to follow the rules you were called OUT!

In religious terms, the word ecstasy has an interesting meaning. "*Ek*," in Greek means: "to come out from, being called out." "*Stasy*" has the root of "Stasis" meaning, "standing, stopping, remaining status quo." It is where we get words like homeostasis (maintaining equilibrium, standing still) or static (showing little or no change). So, if we put these two Greek root words together, we get a meaning like:

COME OUT FROM YOUR APATHY

When Jesus was preaching his amazing insights, his family came to "lay hands on him" or "take a hold" of him because they said he was "out of his mind."

When His family heard about this, they went to take custody of Him, saying, "He is out of his mind."

~Mark 3:21 (Berean Study Bible)

The Greek word here for "out of his mind" is *eks-ē'-stā-mē*.

Like Jesus, if we are experiencing a true revelation from God we are literally "out of our minds!" We become "in the mind" of Christ, not our own. In spiritual terms, the passionate state of believers experiencing a vision is often referred to as a "religious ecstasy."

Similar to this childhood game, "ecstatic" Christians need to start "calling out" people from their static unchanging positions. Come out from the unchanging, lukewarm-ness of your compromised lifestyle! Take a stand now and show yourself. For the apathetic churches, this means it is high time to make a public break from the cultural apostasy.

The devil is well aware of the POWER of this spiritual principle and the need to "come out" and identify yourself. The homosexual movement uses terminology of "coming out" also. It is no coincidence, that at the same time, Christians are being required by new laws to "get in the closet and shut up." We are being marginalized and shamed with the

new human secularist make-believe sins of homophobia and intolerance. Apparently, Human Secularism has turned out to be an alternate new religion after all with its own set of rules, transgressions, and commandments. Who knew?

We are now being asked to AFFIRM, not just tolerate, homosexuality and gender identify politics. Neutrality is no longer an option. Come out, Come out and approve of sin says the government! How is this possible for sincere Christians?

Innkeepers, Photographers, Bakers and "Candlestick-makers" are being sued across the country for refusing to compromise their devout beliefs. One by one they are being called out. If they comply, they may get a temporary "olly, olly oxen-free" pass from the government. However, it will not be truly safe.

Playing it safe or "going along to get along" may buy you some friends and time in the natural realm, but in the spiritual realm you will be dealt with harshly. Plainly and simply: If you deny Christ, He will deny you. He said so Himself:

But everyone who denies me here on earth, I will also deny before my Father in heaven.
~Matthew 10:33 (NLT)

It's as if Jesus is saying: "Deny me in front of your government with your testimony, and I promise you, I will deny you before my Father in Heaven with My testimony."

Interestingly, just a few verses prior to this one Jesus said:

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Instead, fear the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.
~Matthew 10:28 (Berean Study Bible)

In Revelation, God tells His Church: Come out from her (Mother of Abominations/Whore of Babylon) lest you share in her punishment.

Then I heard another voice calling from heaven, "Come out of her, My people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues."
~Revelation 18:4 (ESV)

We need to take this warning to heart. As supporters of our Judeo-Christian beliefs, we need to make a public stand against sin and apostasy. We need to "call out" government and church leaders who have gone astray. We can no longer continue to be silent or wishy-washy about our convictions hoping we will maintain the "homeostasis" of our own lifestyle.

Soon, the harsher door knocks will begin and the "Nazi Gestapo" will be at your front door. Comply or die. The authorities will begin to DEMAND that all those hiding need to COME OUT. You will NOT escape by trying to stay hidden...you will be found. The question is by whom? Will it be the government that finds you cringing in your workplace or will it be Yeshua who finds you cowering behind a tree? I'd rather that when Jesus calls "olly, olly oxen-free" He finds me out in the open, so I'm not eternally tagged out.

Ready or not...

HERE HE COMES.

Prayer:

For far too long we have been more concerned about our personal reputations, our popularity and our pocketbooks rather than advancing Your Kingdom. How amazing that our King and Lord of Heaven and Earth, Yeshua, "made Himself of no reputation." How much more should we follow in His path? Help us to not fear those who can kill the body, but the One who can destroy both soul and body. Remind us that man's life is but a vapor and is quickly gone but what we do for Christ remains eternally. Teach us to have more concern about the lost and dying souls around us as the trials and tribulations of this world become more and more difficult. You taught us that there is no greater love than laying down our lives for others. Tolerating sin, selling "gospel" messages and amassing fame and fortune have nothing to do with the sacrifice that You require. Forgive us as we REPENT for selfish behavior that has caused the sinful culture to proliferate and influence us instead of us changing the sinful culture. We pray in the Name of Jesus Christ who sacrificed Himself for us. We can do no less for Him.

~Amen

Day #43 ~ Counting the Omer

Final Inspection Your Word Against His?

*"Let us break Their bonds in pieces
And cast away Their cords from us."
He who sits in the heavens shall laugh;
The Lord shall hold them in derision.
~Psalm 2: 3-4 (NKJV)*

Moving onward in our "Counting the Omer" devotional series, we see an orderly progression in scripture. Today is Day #43. With 41 signifying "separation" and 42 indicating the arrival or Advent of Christ, then 43 signifies the Final Test results of Christ's Separation and Advent. Will we be judged a wheat or a tare? a sheep or a goat? a faithful or wicked servant? righteous or unrighteous?

This is the qualifying factor on what we will be judged on: "What did we do with God's Holy Word?" Since Jesus Christ is THE WORD made flesh, we will be asked what we did with the knowledge of "The Logos."

The Eternal Word

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and without Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

~John 1:1-5 (Berean Literal Bible)

In Ezekiel 43, we see the significance of 43 as the prophet is describing the final Temple, which is the glorified Body of Christ. Remember, this vision is a POST-Advent prophecy!

Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings, far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them forever.

~Ezekiel 43:9 (KJV)

If 43 symbolizes the Body of Christ, unified with Him after the Advent of His Second Coming, what does rebellion to The Logos here on earth look like now?

In modern times, there has been a resurgence of an old symbol afoot in geopolitics...the Raised Fist. The Raised Fist is an almost universal sign of rebellion. This is a common image in Marxist, Anarchist, Socialist and Communist propaganda. Today we see the Raised Fist in Gay Pride parades, Feminist marches, Black Lives Matter demonstrations and among "global warming" activists. Amazingly, this gesture dates to ancient Assyria which was the nation that God sent to punish Israel for disobedience. Perhaps we are seeing that same punishment on our streets today. Here's what God has to say about the "raised fist" symbol:

For no one on earth--from east or west, or even from the wilderness--should raise a defiant fist.

~Psalm 75:6 (NLT)

But those who are in rebellion never let a little scripture admonition stop them from doing whatever they feel like, right? It is that spirit of rebellion which causes them to foolishly think: "What's the big deal if we co-opt a few of God's symbols?" Well...under International Law, if you do that with a logo which is a previously registered trademark, you will find ourselves in deep trouble legally. Likewise, much of Western Civilization is in deep trouble with the "Law" today.

We have taken God's symbols and re-purposed them for our evil uses. Remember when a rainbow was God's promise not to destroy the entire planet by flood ever again? Now, we hardly ever see a rainbow unless it is pushing some LGBTQ+ propaganda. This symbol was truly co-opted by a movement completely at odds with Biblical mandates.

I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I form clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between Me and you and every living creature of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life.

~Genesis 9:13-15 (Berean Study Bible)

We have taken God's symbol of the Knitting Needle and raised it in defiance at Pro-Death abortion rallies. This symbol was meant as a beautiful imagery of God's intricacy in knitting us together as complex and wonderful beings created in the very Image of God. Now it is used to express a perverse desire for unfettered infant slaughter.

For You formed my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvelous are Your works, and I know this very well.

~Psalm 139:13-14 (Berean Study Bible)

These symbols are God's way of reminding us of His Covenantal Contract. Think of them as God's registered logos. When utilized for rebellion, without the correct authority, we are misrepresenting God's Word and breaking the Law.

Now, read these next two verses carefully. They are written just like a legal contract. IF we do such and such, THEN we will receive:

No if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, you will be My treasured possession out of all the nations—for the whole earth is Mine.

~Exodus 19:5 (Berean Study Bible)

If, however, you do not obey the Lord your God by carefully following all His commandments and statutes I am giving you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.

~Deuteronomy 28:15 (Berean Study Bible)

In yesterday's devotional, we raised the question:

Will we pass or fail?

Sadly, like many contract breakers, there will be those who have failed to read the "fine print" until it is too late. Go to Deuteronomy 28 and read the entire passage. It is the complete list of national penalties that apply when we break faith with Holy God.

So, have democratic nations, founded on the principles of Mosaic Law, lived up to their Covenantal Contract with the Most High God? With our redefinition of marriage, our insatiable bloodlust for more infanticide, our removal and replacement of God Almighty from the public square and our betrayal of Israel, we have seriously misrepresented the "Logos." We've benefited from God's property rights, but we've failed to uphold our side of the bargain. Now we must prepare for the biggest Cosmic Lawsuit we've ever seen. The "damages" amount will be staggering.

To Western Civilization: God is calling. He wants His symbols back. He is calling us to REPENT and RETURN.

Consider this....

Your final legal notice.

Whenever the pillars of Christianity shall be overthrown, our present republican forms of government, and all the blessings which flow from them, must fall with them.

~Jedidiah Morse, a historian of the American Revolution

Prayer:

Heavenly Father: We confess that our nations are covenant breakers. We have enjoyed all of the liberty and goodness that goes along with being founded on Your Holy Word but now we want to be the "god" of our own lives. We have become like the wicked stewards of the vineyard mentioned in scripture. Please open the spiritual eyes of nations all across the Earth. We MUST stop committing the four national apostasies that lead to the destruction of nations or, just like Ancient Israel, we will be ruled by the Assyrians. We are already being "masked" and covered up. We are being "locked down" and walking 6 paces behind. These are spiritual similarities to Persian bondage! Until we stop slaughtering innocents, sanctifying perversions, removing/replacing the One True God Almighty of the Old and New Testament from our moral foundations and betraying the Throne of David, we will fall just like every other nation in history before us. Help us to REPENT! We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, the ONLY NAME in which we will find liberty, Yeshua our Great God and Savior.

~Amen

Day #44 ~ Counting the Omer

Bad Fruit

Rotten Apple

Then the lust, when it has conceived, bears sin; and the sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death. ~ James 1:15 (World English Bible)

Today is Day #44 in Counting the Omer. On the fourth day of "creation week" God completed the material world. In this created world, there are "four points" geographically: North, South, East and West. Thus, one could say that 44 symbolizes a global perspective encompassing the entire planet or "world-wide."

I've never been a fan of those "Fruit of the Month" clubs. You know...the type of gift you send to your mother-in-law because you never know what to buy for her birthday. They start out well-intentioned, perhaps offering a nice varietal selection of apples from all different regions. MacIntosh, Granny Smith, Red Delicious and so on--yummy! But by the 12th month, it has run its course on the more traditional fruit and your mother-in-law is up to her ears in kumquats. Needless to say, at that point, she is not pleased with you.

