

Lesson No. 133 – The Curse of Modernity’s Christian

Hosted by Donald Crosswell
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This past week as I watched the news, I witnessed several news anchors with ashes painted on their foreheads. In listening to these same anchors speak at various times, they express themselves to be Christians. The ashes on the forehead evidence their observance of Ash Wednesday, a day of repentance which follows Fat Tuesday, a day of revelry in which many divulge in a wide variety of vices (some of which are of a sexual nature), which is the culmination of the celebration called Mardi Gras. Ash Wednesday purportedly begins 40 days of Lent. Now, according to Wikipedia, “Lent is traditionally described as lasting for 40 days, in commemoration of the [40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert](#), according to the Gospels of [Matthew](#), [Mark](#) and [Luke](#), before beginning his [public ministry](#), during which he endured temptation by [Satan](#). Depending on the Christian denomination and local custom, Lent ends either on the evening of Maundy Thursday,^[17] or at sundown on Holy Saturday, when the Easter Vigil is celebrated.^[18] Regardless, Lenten practices are properly maintained until the evening of Holy Saturday.”

I have witnessed in several workplaces where those that observe Lent at times loudly express their observance, letting others know what vice (defined as an immoral or wicked behavior) they are giving up for these 40 days. In all fairness, these vices also include giving up smoking, eating certain foods, etc., etc. There is no shame in this outward expression of these observances, and, that those who participate in such truly believe themselves to be Christians.

Sadly, these Christians that observe Mardi Gras, Fat Tuesday, Ash Wednesday, Lent and Easter have not been taught the heathen origin of these observances. Some seeing or hearing this may think these thoughts to be hypocritical on my part. And yet, in this age of modernity, it is a simple matter to Google or open a creditable encyclopedia or other reference book, and read for oneself the origin of each of these practices. One would discover that none of these practices are commanded by the WORD of ELOHIM, otherwise known as the Bible.

Now, someone might ask the question. Didn't CHRIST fast for 40 days after HE was tempted by Satan? And the answer is yes, HE did. However, a proper response would ask the question of whether HIS 40 days and 40 nights of fasting followed some form of behavior on HIS part that was in need of repentance or giving up. And, is there any evidence that CHRIST commanded or even suggested that HIS followers observe this same action each year.

Now, there are other Christians, who for whatever reason have determined that these observances are heathen/pagan, and have chosen to observe what the Bible calls the Passover and Unleavened Bread. Now, if someone with no knowledge of any of these observances were to move to this nation, which observances would they most likely be drawn to? Which would carry the loudest shout and the greater element of persuasion? The obvious answer would be those observances we just read about that create the framework of the Easter celebration each year.

What does this say about those that observe the Passover and Unleavened Bread? Are they shouting loud enough? Are they so confident in what they believe, and yet for a variety of valid reasons shun outward expression of their beliefs? In Lesson No. 133 – The Curse of Modernity's Christian, let's explore the spiritual environment of modernity that is presented to those ELOHIM's WORD calls saints.

And what we must first do is to define who are saints in ELOHIM's WORD. We learned last week that the word "saints" is translated from literally means those who are holy, sacred, and morally blameless. ELOHIM's WORD provides the following description.

- Rev 14:12 Here is the patience of the saints: **here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.**

So, for those who accept the WORD of ELOHIM as truth, it should be simple. Saints are those “that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus”.

Any amount of research should result to the open-minded believer that the observances associated with Easter are not the commandments of ELOHIM. However, those that believe in the authority of the Roman calendar have been taught that the Passover, Unleavened Bread and other appointed times were part of an old Covenant meant only for the Children of Yisrael (COY), often referred to as the Jewish people.

Thus, their pastors do not teach the knowledge of these days because they assume that a major change was made under the New Covenant. As a result, the following is unknown to most of these Christians.

- Lev 23:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Lev 23:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, *Concerning* the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, *even* these *are* my feasts.

These 2 verses should teach Christians that whatever follows is describing the LORD’s (YAHWEH) feasts, not the Jews’ feasts. The first of these feasts is the seventh day Sabbath.

- Lev 23:3 Six days shall work be done: but **the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation**; ye shall do no work *therein*: **it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings**.

After the weekly seventh day Sabbath, YAHWEH commands the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

- Lev 23:4 **These are the feasts of the LORD**, *even* **holy convocations**, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

- Lev 23:5 **In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover.** Lev 23:6 And **on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD:** seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

Now, there should be no debate on two things. One, these days were commandments given to the COY under the Old Covenant. And two, these days belong to YAHWEH (the LORD) and not to the Jews (Yehudans). As such, any change in these commandments under the New Covenant must also belong to the LORD, and not to so-called Christians under the New Covenant.

There obviously are those Christians who believe that the day called Easter is the Christian day to be observed during the same season that the Jews observe their Passover. In fact, some of them point to the fact that Easter is mentioned in ELOHIM's WORD, justifying its legitimacy. Let's read the one time the word Easter as found in the KJV, which may be considered by some as a confirmation that Easter is Biblically based, and thus a commandment of ELOHIM.

- Act 12:4 And when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; **intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.** Act 12:5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

This is the only time the word Easter is found written in the Bible. There is no indication that states it is a commandment of the LORD. We are about to discover together that this word is in fact, a mistranslation. I have found this to be fascinating in my spiritual walk because I have met other Christians that observe a form of the Passover while rejecting the observance of Easter, who yet believe the KJV to be the only reliable Bible version, and thus, believe this translation in these verses to be accurate.