This got me thinking about two amazing historical stories of "unexpected consequences." The first story is regarding Madalyn O'Hair. Most people may recognize this name as the woman largely responsible for removing Bible reading and prayer out of the American public school system. However, like me, you probably didn't know much about her personal life.

It seems that young Madalyn had an affair with a married Catholic man. Apparently, she fell in love, got pregnant and wanted him to leave his wife. He refused to do so because of his faith. One wonders why he didn't consider his faith to help prevent him from getting involved in an extramarital affair in the first place. But anyway, let's just take for granted he somehow succumbed to temptation of "sin"--a concept which is not very popular anymore.

When I first read this story, I was immediately struck with an understanding of what circumstances probably created an individual like Madalyn O'Hair. Is it really any wonder that this woman, later on in life, demonstrated such a hatred for Bible principles that she doggedly pursued, with deep antipathy, removing scripture and prayer from the public sector? Truly, *"Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned."*

So, it's conceivable that ONE man's abandonment of God's law--Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery--was quite possibly the instigating factor in defining an issue which 50 years later has arguably left public school systems, and perhaps Western Civilization, in shambles.

Amazing story right? That's some severe unexpected consequences--Just sayin'. *C'mon...you may argue. Seriously, isn't that a bit of a stretch?* OK, if you think that's far-fetched, how about one sin that caused 97 million deaths?

Are you kiddin' me?

It has been called "The Shot Heard 'Round the World." One man's sin, literally was the catalyst for TWO WORLD WARS! On June 28th, 1914, a formerly unknown 19-year old named Gavrilo Princip assassinated Archduke Ferdinand of Austria along with his wife Duchess Sophie. It is believed that he committed this assassination to impress his radical friends that, despite his small stature, he was a man to be reckoned with. So, filled with misguided youth, pride, and hate, he set out to demonstrate his prowess.

Appropriately titled as "The Shot Heard 'Round the World," historians agree that this assassination eventually led to a series of events which directly fomented World War I. A total of 37 million civilian and military casualties resulted from World War I. After World War I, Germany was subjected to the stipulations in "The Treaty of Versailles." Its terms were deeply resented by the German people as overly punitive in laying "war guilt" on their nation. This resentment ultimately led to the success of the Nazi regime under Adolf Hitler and started World War II. World War II was the deadliest military conflict in all of recorded history with over 60 million civilian and military deaths. All in all, the total death count from these two massive wars was NINETY-SEVEN MILLION MEN, WOMEN and CHILDREN!

This massive carnage began from the sin of one insignificant, unknown person. I bet none of us would correctly name this guy on a history exam. How's that for unexpected consequences?

So, what am I trying to say here? Today, it's fashionable to be lackadaisical about our Judeo-Christian foundation and biblical definitions of sin. Much of Western Civilization has strangely adopted some weird dichotomous national "split personality" on morality. It goes something like this:

"Well, I personally don't believe in _____ (fill in the blank with some immoral social issue or choice), but I believe in the freedom to allow everyone to do what they want. I will also support laws that allow and encourage people to make these immoral choices."

Thus, the new religion of human secularism starts out, much like the Fruit of the Month club, with "good intentions." Words like "tolerance" and "choice" and "fairness" sound so initially pleasing...so humanly reasonable. However, we have merely substituted Man's reasoning for God's Laws. Even young students know that when there is a "substitute teacher" in place, everyone simply uses it as an excuse to go wild. It signals an "open season" to act up. In society the "fruit" of such lawlessness is called ANARCHY.

Remember the old commercial for a hair gel called "BrylCreem?" The slogan, for those of you under the age of 50 who don't remember it, was "*a little dab'll do ya.*" So, it is with sin. Based on the Garden of Eden story, just one bite of forbidden fruit can set in motion a serious chain of events that has the ability to damage all of mankind. Even recent history has shown us that not only will "*a little dab do ya*" but that a little dab will "*do us in.*"

Let's fast forward to modern day democratic societies. With most of Western Civilization slaughtering innocents unabated, redefining morality and genders, removing the One True God Almighty from the public square and pressuring Israel to give away their God-ordained land...what unexpected consequences might be coming next? Like the Fruit of the Month Club, let's start counting.

World War I, World War II...

A little leaven corrupteth the whole lump.
~Galatians 5:9 (KJV)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father: As Adam and Eve succumbed to temptation in the Garden of Eden, so too have we readily embraced disobedience and sin. Instead of enjoying the freedoms, liberties and blessings that come along with a society founded upon Mosaic Law principles derived from Your Commandments, we believed the lie that we could be the "masters" of our own destiny. As Your Holy Word so clearly states, there is nothing new under the sun. Man has always wanted to usurp Your Throne with his own evil desires. Who will save us from this body of death? Thanks be to the Lord Jesus Christ who showed us the way of escape. As we see civilization wracked with grief and in its final death throes from worldwide delusion, remind us of Your simple gospel message which begins with REPENT! We must change our minds and then change our direction and TURN FROM OUR WICKED WAYS. Nothing will help us unless we STOP slaughtering innocents, STOP sanctifying perversions, STOP believing that humanistic thinking is wiser than Your Holy Word and STOP attacking the Throne of David (temporally symbolized as the State of Israel). PLEASE SAVE US, O GOD. We are on a sinking ship. Help us to remember the brevity of life and behave accordingly. We

pray this prayer in the Name of our great God and Savior, Yeshua in whom all of mankind must bow down to in order to be saved.
~Amen

Day #45 ~ Counting the Omer

Preserving Agent In a Sorry State

Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all, not even enough to blush. Therefore they will fall among the fallen. When I punish them, they will collapse, says the LORD.

~Jeremiah 8:12 (Berean Study Bible)

As we continue to Count the Omer on Day #45, we are reminded of another biblical "countdown." In the "Sodom Countdown" conversation between Yahweh and Abraham, we see this counting begin when Abraham asks God if only five are missing from his original 50 request, would God still destroy Sodom if there were 45 righteous people left?

Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt Thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And He said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.

~Genesis 18:28 (KJV)

We know the rest of the story. Abraham continued counting down until he reached 10. I've always wondered what would have happened had he went down to just ONE righteous person in Sodom. At no point, did God say: "*Hey Abraham...knock it off already. How many times are you going to annoy Me with this same question?*" I'm sure there is a deep spiritual meaning as to why Abraham stopped at 10. One can't help but wonder how long we should keep pressing in and asking for more of God's Mercy on our nations. Maybe at some point, more Mercy becomes counter-productive and leads to an even worse destruction if evil is simply left to run rampant without Judgment. Only God knows this answer. We must remember that God's Judgment is also Merciful.

In any case, the number 45 has become associated in scripture with *preservation*. Genesis Chapter 45 is about God's plan to preserve the Jewish people through Joseph's trials, tribulations, and temporary reign in Egypt:

And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

~Genesis 45:7 (KJV, underline emphasis added)

The earthly symbolic opposite of "preservation" can be seen in the destruction caused by weather-related disasters. Hurricanes, Tornadoes, Cyclones and Floods get a lot of media attention these days, as does the pseudo-science narrative of "global warming." While unsettling photos of roofs ripped off and debris strewn streets can be very dramatic, there is actually a natural phenomenon that destroys a vastly greater amount of homes each year. This has been described as the "single greatest economic pest" of the entire world! Wow...What force of nature could possibly do more structural damage than violent storms, winds, flooding, and wildfires combined, you may ask? The answer is: TERMITES.

Termites are nice and quiet while they chomp down your house. You can barely notice them. They don't seem to be bothering anyone at first. However, if left unchecked, your home's very foundation will crumble into a worthless heap of rubble. They need to be aggressively confronted and resisted by constant treatment, awareness, and vigilance.

In a societal analogy, Islamist Terrorists are as easy to spot as violent weather. They crash planes, deploy suicide bombers, slit throats and shout "Allahu Akbar" while attacking anyone in sight. They are readily identifiable as destroyers of society. Human Secularists, on the other hand, can probably be described as "nice and quiet guys." According to their philosophies, they want everyone to just be happy and do their own thing. They believe man's reasoning reigns supreme. They bring us pleasant sounding terms like "fair share," "wealth equality," "choices," "public option," and "civil discourse." All of their ideologies sound so reasonable. In fact, they sound so NICE!

However, it doesn't take long for these policies to slowly eat away at our foundations with more ominous sounding follow-up words such as: "mandate," "penalty," "requirement," "control," "compliance" and "enforcement." Apparently, if they want everyone to "play nice," the government will have to impose it. History shows us that when we hand over our freedoms to a nanny or police state, we will soon find ourselves in tyrannical bondage. Then, when the violent societal winds of anarchy start to blow, we will fold like a termite-ridden house of cards. The Bible has something to say about "niceness" as well:

For even your brothers and the household of your father, even they have dealt treacherously with you, even they have cried aloud after you. Do not believe them, although they may say nice things to you.

~Jeremiah 12:6 (appropriately from the New American Standard 1977 version!, underline added)

This scripture is a warning to believers about those who are claiming kinship. Too many of today's churches are overly concerned with nice-sounding sermons about social justice. Instead, they are insidiously dealing treacherously with God's people. Their

focus is mainly for their own popularity and profit. Like termites, they thrive in sandy soil. This soil is no longer on a firm Rock-solid foundation. They are the proverbial house built on sand described in the Bible. Likewise, they will fall with a great crash (Matthew 7:27).

Jesus/Yeshua has been depicted in many ways throughout the last two thousand years. However, "nice" would never be an accurate portrayal of Him. Jesus didn't mince words. He told one of his best friends *"Get thee behind me Satan."* Can you imagine how well that would be received at your next family dinner party? As for government officials, he showed disregard calling Herod a "fox" and telling Pilate he had no power over Him that God didn't already ordain.

Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."
~John 19:11 (NIV)

This verse reminds us that the phony religious leaders and apathetic Christian community is guilty of the greater sin for the failures of our society than the clueless politicians. Yeshua reserved his most scathing pronouncements for religious hypocrites calling them VIPERS and SNAKES.

You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape the sentence of hell?
~Matthew 23:33 (Berean Study Bible)

To those that used the Temple of God as a personal profit-making venture, He flipped tables with more passion than *The Real Housewives of New Jersey*. He aggressively confronted evil and sin! He didn't restrain Himself with the concern that perhaps someone may get offended. In fact, He said: If your hand offends you CUT IT OFF. If your eye offends you GOUGE IT OUT! (Matthew 18:8-9). In Strong's concordance, one of the shaded meanings of the Greek word "offend" here means "to make indignant," "to cause displeasure." The Greek word is "skandalizo" the root from which we get the word scandalous. Jesus scandalized society with His words and actions. He knew that going on the offensive against evil was the necessary catalyst in the chain reaction resulting in REPENTANCE.

One might say that shame, therefore, acts as a "preserving agent." When we read literary classics, we can see how far Western Civilization has fallen from its original founding ideals. In the novel, *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, 17th century life in Puritan Boston was characterized by a distinct set of societal rules. Adultery was (and should still be) shameful. While I'm not suggesting we go back to sewing a Scarlet Letter on adulterers, perhaps the days of public humiliation in the public square was the inhibition factor required to curb detrimental societal behavior with good old-fashioned

shame. In scripture this day of public humiliation is known as Yom Kippur and it was intended by God to be a "statute forever."

The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. You shall hold a sacred assembly and humble yourselves, and present an offering made by fire to the LORD. You are not to do any work at all. This is a permanent statute for the generations to come, wherever you live.

~Leviticus 23:27&31 (Berean Study Bible)

We should all be ashamed of how we have promoted ungodly behavior resulting in the decimation of our children and family structures. When will we recognize our shameful condition? Adam and Eve hid from God in the garden when they became aware of their nakedness. They recognized how far they had fallen from communion with God and were ashamed of their nakedness. They covered themselves in fig leaves. In scripture, fig trees are representative of churches. They should be teaching their congregations that they are shamefully naked and to run for cover through repentance! THEN, after the acknowledgement of their shameful condition, God provides the covering of the Lamb skin of Yeshua.

The Bible has this to say about shame:

Were they ashamed because of the abomination they have done? They were not even ashamed at all; they did not even know how to blush.

~Jeremiah 6:15(a) (appropriately from the New American Standard Bible!)

Interestingly, Jesus cursed the fig tree on his way to Jerusalem as a "shadow-picture" for the Apostate Church. It was early in the year in Jerusalem for figs to be sprouting at that time, but Jesus cursed the tree anyway. Why? Because like the first century religious leaders, so shall it be with the heretical churches worldwide in the final days. For goodness sakes, by now they should be bearing all sorts of fruit! Instead, our religious organizations seem to have worldwide systemic failure.

If our churches do not begin fulfilling spiritual hunger soon through the preaching of repentance, they will be cursed when Jesus makes His second appearance. More maturation time will not make any difference for those who have knowingly chosen apostasy over Truth. In fact, they will be the first to experience God's refining judgment.

For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God.

~1 Peter 4:17(a) (NKJV)

The Holy Spirit's purpose is to convict of sin. Once we remove this restraint (conviction) we will find ourselves in a state of lawlessness. Queue the music...enter anti-Christ.

Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

~2 Corinthians 7:9-10 (NKJV, underline emphasis added)

Niceness may prevent us temporarily from being publicly crucified. However, like Jesus, if we want to save the peace and security of our family and nations...

Nice won't suffice.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father: Pour out your "preserving agent," the Holy Spirit, to convict us of our sin so that we will not fall along with the fallen! Help us to fear God and not man. Teach those who hold positions of authority not to tailor their messages to tickle ears in order that they may be thought well of through fans, fame, and fortune; for these are the temptations of the devil. Remind us that we are fighting a spiritual battle and Satan does not present himself openly but slyly, cunningly, subtlety as an "angel of light." Too often we fall prey to his schemes because we have not studied Your Holy Word to show ourselves approved by You. When we are proper workmen, we need not be ashamed as we are trained to rightly divide Your Word of Truth. Teach us to shun profane and vain babblings, even when they come from a pulpit, for they will simply increase more and more ungodly behaviors in our lives. We pray this prayer in the Name of our Rabbi-Teacher and Master, Yeshua who showed us what walking in His Way looks like and made Himself of no reputation.

~Amen

Day #46 ~ Counting the Omer

Genetically Modified

Say Yes to the Dress

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

~Isaiah 61:10 (NKJV)

As we come to Day #46 in counting the Omer, we may be reminded that we are coming near to the end. What does "the end" look like? Some people may get fearful when they hear this, but the Bride of Christ understands that "the end" means "happily ever after" is about to begin!

In the movie, "*Pretty in Pink*," the main character, portrayed by actress Molly Ringwald, predictably ends up with the popular, rich, and handsome guy. The movie producers originally filmed an ending in which she selected the geeky, loyal, but average-looking friend first. However, in the pre-screening they found that audiences reacted unfavorably to it. Apparently Western Culture requires that the prince be flashy, wealthy, and desired by all for the Hollywood "fairy tale ending" to occur. This is exactly why the anti-Christ will be readily attractive to so many people. They are looking for the wrong person. Here is what scripture tells us about our REAL Bridegroom:

He had no stately form or majesty to attract us, no beauty that we should desire him.
~Isaiah 53:2 (Berean Study Bible)

Just as any Bridegroom would desire, He wants the Bride to love Him not based on superficial appearances' sake. In scripture, the number 46 is often associated with "New Garments." In Luke Chapter 8, verse forty-six, we see Jesus acknowledging that someone had touched the hem of His garment.

But Jesus declared, "Someone touched Me, for I know that power has gone out from Me."
~Luke 8:46 (Berean Study Bible)

This touch was done by the woman with the "issue of blood." She touched the "hem" of His garment. In the Greek, if we were to study the word "hem" used to describe the

edge of a rabbi's garment, it was known as the "fringe" or "border" or "tassel." In Hebrew it is known as the "tzitzit." It has a meaning similar to "wings."

But to you who fear My Name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His Wings.

~Malachi 4:2(a) (NKJV)

In this chapter, where the woman was instantly healed, we see the actual manifestation of the Malachi prophecy on full display in Yeshua. Indeed, there was literal healing in His tzitzit, the "wings" of His garment!

In Strong's Concordance, G46 is the Greek word "*agnaphos*" which means "unprocessed," or "unmilled" and by implication associated with a *new cloth*. As a bride on earth dons a new wedding dress, the Bride of Christ puts on a new garment also.

No man also seweth a piece of new [G46, Strong's Concordance = unprocessed, unmilled] cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

~Mark 2:21 (KJV, bracketed explanation added)

Scripture is clearly showing that when we are woven together with Christ, just as in a wedding process when the two become one, we become a new creation. This symbolism of two partners being woven or sewn together has a temporal analogy in a strand of DNA. DNA is graphically depicted in a diagram of a spiraling double-helix. In the process of creating a new birth, the man contributes 23 chromosomes and the woman contributes 23 chromosomes. $23 + 23 = 46$ total human chromosomes.

Thus, the Number 46 literally and figuratively creates a new "skin bottle" or "outer garment" for each new soul that is born into the world. God always gives us a temporal example for a spiritual concept! When we are born again, our union with Christ creates a new being as well!

Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will spill, and the wineskins will be ruined. Instead, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.

~Matthew 9:17 (Berean Study Bible)

The word "skin" is etymologically linked to the Greek word "skene." A "skene" in Greek, is an area behind the stage, which was originally built for changing masks and costumes, but then also functions as the background staging for the ensuing drama being performed. We also find a variation of this word in knitting parlance where a "skein" indicates the raw materials for creating a new blanket or covering. This knitting concept is found again in the Book of Psalms:

For You formed my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb.
~Psalm 139:13 (Berean Study Bible)

In God's Epic Drama stage, we are called to act out (like the Book of Acts!) our best performance behind our "skene." This twirling dance of our earthly contribution combined with Christ's direction becomes a passion-play much like the DNA strand, each contributing their seed to become the new dwelling site for the Kingdom of God.

Interestingly, the number 23 (as seen in Devotional #23) is the number symbolizing DEATH. It is not good for Man to be alone. Alone = NO NEW LIFE. But add the death (23) of Christ to the death (23) of Self (Woman/Church), each sowing a seed, and we get a NEW garment, a new "skin." This is the revealed mystery of the Incarnation:

...that they may be encouraged in heart, knit together in love, and filled with the full riches of complete understanding, so that they may know the Mystery of God, namely Christ.

~Colossians 2:2 (Berean Study Bible)

Prophetically, physically, and spiritually, this "mystery" is God *infused* with mankind! It is the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah!

Behold, I tell to you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed.
~1 Corinthians 15:51 (Berean Literal Bible)

Upon Christ's Second Coming, we will see this mystery fully unveiled in a "twinkling of an eye!" The final and utter transformation of mind, body, and soul!

In an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must be clothed with the imperishable, and this mortal with immortality.

~1 Corinthians 15:52-53 (Berean Study Bible)

Now, here's what the WRONG attire looks like:

Beware of the scribes. They like to walk around in long robes, and they love the greetings in the marketplaces, the chief seats in the synagogues, and the places of honor at banquets.

~Luke 20:46 (Berean Study Bible, note this is verse 46, another reference to garments).

But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So, he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a

wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

~Matthew 22:11-13 (NKJV)

Instead of being properly dressed, it seems as if many in the church world today are in the business of telling God what they prefer to wear...which old sinful, stained garment they plan to put on.

This is just my opinion, (so please don't make a conspiracy theory around it) but I believe the anti-Christ will, in some way, be "genetically modified." Just as God has a good spiritual plan, the devil will mimic God's "spiritual modification" with an evil counterfeit. Some are already saying that COVID-19 vaccines will insert some sort of genetic modification into the flesh. Here's a recent headline:

Advancing Experimental Gene-Based COVID Vaccine

The Theme song from "*Pretty in Pink*" is appropriately titled "*If You Leave*." The name of the band is also aptly named "*Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark*." Here's a snippet of the lyrics:

*We've always had time on our side
Now it's fading fast
Heaven knows what happens now*

Yes, Heaven DOES know what happens now! We must be dressed in the right attire or we will be thrown out where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. He's coming for a Bride without spot or wrinkle. It's the season for wearing white. Are you properly dressed?

that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

~Ephesians 5:27 (NKJV)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, as a Bride anxiously awaits her wedding day, so we are to await the Glorious Appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ who is worthy of nothing less than a beautiful Bride without spot or wrinkle. Help us to bring You honor Lord as we ascend the aisle. Teach us to take care how we put on Your attire and to walk upright and in accordance with Your commands. We hear the music starting, the people are beginning to take notice and on Your arm Father, we wait to be presented. We present our bodies, our vows, our passion, and our lives poured out as a living sacrifice at the altar, but we do not provide our own garments. There is nothing that we can sew, spin or weave that

is appropriate for the Wedding Supper of the Lamb. He has already provided us with a garment of splendor, a raiment, a cloak that is brand new, fresh, unused, unworn, and uncommon. It is fully sufficient to meet all our needs for the Final Wedding of Cana and Eternal Life in God's Holy City. It is woven by the Bridegroom of Galilee for those who have bowed in repentance and acceptance of His gracious offer. Thank You that You have provided us with this garment of splendor.

Come Lord Jesus Come.

~Amen

I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a Bride beautifully dressed for her Husband.

~Revelation 21:2 (NIV)

Day #47 ~ Counting the Omer

Red Earth of Terra

All Nations Under Rod

This is the purpose that is purposed against the whole earth, and this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations. For the LORD of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?

~Isaiah 14:26-27 (NKJV)

There are not many Books in the Bible that reach to 47 chapters in length or more. Remarkably, in all books that have a Chapter 47, it speaks of either nation building or national humiliation! Truly the Bible is a amazing Master Peace of beautiful synchronicity. This is just one more confirmation to the faithful that our God is a God of order and not chaos. It follows, understandably, that He does not tolerate continued chaos and disorder in individuals OR nations.