However, there are others who likewise reject the observance of Easter, who also through study know that the word Easter in verse 4 is translated from the Greek word “Pascha”, which literally means Passover.

One of the great weaknesses of too many Christians in modernity is the failure to grasp that context is one of the most valuable tools required to understand ELOHIM’s WORD. We read the commandments in the 23rd chapter of Leviticus. Now, look at verse the 3rd verse which preceded acts chapter 12, verse 4, where the mistranslation occurred.

- Act 12:3 And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (**Then were the days of unleavened bread.**)

This scripture teaches that these events occurred during the days of Unleavened Bread. A saint would know that verse 4 is accurately referring to the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which we just read were YAHWEH’s commandments. This event with Peter was reflective of a custom that was also in play when CHRIST was arrested. A saint should know that CHRIST was arrested on the night of the Passover, as HE had explained to HIS disciples.

- Mat 26:1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Mat 26:2 **Ye know that after two days is the feast of the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.**

CHRIST explained to HIS disciples that it would be on the Passover that HE would be betrayed and crucified. Does this have any significance to the observers of Ash Wednesday, Lent and Easter? Probably not because this has been taught to them to be Jewish and Old Testament.

But to the saint, this is the knowledge of the truth, to which we shall shortly read how that HIS apostles provided the understanding.

- Mat 26:3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, Mat 26:4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *him*. Mat 26:5 **But they said, Not on the feast day**, lest there be an uproar among the people.

Note that there was some concern about killing CHRIST on the Feast day.

- Mat 26:17 Now **the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus**, saying unto him, **Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?** Mat 26:19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and **they made ready the Passover**. Mat 26:20 Now **when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve**.

A saint would have the knowledge that Passover and Unleavened Bread comprise an eight-day period often called the Feast, and yet also know that as we have just read, there is the Passover, directly followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Now let's see what happened to CHRIST on this Passover. Saints would also know that as verse 20 teaches, the Passover began on the evening of the 14th day of the first month of the year (Leviticus 23:5).

- Mat 27:15 **Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would**. Mat 27:16 And **they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas**. Mat 27:17 Therefore **when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?**

This Feast was the Passover, often referred to interchangeably Mathew 26:17) the period of Unleavened Bread.

It is the same as the Feast that in Acts 12:4 that was intended to bring Peter before the people. ELOHIM ensured that HIS saints were given the context of the days of Unleavened Bread in verse 3 of that chapter.

- Mat 27:20 But **the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.** Mat 27:21 The governor answered and said unto them, **Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.**

As CHRIST was presented before the people by the Roman governor for HIS possible release, so too was Peter in the 12th chapter of Acts on the Passover, that same commanded holy day that the LORD plainly asserted belonged to HIM and not the Yehudans. The saints must have the faith that all that is needed for their understanding, ELOHIM has provided them in HIS WORD.

And with all of the knowledge that saints have, or should have, others claiming to be Christians shout louder, assert themselves louder, and at times seemingly with more confidence. What is it then that prevents modernity's true Christians, the saints of ELOHIM, from expressing themselves more openly and assertively?

Well, YESHUA spoke these words to HIS disciples as HE began HIS earthly ministry.

- Mat 5:13 **Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.**

These words should be of great concern to modernity's saints, because all saints have come to CHRIST only through the words of these disciples. We know by reading the following that this is the protocol for the knowledge of YESHUA the CHRIST in ELOHIM's WORD. Note the words of CHRIST.

- Joh 17:6 **I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world:** thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Joh 17:7 **Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.** Joh 17:8 For **I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.** Joh 17:9 **I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.**

YESHUA prayed only for HIS disciples, and not for the world. HE gave only these disciples the words given CHRIST by the HIS FATHER. And yet HE followed these words with a clear reference to the saints to come.

- Joh 17:20 **Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;**

Then HE prayed for those who should believe on HIM “through their word”. Saints should know that this is the protocol towards the implementation and teaching of the New Covenant church and for the saints’ belief on CHRIST in modernity.

So, when HE is asserting to these same disciples in Mathew 5 that they are the salt of the earth, HE is metaphorically also referring to the saints. The saints were called out of this world as the salt of the earth, the preservers of something so powerful that all those that observe the Easter-related events simply do not understand. Yet, HE is also warning the disciples and saints to not lose their savor, their flavor, which would render them useless but to be cast out and trodden underfoot by men.

We need to read this again to fully grasp what the saints are being told by CHRIST HIMSELF.

- Mat 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but **if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.**

From the very beginning of HIS ministry, CHRIST set the boundaries for HIS followers. HE made them the caretakers of HIS WORD. They became HIS ambassadors. They were not to lose HIS WORD, or settle for anything HE did not give them. Or, they would be of no use to HIM but to be cast out and trodden underfoot by men. What does this mean, “if the salt have lost his savour? Remember, the salt is the disciple. The word savour is interesting. It was translated from the Greek word “moraino” which means become a fool or make foolish. I.e., CHRIST is saying if the disciple has become foolish, it is good for nothing but to be cast out.

Saints should also understand what it means “to be trodden underfoot by men”. Later, CHRIST said the following to them.

- Mat 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; **insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.** Mat 24:25 Behold, I have told you before.

The elect, the saints, can be deceived by false Christs and prophets if they lose their savor, or become foolish. We shall read the further result of this a little later. Becoming foolish can become their curse. When you get this, we see how that this was what CHRIST had previously told the only nation HE had known.

- Deu 6:3 Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do *it*; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Deu 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD:

- Deu 6:5 And **thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.** Deu 6:6 And **these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:** Deu 6:7 **And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.**

This nation had