Here are all the topics of the Chapter 47s found in the Bible:

Genesis 47: Israel takes the best of the land of Egypt (Goshen)

Psalms 47: God's Reign over all the nations

Isaiah 47: The Fall of Babylon

Jeremiah 47: The Destruction of the Philistines

Ezekiel 47: The New Jerusalem ~ God's Millennial Nation

Accordingly, as we follow the pattern in scripture, we see that the Number 47 indicates (in order!) God's Sovereign plan for His final "Purification of National Rebellion." His Word outlines, in detail, His blueprint for national formation and national collapse. Israel, both temporal and spiritual, is to have the BEST portion of the land. While Israel is specifically selected as God's "showcase," God is the Supreme Ruler over *all* nations. Babylon, signified by any nation or religious system bowing to paganism or false gods, will *always* fall. Those who persecute the Jews, either temporally or spiritually, will ultimately be destroyed. Curse Israel and you will die. You can take that to the bank...the West Bank. And finally, those who have aligned themselves willingly with Yeshua, will rule and reign with Him in the New Jerusalem. This is God's Holy Nation, ruled by Christ Himself in the final 1000 year Millennium, the 6000-7000th year of mankind after Adam which is a required rest (Sabbath) of the Earth as God's Laws *always* rule and His Sovereign decrees must *always* be fulfilled. Every jot and tittle.

Now let's apply this pattern of national rise and collapse to a demonically-inspired Newtonian law which goes like this: *For every action in Heaven, the devil attempts a similar and opposing reaction on planet Earth.* Observing this principle (which so far has been quite interesting once you notice it!), we see that the spirit of anti-Christ mimics true goodness by having a false fake virtue for every good one put forth by God.

I think Socialism is the most obvious example of this. Socialism is touted as a virtue despite the common knowledge, by picking up any history book, that utopian societies DO NOT WORK. Not only do they always fail miserably, they KILL MASSIVELY.

With the mass shootings lately, and the screaming hysteria to remove our gun rights, few remember that the #1 offender, in all of recorded history on the mass murder "hit parade," is GOVERNMENT. Furthermore, the #1 TYPE of government that murders the most of its hapless citizenry is Socialist, Marxist or Communist governments.

Obama's campaign slogan, was "Forward." This slogan has been used repeatedly in history to promote a Socialist, Marxist and Communist agenda. Here are a few examples:

Vorwärts!

(German word for Forward used in Nazi propaganda-also known as Germany's National SOCIALIST party)

Vpered!

(Soviet word for Forward)

Forward to victory!

(Lenin)

Great Warriors Forward to the West!

(Russian WWII poster)

Let's March Forward under the Banner of Mao Zedong!

(Propaganda in the People's Republic of China)

Mao's Great Leap Forward!

(1958 Communist China slogan)

Under the Leadership of Stalin-Forward!

(Stalin)

Forward for Stalin

(the name of Stalin's newspaper)

Super Great Leap Forward
(Cambodian Khmer Rouge Leader Pol Pot slogan)

Here's the end result of previous "Forward-thinking" rulers:

Germany's National Socialists (Nazis):
21 MILLION PEOPLE KILLED

Mao Zedong's People's Republic of China:
65 MILLION PEOPLE KILLED

Pol Pot (Khmer Rouge Leader of Cambodia):
3 MILLION PEOPLE KILLED

USSR stands for Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:
100 MILLION PEOPLE KILLED

Socialism is simply a demonic ideology from the abyss cloaked in an "angel of light" costume. There is talk of "saving the planet" and of "fairness," and "income inequality." All of this is simply a subtle power grab. Sadly, the Socialism message has also been picked up by false religious leaders and touted as "social justice."

Let's examine this concept of "fairness" and everyone getting the same treatment from a scriptural context. Some churches even go so far as to claim that if Jesus was walking here today on planet Earth He would be a socialist, which is utter blasphemy. They use the sharing of Acts as an example to make this claim:

Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.
~Acts 2:44-45 (NKJV)

There were no needy ones among them, because those who owned lands or houses would sell their property, bring the proceeds from the sales, and lay them at the apostles' feet for distribution to anyone as he had need.
~Acts 4:34-35 (Berean Study Bible)

The key difference here is *choice* instead of *compulsion*. Now, let's compare the Book of Acts example to the Socialist ideological perversion:

Acts of First Century Church: given freely, cheerfully.
Socialism: forcibly taken from others, taxed grudgingly.

So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

~2 Corinthians 9:7 (KJV)

Acts of First Century Church: Were acts of Christian charity for the purpose of expanding the Kingdom of God.

Socialism: Is an act of Human Secularists for the purpose of expanding government control for themselves, the elites.

Because of the proof this ministry provides, the saints will glorify God for your obedient confession of the gospel of Christ, and for the generosity of your contribution to them and to all the others.

~2 Corinthians 9:13 (Berean Study Bible)

Acts of First Century Church: encouraged everyone to pull their own weight.

Socialism: encourages a "non-work" victim mentality.

For even while we were with you, we gave you this command: "If anyone is unwilling to work, he shall not eat."

~2 Thessalonians 3:10 (Berean Study Bible)

Interestingly, JUDAS was the disciple who expressed concern about redistributing wealth to the poor:

Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages." He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

~John 12:5-6 (NIV)

Government cannot erase all boundaries, differences, and the unique characteristics of every individual person. Nor should they step in and try to erase the consequences of poor choices and confiscate the rewards associated with great effort. In fact, many people at the end of their lives will share that the "worst" things that ever happened to them often had the greatest beneficial impact on them mentally, physically, and spiritually. THAT is exactly why we should not attempt to erase all pain. No one likes pain while they are going through it, but this is what scripture says:

No discipline seems enjoyable at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it yields a peaceful harvest of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

~Hebrews 12:11 (Berean Study Bible)

So, let's press ONWARD dear Christian soldiers by continued Acts of good works but not pitch "Forward"...

lest we end up in the abyss.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, Your Word teaches us that every soul is to be subject to the governing authorities, and that there is no authority except from You; those that exist are appointed by You. Your Holy Word further tells us to pray for those in authority so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. Teach us that the only "social justice" comes from You and not from the hand of government. You created government to maintain order and administer judgment but not to steal, kill and destroy their own citizenry. When government turns to these activities, they will be judged by God. You came to bring us Life and Liberty. Let us render unto Caesar what belongs to Caesar and render unto God what belongs only to God. Caesar may tax us physically, mentally, and spiritually but our hearts, minds and souls belong to You and You alone. Remind us that government is not our "Provider" and that only You can fill that role. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, our Great God and Savior the Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The ONLY Name in Heaven and Earth by which mankind may be saved.

~Amen

Day #48 ~ Counting the Omer

World Class Crop Separate but Unequaled

And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

~Hebrew 11:39-40 (NKJV)

We've reached Day #48 in "Counting the Omer." With only 3 more days to go, it is our prayer that these devotionals have trained you spiritually to be more aware of God's created order of the Universe. Ancient Israel was keenly mindful that nothing was "random" with the Lord and everything, down to the smallest detail, has a purpose. A belief in randomness causes a sense of dread, a sense of futility and a state of hopelessness. It is a recipe for depression, suicide, and man's inhumanity to man. If nothing has any meaning, then "why bother?" "Whatever" becomes the apathetic mantra to define an individual or a nation. Once you enter into the Light of Christ, where all things have meaning, everything is important, everyone has purpose, then, and only then, can you truly love others and live a life that is pleasing to God. We become keenly aware of the consequences of disobedience to God and how this greatly affects our lives and our nations. This is not a gospel of "being nice" but a deep knowledge that the devil is "playing for keeps." We must view people as souls either on the path to destruction or walking the straight and narrow. We are not permitted to "cross the road" or "look away" when we see someone taking a beating by Satan. Like the Good Samaritan, we are to *get involved*.

And indeed, have mercy on those who doubt; save others by snatching them from the fire; and to still others, show mercy tempered with fear, hating even the clothing stained by the flesh.

~Jude 1:22-23 (Berean Study Bible)

When we research "forty-eight" in Strong's Concordance, only two verses come up:

So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be FORTY and EIGHT cities: them shall ye give with their suburbs.

~Numbers 35:7 (KJV, emphasis added)

All the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of Israel were FORTY and EIGHT cities within their suburbs.

~Joshua 21:41 (KJV, emphasis added)

The Levites did not receive the large land apportionments when the Israelites entered the Promised Land. Instead they received *cities*. It's as if God gave them the key to the city (authority) instead of the deed to the real estate (ownership).

Furthermore, the Book of Ezekiel, is the only book in the Bible with exactly 48 chapters. Wikipedia describes Ezekiel concisely:

It is "structured around three themes:

- Judgment on the nation of Israel
- Judgment on the nations
- Future blessings for Israel

Further stated as:

- God's requirement of separation/purity for His people
- Israel as a divine community
- The individual's responsibility to God

In Chapter FORTY-EIGHT of Isaiah we see this admonition:

Leave Babylon, flee from the Chaldeans!

~Isaiah 48:20 (Berean Study Bible)

Symbolically, in scripture, Babylon signifies any evil nation and Chaldea signifies the magical, mystical practices of false religion. The Beatles sang "*the magical mystery tour in coming to take you away.*" Yes, it is. *Don't get on that train.* Many commentaries have been written on *why* God calls His people to be separated and distinct from these two evil pulls (political power and mysticism), but this should be relatively simple to discern. Just as Levitical priests were not supposed to be practicing like the false-god religions, the nation of Israel is also not supposed to be governed like the rest of the nations. God was displeased when Israel asked for a king to rule over them. GOD is their King! God's individual people are, of course, living in the world but citizens of a spiritual kingdom; a different way of governing.

But our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.

~Philippians 3:20 (Berean Study Bible)

Thus, like the Levitical priests of Ancient Israel, we should find our apportionment elsewhere. God does nothing in His Holy Word that is not rich with principles for us to learn from and live by.

Without getting into long eschatological explanations on "end times," there are 144,000 "virgins" who "have not defiled themselves with women." (Revelation 14:4). A "woman" in the scripture can symbolize many things. Since marriage is a holy estate and you are not "defiled" by marriage, I think this means something much deeper than physical virginity. Scriptural multiples of 12: ($12 \times 12 = 144$) are indicators of God's Perfect Government, the New Jerusalem. Thus, whoever these 144,000 people may be, we know that they are not "joined" with or "in bed with" established earthly government and/or established earthly religions. They are citizens of a Heavenly government with a Heavenly spiritual mandate being appointed over the "cities" or jurisdictions laid out by the Lord Himself. In another multiple of 12 ($12 + 12$) we see "elders" or judges who shall rule Jerusalem alongside the King of kings.

And around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and sitting on the thrones twenty-four elders, having been clothed in white garments; and on their heads, golden crowns.
~Revelation 4:4 (Berean Literal Bible)

48 can also be expressed like this: $12 + 12 + 12 + 12$. It symbolizes the 4 walls surrounding the New Jerusalem, or the Heavenly real estate we will rule. Even secular Wikipedia includes this comment regarding The New Jerusalem:

"John writes that the wall is 144 cubits, which is assumed to be the THICKNESS since the length is mentioned previously. It is important to note that 12 is the square root of 144." ~ Wikipedia (The New Jerusalem, emphasis added)

Thus, to state this more clearly, the walls of the New Jerusalem are described as 12 wide + 12 high (2 sides), 12 wide + 12 high (2 sides) = 48. Once again, we see the amazing orderliness of God's Holy Word.

Too often, the phrase "be in the world but not of the world," is the poorly practiced ideology of the churches of today. Even more surprisingly, this is NOT an actual scripture verse! It is a twisted version of Christ's actual words which are:

They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.
~John 17:16 (Berean Study Bible)

So, scripture does not teach us that we are supposed to be "in the world." We are to COME OUT of the world. Sadly, much of the Churchian establishment today revels in the mud with the world and is, for all practical purposes, virtually indistinguishable from

the world in music, dress, entertainment, speech, and practice. This is not what the Lord intended! Let's check again on what else God has to say on this topic:

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of the One having called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

~1 Peter 2:9 (Berean Literal Bible)

And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.

~Revelation 18:4 (NKJV)

This was true THEN, true NOW and true in the FINAL DAYS! There's an old saying/meme still floating around that goes something like this: *"If you were put on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?"* Based on the sad state of most churches today, the answer is clearly "no." They would get a secular FDA stamp of approval: **Formally Declared Apostate ~ not harmful at all to the devil's kingdom.** The right way to live for the Lord is like this:

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in Your Name."

~Luke 10:17 (Berean Study Bible)

While Jesus told us not to rejoice in this fact but instead rejoice that our names are written in the Book of Life (Luke 10:20), He nevertheless acknowledged the fact that devils *must* obey us. This is TRUTH! When passionate, spirit-filled Christians wake up in the morning, Satan should literally SHAKE IN FEAR. We should be a daily reminder to him that his days are numbered.

When a war starts, there is a separation that takes place: families get torn apart, soldiers leave for battle, there are casualties and differences of opinions that can become very heated. There is SACRIFICE. God's spiritual war is no different. These scriptures should leave no doubt:

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

~Matthew 10: 34-39 (KJV)

From now on, five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.

~Luke 12:52-53 (Berean Study Bible)

"Truly I tell you," said Jesus, "no one who has left home or brothers and sisters or mother or father or children or fields for My sake and for the gospel will fail to receive a hundredfold in the present age--houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and fields, along with persecutions--and in the age to come, eternal life."

~Mark 10:29-30 (Berean Study Bible)

Instead, modern Churchianity preaches the outlandish idea that comfy pews, prosperity preaching, "self-actualization," and fans/fame are the way of the Cross. This is the way of Satan's three temptations! It is made clear in scripture that Satan currently holds title to the secular kingdoms of this world.

Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. "All this I will give You," he said, "if You will fall down and worship me."

~Matthew 4:8-9 (Berean Study Bible)

So, who will heed God's battle call? He's organizing His Final Army. 144,000 of the finest warriors this planet has ever seen to retake the land. While they may not yet hold the "title deed" on planet Earth, they will finally...

give the devil his due.

For you have spent enough time in the past carrying out the same desires as the Gentiles: living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing, and detestable idolatry. Because of this, they consider it strange of you not to plunge with them into the same flood of reckless indiscretion, and they heap abuse on you. But they will have to give an account to Him Who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

~1 Peter 4:3-5 (Berean Study Bible)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, It is time for Your army of spiritual warriors to amass. Let us not be bound up with things of this earth but let us set our sights on Your Heavenly Kingdom. As a nation often remembers those who died for us in earthly battles, let us never forget the One who died for us so that we may win the spiritual battle with the enemy of our souls. From previous warriors, such as those honored in Hebrews 11 who have gone before us, let us be fully cognizant of the sacrifices that must be made. If men will readily die as they wrangle over pieces of temporal, earthly real estate, how

*much more so must we be ready to commit our lives into Your service which offers ETERNAL returns. Please send the Power of Your Holy Spirit to equip us so that we may we continue onward in faith. We have the Blessed Hope that our Great God and King is soon to return to rule and reign for 1000 years to fulfill the Sabbath Law. This will fully complete our prayers that Your will may be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.
~Amen*

Day #49 ~ Counting the Omer

Finish Up Or Give it a Rest?

As God's fellow workers, then, we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For He says: "In the time of favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." Behold, NOW is the time of favor; NOW is the day of salvation!

~2 Corinthians 6:1-2 (Berean Study Bible, emphasis added)

By the 49th day of counting, the barley harvest is complete (the first fruits) and the wheat harvest begins. Jesus, of course, was described as The First-Fruit and we are to follow Him.

For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ the firstfruits; then at His Coming, those who belong to Him.

~1 Corinthians 15:22-23 (Berean Study Bible)

The number "forty-nine" is found only 1 time in 1 scripture verse to describe the 7x7 sabbaths of years:

And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.
~Leviticus 25:8 (KJV, underline added)

The symbolic meaning of the number 49 is derived from the fact that it is a result of 7 times 7. With seven representing "completion" in scripture, 7x7 (49) represents the penultimate perfect ending. If day #7 represents a Sabbath rest, then 7x7 represents a "MEGA-rest" leading to a Jubilee year (#50) when the captives will be set free.

It is quite interesting that the "Counting of the Omer" occurs only during the Barley Harvest. Barley is very easily threshed. To separate the kernel from the chaff, barley is sifted by throwing it in the air and letting the wind (symbol of the Holy Spirit) separate it. Barley represents those with a soft heart towards repentance. They are easily separated from the world as those who readily submit to the Lord's separation process and they are the very first to REPENT.

As we reach the end of Omer counting, those who are easily moved by the gentle blowing of the Holy Spirit have already been harvested, and now the rest of the harvest begins.

In the wheat harvest, it is more difficult to separate the "fruit" or seed from the chaff. Here are some very descriptive terms of what is required to harvest wheat:

To Harvest Wheat, first the wheat is CUT DOWN with either a pruner, a sickle, or a scythe to separate the wheat from the chaff. Then the wheat sheaves are bundled and dried out before the threshing process. Typically, this is a 7 day "curing" process. Perhaps this is indicative of a 7-year tribulation period or a desert walk "drying out" period.

The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.

~Isaiah 2:11 (ESV)

Then, the threshing process begins. This separates the "fruit" head from the worthless straw and involves beating with a wooden bat, banging the seed heads inside a metal trash can and treading under foot. Beating is done with a flail. We see this symbolic concept in scripture:

Strike him with a rod (a flail), and you will deliver his soul from Sheol.

~Proverbs 23:14 (Berean Study Bible, parenthesis added)

God's Holy Word is often described as a "rod of correction." Next, the straw, (the worthless works) are burned up but unlike the worthless tares, the "body" of the seed is saved.

If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or straw, his workmanship will be evident, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will prove the quality of each man's work.

~1 Corinthians 3:12-13 (Berean Study Bible)

Then, the sifting process begins which involves a whole lot of shaking.

The words, "Once more," signify the removal of what can be shaken--that is, created things--so that the unshakable may remain.

~Hebrew 12:27 (Berean Study Bible)

After threshing and sifting comes winnowing. Winnowing involves pouring from one container to another. It is done in front of a fan with more blowing wind.

His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.
~Matthew 3:12 (NKJV)

Finally, for the finest flour, STONE-GRINDING in a mill is necessary. Too much heat reduces the quality.

You shall beat some of it very fine and put part of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting where I will meet with you; it shall be most holy to you.
~ Exodus 30:36 (NASB)

While reading this description, I could not help but wonder at God's amazingly descriptive symbolism! There are many of us who are resistant to submitting to God's ingathering by repenting. We should all pray to be like the BARLEY HARVEST because, after the Omer is counted, one might describe the next season of harvest as "*let the beatings begin.*"

Like any good parent, those who remain stubbornly unrepentant will continue to be corrected with the rod of God's Holy Word, a few heads may get banged to get some brains released. Worthless works, those not of precious metals, are "trash canned." A little stomping under foot happens next.

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.
~Matthew 5:13 (NKJV)

Lastly, God will pour out what remains into a new container while the powerful wind of the Holy Spirit is blowing as a fan-sifter.

I will scatter them with a winnowing fork at the gates of the land. I will bereave and destroy My people who have not turned from their ways.
~Jeremiah 15:7 (Berean Study Bible)

The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will weed out of His kingdom every cause of sin and all who practice lawlessness.
~Matthew 13:41 (Berean Study Bible)

While this may sound very harsh on the surface, the alternative is to have a reprobate child, a bad seed, who will go on to be a danger to himself and others. A seed that bears no fruit.

For the Lord disciplines whom He loves, and He scourges every son whom He receives.
~Hebrew 12:6 (Berean Literal Bible)

For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His Holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

~Hebrews 12:10-11 (NKJV)

After the Wheat Harvest comes the Olive Harvest. Olives are PRESSED into service. This process is even more intense. During the olive harvest there will be great pressure on all sides, but we will rejoice in an increase of prophetic understanding of the times. Some of us will need multiple pressings to create the Extra-Virgin lamp oil which is necessary to be prepared for the Bridegroom as in the Parable of the Ten Virgins. (Matthew 25:1-13). The very word "Gethsemane" means oil press. It is where Jesus sweated great drops of Blood as He contemplated with prophetic understanding what was necessary for Him to go through.

After the Olive Harvest, comes the Fig Harvest. Ripe figs represent churches and church leaders who provide the correct gospel teaching so that we may be taught how to be partakers of His Holiness. Churches must pray to be productive and serving Christ's purposes, lest they be cursed like the barren fig tree that He came upon. The ripe ones will go on to bear much fruit. The others will shrivel and die in their apostasy.

Finally, let us prepare our hearts for the last stage of separation of the sheep from the goats. The Church will have to endure persecution, war, bloodshed and, for some, martyrdom. We know this will be God's final merciful attempt to bring all nations to repentance.

Today, with Day #49 completed, in tomorrow's Devotional we reach the 50th Day, also known as the Jubilee. As we can see from the symbolism found in the various harvests, this is a time of glaring juxtapositions. For some this is a time of joyful anticipation (freedom/release), for others it is a time of razing (getting cut down).

In the final Jubilee, which no one except The Father knows for sure when that might be, it is the end of the countdown to Christ's return in Victory for His people. For the remaining impenitent it is the beginning of the countdown to the apocalypse. He comes in both Mercy AND Judgment unto Victory. We must understand that for many, Judgment IS Mercy! Better to be disciplined by the rod of God's correction NOW than be destroyed by Satan later!

With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

~Isaiah 26:9 (KJV, underline emphasis added)

A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

~Matthew 12:20 (KJV)

It's Harvest time. Fear the Reaper. Repent NOW.

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Instead, fear the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

~Matthew 10:28 (Berean Study Bible)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father: For far too long we have not held a correct and reverent attitude about Your Holiness. Your Holy Word tells us that Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom! Yet, instead, we have thought of You as if You are doing our bidding when we should humbly be in Your service. It is an HONOR to be called to do the work of the Most High God. Help us to serve accordingly with all honesty, integrity, and passion as followers of our Perfect Role Model, Yeshua. Let us not have grandiose thoughts about ourselves, but like Christ, humble ourselves and then wait for God to lift us up. Like Christ, we make ourselves of no reputation and we triumph over Satan's three temptations of fans, fame, and earthly fortune. We pray for more laborers into Your Kingdom as there is much work to do and the Harvest is ripe. May we work towards the ultimate reward, to bow down at Your feet and hear: "Well done thou good and faithful servant." We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, our Great God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the ONLY Name under Heaven and in Earth by which mankind may be saved.

~Amen

Day #50 ~ Counting the Omer

Abundant Harvest

The Living End

I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will give you counsel and watch over you. Do not be like the horse or mule, which have no understanding; they must be controlled with bit and bridle to make them come to you.

~Psalm 32:8-9 (Berean Study Bible)

Today we reach Day #50, the final day of Counting the Omer! To recap, an omer is a "sheaf" of unthreshed stalks of grain. It symbolically references the Great Harvest of mankind just as the old hymn "*Bringing in the Sheaves*" demonstrates to us. We must now prepare to be threshed and refined!

The Counting of the Omer is referenced two times in scripture:

And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord.

~Leviticus 23:15-16 (NKJV)

You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain.

~Deuteronomy 16:9 (NKJV)

For Christians, the Omer counts us to the day of Pentecost and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. One might say Counting the Omer is a summary of our Christian walk from receiving the Law to receiving the Power which writes the Law on our hearts, from beginning to end, from start to finish. Jesus finished His atoning work on the Cross and now He is finishing and refining us in His Master Peace through the Power of the Holy Spirit. It was 50 Days after Jesus rose from the dead that the apostles gathered in the Upper Room to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

For today's final Devotional, we need a fitting ending. We need to address that, not only are we reaching the end of this Omer series, but we are also nearing the end of days on this planet. As such, there is some "final business" that we all need to tie up. Jesus stated to Peter that we should make every effort to forgive others over and over again.

Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven."

~Matthew 18:22 (NKJV)

It seems that, through hyperbole, Jesus is clearly advocating for extravagant forgiveness. Many people might take this to mean "unlimited forgiveness" but even at 70 x 7, Jesus' own words suggested that there is still an ending point. In keeping with our Counting of the Omer understanding we can discern that this ending point (70x7=490) is the temporal Day of Jubilee or The Leveling. It is the "Cosmic Do-over."

Let us also remember that just a few chapters before, Jesus spoke of an "unpardonable sin!" In light of Christ's recommendations to forgive and then forgive and forgive again, the term "unpardonable sin" may almost seem to be an oxymoronic unbiblical ideology. If He commands us to be willing to extravagantly forgive sin...WHAT CAN BLOCK FORGIVENESS FROM HAPPENING? How can someone sin unpardonably? Yet this condition must be possible, or it would not be in scripture.

If we confess [Spoiler Alert: Clue here] our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

~1 John 1:9 (Berean Study Bible, brackets added)

As Christians we must believe what Jesus says without question. If Jesus says there is an unpardonable sin, make no mistake about it, there IS a sin that is unpardonable! First, let's look at His words in context. When Jesus made this statement, He made it to the Pharisees who were accusing Him of being "Beelzebub" or of being a devil. Jesus responded:

Therefore, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

~Matthew 12:31-32 (NKJV)

May I be so bold as to paraphrase Jesus? In essence, Jesus said: "As BAD as that is (calling Me a devil), it is STILL pardonable. What is unpardonable, however, is speaking that same thing against the Holy Spirit or attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to the devil. Now, THAT is unpardonable."

"OK, OK"...you might say. *"I still don't fully understand it."* Well, let's begin by studying the attributes of the Holy Spirit. WHY was the Holy Spirit sent to the Church after Jesus ascended to Heaven? How does someone blaspheme against the Holy Spirit? Let's "be a Berean" and study the scripture to confirm this:

The Work of the Holy Spirit

CONVICTS:

And when He comes, He will convict the world in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:

~John 16:8 (Berean Study Bible)

TEACHES and REMINDS:

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have told you.

~John 14:26 (Berean Study Bible)

EMPOWERS WITH BOLDNESS:

After they had prayed, their meeting place was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

~Acts 4:31 (Berean Study Bible)

KEEPS OUR HEARTS SOFT IF WE LISTEN:

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as you did in the rebellion

~Hebrews 3:7-8 (Berean Study Bible)

SHOULD NEVER BE IGNORED, QUENCHED, OR EXTINGUISHED:

Do not extinguish the Spirit.

~1 Thessalonians 5:19 (Berean Study Bible)

Recently, an apostate woman "pastor" posted a YouTube video teaching people that the nagging in their heart convicting of their sin was BAD, that it was the voice of the devil. She instructed them that they simply needed to keep ignoring this voice in order to reach "self-actualization." She went so far as to call that "check" in your spirit an "inner critic," the "accuser" and equating it with the devil who doesn't like your "actual self." Wretchedly, she was instructing people, in detail, on how to commit the unpardonable sin. She was equating the conviction of the Holy Spirit with something bad or evil, something to be ignored, suppressed, and resisted. The devil is to be resisted, NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT! When we resist the devil, he flees from us. Why, in the name of everything holy, would we want to resist the Holy Spirit? David prayed:

Cast me not away from Your presence; take not Your Holy Spirit from me.

~Psalm 51:11 (Berean Study Bible, underline emphasis added)

This apostate "pastor" was also instructing people to do away with the necessary component of CONFESSION but instead accepting ourselves and our sins as just part of who we are.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.
~Psalm 51:3 (Berean Study Bible)

This evil teaching of no conviction, no confession is basic *"I'm OK, You're OK"* pop-psychology, secular nonsense. The real Truth is that a book should more accurately be titled *"I'm a Mess, you're a Mess!"* That is the core essence of a REPENTANT heart! Until we grasp how badly we need a Savior (the depth of our wickedness), we cannot REPENT! If we simply keep embracing and affirming ourselves with all of our spots and wrinkles, we will not submit to the transformation from "glory to glory" provided by the tutelage of the Holy Spirit. Christ demands and deserves a Bride without spot or wrinkle!

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
~Ephesians 5:27 (KJV)

As a popular song lyric says: *"Don't Leave Me This Way"*...Christ loves us too much to leave us the way He found us.

Then I passed by and saw you squirming in your blood, and as you lay there in your blood I said to you, 'Live!' There I said to you, 'Live!'
~Ezekiel 16:6 (Berean Study Bible)

The real "accuser of the brethren," the enemy of our souls, will NOT convict us because Satan wants to CONDEMN us. He knows that the only way we will be condemned is by tricking us into perpetual disobedience and non-confession of sins.

If we deliberately go on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no further sacrifice for sins remains, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume all adversaries.
~Hebrews 10:26-27 (Berean Study Bible)

When our Teacher, the Holy Spirit, convicts us and tries to guide us into righteousness, what should we do with that "knock on the heart?" If we continually and unrelentingly DISMISS Him, we will die in our sins! Even worse, to equate the Holy Spirit's conviction of sin with the devil is unpardonable as it creates an unrepentant state in which it is IMPOSSIBLE TO REPENT! Shudders!

So clearly the Bible does not instruct us to "embrace our real self." You are not great "just the way you are" despite popular belief and song lyrics. Embracing the spirit of "self-acceptance" IS THE ESSENCE OF THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

Just before Christ's return, scripture speaks of the removal of the "restrainer" which precedes the revealing of the "man of lawlessness."

And you know what is now restraining him, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but the one who now restrains it will continue until he is taken out of the way.

~2 Thessalonians 2:6-7 (Berean Study Bible)

I personally believe that the "man of lawlessness" who is revealed before the Second Coming of Christ will preach a false gospel of "giving up" and embracing sin and sinful lifestyles. It will be the opposite message of scripture which exhorts us to persevere and overcome. We see this evil "gospel" being proclaimed already in the LGBTQ+ perversion agenda. "Just accept yourself." It will be a gospel of fake "love" and Universalism. It will preach that the only requirement for entry into the Kingdom is the false doctrine of "if you just believe." This is NOT the gospel in scripture, I like to call it the fake Disney gospel. Disney literally wrote a song for the movie Peter Pan entitled "*If You Just Believe*." It was about children who don't want to grow up. Even devils know that Jesus Christ is the Holy Son of God and they know that He rose from the dead for our sins. Thus, this "head knowledge" is obviously not enough to keep us out of the abyss with them!

As most devilish messages are it is a *half* Truth which is the worst sort of lie. While Jesus most certainly is the Holy Son of God, and He most certainly rose from the dead, the true gospel message begins with REPENT....*turn away from sin!* We must also bear fruits of repentance through confession and conduct otherwise we will be outed as LIARS whose father is the father of all lies.

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors--not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

~Romans 8:12-13 (NKJV)

The Final False Prophet will teach a doctrine of LAWLESSNESS, no conviction, no confession of sins...just grace, grace and more grace on steroids. This is a heretical doctrine leading to eternal death.

This devilish doctrine of "just believe" maligns obedience as a "return to legalism." The snake in the grass tells us: "*Surely, God doesn't require you to obey Him! You can eat the forbidden apple of your own desires and not die! In fact, you will become like God, making all your own decisions and doing what is right in your own eyes.*" Same old lie from Satan was told just before the Fall of mankind.

While, we must fully grasp that our atonement is 100% through the Blood of Jesus Christ and that nothing we can ever offer atones for one single sin that we have committed, we SIMULTANEOUSLY acknowledge, with a repentant heart, that we HATE sin and wish to avoid it through obedience to His Holy Word administered to us through

the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit convicts us, teaches us, guides us, "softens us up" and reminds us of God's Holy Word and SHOULD NEVER BE IGNORED. God forbid any teaching that instructs us to resist the Holy Spirit and then likens His conviction in our souls to the devil! God forbid it.

And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.

~Hebrews 5:9 (NKJV, underline emphasis added)

So, let us finish counting the Omer on a good note. Let's REPENT! We must return to serving Christ in obedience to His Holy Word. Don't bite the big apple of Satan's lies...it's full of maggots. As the First Century Church after Pentecost, let us be thankful for the Power and conviction of the Holy Spirit Who was sent to help us fight the good fight to the finish. When we submit to the Holy Spirit, He gives us the power not only to submit to God's finishing work in our hearts but also to...

FINISH OFF SATAN.

Christ Returns on a White Horse

~Revelation 19:11-16 (NKJV)

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:

***KING OF KINGS AND
LORD OF LORDS.***

Prayer:

Heavenly Father: On this final day of Counting the Omer I am reminded how quickly life passes. Your Holy Word says our lives are like vapors, here today and gone tomorrow. Help us to use our days wisely in Your service as only Your eternal works and rewards will remain. Sensitize our hearts to the voice of Your Holy Spirit. Your sheep know Your voice. When Your Voice is correcting us, let us not resist as we submit to Your discipline with the assured knowledge that those whom You discipline

You love us as Your sons and daughters. Empower us to "fight to the finish" and, in doing so, complete the Great Mission that You gave us to go and preach the gospel unto the ends of the earth through DISCIPLESHIP. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, the only Name under Heaven and on earth by which mankind may be saved, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, our Great God and Savior who is coming again soon.

~Amen

Closing Chapter:

Casting Call

Mission Impossible or Happily Ever After?

“Come, follow Me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”

~Mathew 4:19 (Berean Study Bible)

We hope you have enjoyed our *"Counting the Omer"* Devotional Series. In life, it is always more difficult to finish than it is to start. That is why scripture admonishes and exhorts us to persevere and overcome.

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

~James 1:12 (ESV, underline emphasis added)

He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

~Rev 3:5 (NKJV, underline emphasis added)

Often, we may look at the Grand Canyon chasm of our sin and feel a sense of hopelessness just like the Apostle Paul:

What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

~Romans 7:24 (Berean Study Bible)

We may want to sit down and weep at the seeming futility of making it across. When we realize that Christ has laid Himself down to bridge that great chasm, we are filled with GRATITUDE beyond measure.

THAT'S NOT WHERE THIS STORY ENDS HOWEVER!

We must, with the gift of faith, get up and start walking. We must pick up our cross, lay down our own lives and GET GOING. Christ has already shown us the Way. It's scary, it's frightening and there are times when we look down, we feel as if we will fall. We carry the plumb-line of God's Holy Word in our hands as a balancing rod and we have the "wind" of the Holy Spirit to constantly correct us, to buffet our bodies. We fix our eyes on the goal, the opposite side, and keep moving onward.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now even more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

~Philippians 2:12 (Berean Study Bible)

Did you know that the Book of Acts is the one book that many theologians say is not complete? Not all of the apostles are mentioned, only a few. Furthermore, not all of their acts are included. The Acts of the Apostles were supposed to bring the testimony of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. Yet, this is not fully accomplished by the end of The Book of Acts.

If the Book of Acts was a mystery novel, we should be asking by now: *WHODUNNIT?* WHO will fulfill this commission? God is sending out his "casting call." In fisherman's terms, a good cast results in a good catch.

As in any compelling narrative, "*to be continued*" seems to be the appropriate ending for the Book of Acts. Who will complete this seeming "*Mission Impossible?*" With God by our side, it is a "done deal," an already authored script. Nevertheless, He seeks a people who will believe in His cause and come alongside to star in His drama and complete the quest. Until the final credits are shown, many of the heroes and heroines may be complete "unknowns."

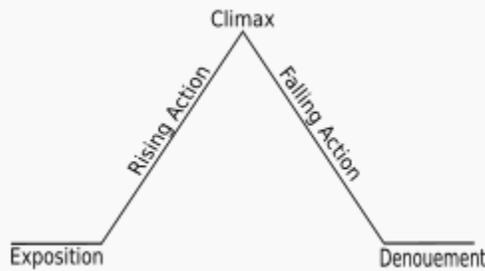
Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

~Matthew 19:26 (Berean Study Bible)

If the Old Testament was Part 1 of God's Epic Drama, and the New Testament is Part II, then WE the Church are responsible for stepping up to be cast in Part III. It is the ultimate ending for an exciting "trilogy."

Make no mistake...We do not add or subtract to the original story! IT HAS ALREADY BEEN WRITTEN. Many movie trilogies utilize a "reverse chronology" perspective or "flashbacks" into the original story to further explain Part 1 and Part 2, so shall The Final Century Church get to play in the concluding "backstory." We understand the dramatic mission that is already outlined in the Old and New Testament and we answer God's casting call to "Act" (pun intended!) with our passion play to the end.

Great literature is often assessed by a dramatic structure paradigm known as Freytag's Pyramid (see chart below). The Biblical Grand Drama has all the elements of a great play or an epic novel. Let's take a look!



Exposition (Main Plot/Characters): In this portion, the Master storyteller (God) creates the scene and the cast of characters. The initial characters, Adam and Eve, interact within God's screenplay which is set up in The Garden of Eden. This begins a chain reaction of events. Obviously, the world is in chaos and disorder and humanity has lost its way. We stumble through life with all the foibles and drama of the human messes that we are. One might say that the Old Testament "sets the stage."

Rising Action: The story continues to build. Who will save the world from this sin bondage and chaos? It becomes clear that none of the "shadow-type" heroes in the Old Testament such as Moses, Samson, King David, Gideon and others have everything that it takes to resolve the situation. The prophecies point to the need for a super-hero, a Messiah-deliver, Jesus Christ. There is a build-up, a hopeful expectation of The Redeemer coming printed between every line of the Old Testament.

Crisis/Climax: This is where we see the greatest tension between the "protagonist" (Good Yeshua) and the antagonist (Evil Satan). The Savior is on the scene and hope is rising. *Oh no!...CRISIS! Our Lord is crucified! But wait...He's back!!! He's stronger than ever before!*

Falling Action: The Hero departs the scene and delegates responsibilities to His followers. The Hero is leaving them with His fighting Spirit, but He realizes that unless He physically goes away, they will never grow strong enough to take on the enemy themselves. The mantle of responsibility falls on them. Sadly, despite our Hero's incredible sacrifice, the battle rages on and the world condition continues to deteriorate. The delegation does not yet fully understand the enemies' tactics and continues to try to negotiate "peace" with an implacable evil. I particularly like this sentence found on an Internet explanation of Freytag's Pyramid: *"The falling action may contain a moment of final suspense, in which the final outcome of the conflict appears to be in doubt."*

That is a perfect explanation of the world's condition at this very moment in time. It almost feels as if we are suspended in time much like a rocket ship that has run out of fuel.

Denouement (Resolution? Revelation? Catastrophe?):

It is here where the Author "unties the knot" (the literal meaning of the French word "denouement"). Christ's confidence in His delegation was not misplaced. Though badly battered and bruised, they are now seasoned warriors who boldly make a "last stand!" The Spirit of the heroes that have gone before them, as well as their Ultimate Hero, inspires them on to magnificent deeds of great sacrifice. Yet still...The battle is fierce. They longingly search the skies for their Hero to return.

For some, this is their ultimate Hope, the long-awaited final resolution of the problem. Others have turned traitor, enjoying the spoils that belong to the Hero alone and they desire to usurp Him and take His place. For others, there will be new insight and revelation as the Truth is revealed to them, they must align fully with the Hero to make it out alive. No schemes, plots, plans and temporary kings and princes will save them. For the hard-hearted villain(s), there will be catastrophe and an apocalypse as they are unmasked and revealed for the evil that they do and that they are.

Bravo! The Hero makes a magnificent, earth-splitting re-entry. Every eye sees Him as He finishes off the enemy. His people are saved and fully transformed by His Return. Evil and Death are defeated, and the battle-weary delegation is rescued! This is truly a "fairy-tale" ending as we really DO get to live "happily ever after." I inwardly laugh every time I hear an Atheist snarkily ask: *"So you actually believe in those fairy tales in the Bible?"*

YES, YES, YES! 1000 years and then onward to eternity YES!

Jesus came so we can have LIFE and have it more abundantly. To enjoy this abundant life, there needs to be "Two Weddings and a Funeral." First there was the Wedding of Cana. Now, indeed, we need to attend to a funeral of ourselves, our former life. This world and its allures must become nothing to us.

Truly, Truly, I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a seed; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

~John 12:24 (Berean Study Bible)

We must die to sin, die to our old lives, and enlist in the service of the King. Then, and only then, can we enjoy the Second Wedding that Jesus will attend. Unlike the Wedding of Cana, this time we will be the Bride and He will be the Bridegroom.

So today, I bring you some good news and some bad news.

To fulfill the Book of Acts Mission we, the delegation, must first tell you the bad news. If you are living in unrepentant sin or apostasy....It's TERMINAL! Sadly, for much of the world who refuse to give up their wrongdoing, there will be chastisement and judgment.

Jesus made note of the world's unrepentant state in this scripture verse:

"To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others:

*'We played the flute for you,
and you did not dance;
we sang a dirge,
and you did not mourn.'*

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon!' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at this glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is vindicated by her ACTIONS."

~Matthew 11:16-19 (Berean Study Bible, emphasis added)

Despite this diagnosis of "terminal sin sickness," here is the good news, the healing Gospel message of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ is still available for the taking:

REPENT! Don't delay, time is short!

Hear the alarm warnings chiming. It's almost midnight.

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

~Matthew 25:6 (KJV, emphasis added)

ACT NOW!

The Great Commission

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

~Matthew 28:18-20 (Berean Study Bible)

Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, the Holy Prince of the Kingdom: We are humbled and amazed by Your invitation. Satan tries to come and snatch it from us, but You see the earnest yearning of our souls to attend Your Great Banquet. We know that the cost of entry is beyond anything that we can afford, yet You graciously provide a Way. At the stroke of a clock, we will be transformed in the twinkling of an eye. We look forward to that

Glorious Day when You reveal Your choice of a Bride. Many will be shocked and surprised at Your selection. May we be found ready, waiting, and suitable working among the repentance ashes. Even at this late hour, we pray for Mercy for ourselves and others. We recognize that Your righteous Judgment IS Mercy. Lead us today in Your paths of righteousness for Your Name's sake so that we will be presented to You without spot or wrinkle at Your soon coming as our Bridegroom.

~Amen

The Apple of His Eye

Closing Prayer of Repentance

For thus says the Lord of hosts, "After glory He has sent me against the nations which plunder you, for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye. ~ Zechariah 2:8 (KJV)

We conclude with a Holy Spirit-inspired prayer donated by one of our members. We pray that this Devotional series has increased your reverence for the order and synchronicity of Holy Scripture and an heightened awareness to be more like the Sons of Isaachar...those who discern what times we are in and know what we should do. (1 Chronicles 12:32)

Please feel free to share these Devotionals and Prayers and for further reflection.

As you go, preach this message: "The Kingdom of Heaven is near." Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give. ~ Matthew 10:7-8 (Berean Study Bible)

Prayer of Repentance

Dear Heavenly Father: Thank you for Your unfailing love. Help us to number our days appropriately as we Count the Omer. Let us remember that the time is ripe for Bringing in the Sheaves of Your Final Harvest. Let us not forget that we are created from the dust of the Earth and to dust we shall return through the ashes of repentance but that You promised to lift us up if we humble ourselves. May we arise in the likeness of Christ as this mortal body puts on immortality, in the mystery that is revealed at the last trumpet. Give us a deep understanding of Your triunity. You are not three separate persons but One as we too are triune and yet one person, created in Your image. We thank you for the gracious share that you have apportioned to us, a blessing well beyond anything that we deserve. Remind us that obedience is the key to fruitful living and that those who love You obey You. You are the Way and that Way is narrow and few find it. Take not Your Holy Spirit from us and soften our hearts so that we are constantly reminded of the great debt we owe you for the forgiveness of our deep

chasm of sin. Plant Your seeds of Truth within us so that we may yield a good crop. Let it not fall on stony or unreceptive soil but let it produce a harvest many times over. Let us not waste Your seed in acceptance of the world's false philosophies which do not align with Your Holy Word. Teach us to be fruitful and multiply according to Your very first commandment. Grow in us the Fruit of Your Holy Spirit so that we may be filled with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and restraint from evil. Help us to understand that when the Godly foundations are removed, we are grasping at straws and on sinking sand. The wages of sin are death and we must REPENT and fully return to worship You in a spirit of Truth. Let us not put asunder your Mosaic Law from earthly government or we will be cut down as an unfruitful tree. You will not be mocked. Whatever we sow, we shall reap. If we sow evil laws, we will be ruled by evil government which will ultimately collapse. The Harvest is ripe, but the laborers are few. Send more laborers, Lord, so that we may help accomplish Your Sovereign Plan for our nations and for the world. Let us not be found sleeping on the job but fully employed in gainful pursuits to extend your Heavenly Kingdom when the Master returns. Remind us that we will have crop failure and only reap the whirlwind unless we align with Your plans and Your purposes. Our victory gardens will not get plowed under if we set our eyes upon You instead of pursuing our own selfish plans. Bind us tightly to Your Mast. Even if the ship goes down, save those who put their faith in You. May we rest assured of your faithfulness even in the midst of raging storms. Burn off the chaff and save us from simply becoming worthless dross with no eternal value. Help us to plant pure crops with no mixture from any impure sources. Let us, like the moon, reflect Your Light as we have no light of our own without You. As you prepare Your garden of cultivated ground, keep us safe under the shelter of Your Wings. Remind us that there is no refuge found anywhere except under Your protection. Show us the Way through the Son's Light, keep us well-watered with your Living Word. As amber waves of grain get cut down, utilize Your storehouse to feed the rest of the planet with Your Truth. Protect the cream of the crop, those who have committed their lives to You, those who have not taken any thought of their own lives but have sacrificed it for others. Greater love has no man than to sacrifice for others and those who lose their life in Your service will find it, that is Your Holy decree. Remove all half-baked ideas for fake peace plans that do not defer to Your Holy Wisdom and to the promises written in Your Holy Word. Empower us with Your Gospel Truth which is to REPENT, believe, confess and walk as a witness to Your Holy Power. As we suit up in the spiritual armor, remind us that we battle not against flesh and blood but against the powers of darkness, lest we get hit with a left hook from the devil. Help us to remember that those who love You obey You. You are always faithful, but we must be proved by trials and tribulations increasing in faith and in the bond of unity. You choose us and we choose You so that we may have life and life more abundantly. Remind us that we need to remain obedient to You as a faithful Bride. Keep us safe from heretical doctrines that seek to scale Your Holy Mountain and sign on the dotted line with Satan for earthly fans, fame, and fortune. Let us have a bad taste in our mouth for any doctrine that does not exalt You and look onward with great anticipation to Your

magnificent return and reign. In our brokenness, bring forth the sweetness and perfume which anoints the Body. As we fight the good fight, let us fight the proper way with the full authority and power which comes through Your Holy Spirit. Remind us that any other way of fighting results in public shame and embarrassment as we should not rely on the arm of flesh. Teach us to make hay while the Son's countenance is still shining down upon us as there is coming a time of darkness when we will not have the advantages that we now enjoy. Instruct us to number our days rightly and remind ourselves that our lives are but a vapor, here today and gone tomorrow. Only what we do for Christ remains. As the devil continues to have a field day through his final end-time raging, we put our hope in the Lord of the Harvest. Those with evil intent will be caught red-handed and brought to justice. No one will escape Your Final Holy Judgment except those who have put their trust in You. Let no bad seed be found within us as we take the log out of our own eye first and then help those around us to REPENT. Teach us that the only good seed comes from Christ, the firstborn of many who will pick up their individual crosses and follow Him. May we not think that we have any better ideas than those You have already outlined in scripture. As our vanities go up in smoke, help us to realize that our idols are faulty and cannot withstand the blast from Your nostrils. You are a jealous God and You deserve a Bride fully enamored of You and You alone. Purify each of our gardens and restore our individual parcels to produce a good crop for Your Kingdom. As kings and princes fall and as nations collapse, let us die to ourselves so that we may live in eternity. This earth and everything on it will pass away, so teach us to be good stewards but not worship the created instead of the Creator. Call Your people out of Egypt, out of the world systems, that when the Great Harvester returns, we will be found standing firmly. Nevertheless, a bruised reed You will not break and a smoldering wick You will not extinguish until You faithfully bring forth justice. At the final inspection, may we be found only with Your Word in our mouths. Any bad fruit will be removed so it does not contaminate the whole bunch. You and You alone are our preserving agent and we are, indeed, in a sorry state. As we say "Yes" to the dress, Your garments of righteousness, let us prepare for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. As this planet becomes more and more red with sin, help us to submit under the rod of Your correction as those whom You love You discipline. The lips of fools will continue to bring strife and their mouths invite more beatings. As you enact Your Master Peace, we look onward to a world class crop that is separate and unequalled. Finish up Your Epic Drama and give Your people a Sabbath rest. At the conclusion of Your worldwide Harvest, we partake in eternal living with no end. Your casting call has gone out, Your fishing nets have been cast, we watch in awe as You reveal Your magnificent surprise ending and Your mystery is full revealed. We pray this prayer in the Name above all names, the Lord of lords, the King of kings, the Name under which every knee must bow and every tongue confess that He, indeed, is Lord ~ Yeshua, Jesus Christ of Nazareth our Great God and Savior.

~ Amen

Acknowledgements

To those few who stand by The Cross suffering with us during our worst moments.

To the faithful Pastors ~Those who shepherd according to God's heart and feed us with knowledge and understanding.

To the faithful Friends ~Those who stick closer by us than a brother, who love at all times, and sacrifice their own lives for others.

To those who keep inviting ~ even while we are still outcasts.

To the Attendants ~ Those who hold up weary arms until the battle is won.

To the Mother, the Aunt, and the Daughter ~Those who weep and pray. Don't weep for me but weep for yourselves and for your children.

To the Adelpnos ~ Those who share both a bloodline and the same painful experiences.

To the Advocates ~ Those who remind us of the importance of "clean hands."

To the 4-legged companions ~ Those where we too often learn what loyalty looks like.
You empty my pocketbook but fill my heart.

*So, when you remember the ones who have lied
Who said that they cared
But then laughed as you cried
Beautiful darling
Don't think of me.*

About The National Day of Repentance

We are a growing group of believers in Jesus Christ/Yeshua, drawn by His Scripture and His Holy Spirit, to begin purifying ourselves as His Bride through the privilege of Repentance. The Father is calling for a culture of repentance in His Body. He wants us to turn our heads and hearts to follow Him.

What exactly is “The National Day of Repentance” and why is this so important to you personally? History and Biblical Scripture tells us that all nations with internal “moral decay” have eventually become fallen empires, no matter how large or how powerful. At NDR, we believe that many nations are sadly on this same pathway and that the “set time has come” (Psalm 102:13 NKJV). Unless we embrace, both personally and nationally, a true repentant attitude and return to our Judeo-Christian foundations, we will soon be ruled by tyranny. The Bible clearly states that the outcome of our current disobedience of innocent slaughter, sanctification of perversions, removal/replacement of the One True God from our public square and, ultimately, Betrayal of the Throne of David, will result in bondage and destruction.

Repentance and humility are key to entering the Kingdom of the Living God. Yeshua’s very first word as He began His Ministry was “REPENT.” Once in the Kingdom, Repentance is also a vital process by which the Lord restores our soul and leads us in the path of His Righteousness for His Name’s sake. The Messiah Christ thus calls us to be ZEALOUS TO REPENT so as to overcome and sit with Him on His Throne (Revelation 3:19-21 NKJV). Repentance is especially key to healing those nations who were founded on Mosaic Law and wish to participate in the Covenant relationship.

When God has “shut up Heaven” or has “sent pestilence among my people,” we need to remember His advice:

If My people, who are called by My Name, will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

~ 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NKJV)

As joint believers in the Most High God, we can take the example of Nehemiah who, prior to being anointed to rebuild the walls, confessed his own sins, the sins of his father’s house, and his nation’s sins. Having repented, he could later say that the joy of the Lord was his strength.

If you have never prayed to Jesus Christ the Messiah, we urge you to REPENT and do so now. He is faithful and will answer the prayers of the truly penitent. If you have already submitted your life to Christ the Savior, we ask you to come along side this ministry as a fellow prayer warrior. Then continue to pray as God leads you to entreat for Repentance in your family, your local community, and your country.

There is no time to waste. The “enemy” is crouching at the door and seeking to devour us. Let’s hold fast in unity, fasting, prayer and true heartfelt Repentance as we ask God for Mercy.

But there’s also this, it’s not too late—

God’s personal Message! –

“Come back to Me and really mean it!

Come fasting and weeping, sorry for your sins!”

Change your life, not just your clothes.

Come back to GOD, your God.

And here’s why: God is kind and merciful.

He takes a deep breath, puts up with a lot,

This most patient God, extravagant in love,

Always ready to cancel catastrophe.

Who knows? Maybe He’ll do it now,

Maybe He’ll turn around and show pity.

~Joel 2:12-14(a): (The Message)

About Pastor Jeffrey Daly

Founder & Director of The National Day of Repentance

A former Wall Street lawyer, atheist and New-ager, Jeffrey was struck one day with a deep moment of spiritual insight from the Holy Spirit. In addition to clearly hearing God's call to "*Do My Work*," he was filled with the knowledge of this particular scripture:

He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory, but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.

~John 7:18 (NASB)

It was then, in 1991, that he repented of the personal glory-seeking of the New Age movement and has committed his life to serving Christ ever since. He formerly pastored, along with his wife Laurie, the Jesus Christ Fellowship in Middletown, California. During his years of legal practice, he received The Pacific Institute's Faith & Justice Award for his defense of faith and family values. Recently retired from his legal practice, he now spends his time writing, teaching, and working with other national repentance and prayer ministries. In addition to founding the National Day of Repentance, he is also a director of Capitol Hill Prayer Partners in Washington, DC.

His passion is to preach about the power and gift of repentance so that we, as His Bride, will be ready for the soon return of Jesus Christ/Yeshua the Messiah, our beloved Bridegroom.

This book was written along with the assistance of volunteer laborers in service to Christ's Kingdom. Other books from the National Day of Repentance are available at www.repentday.com

NOTES: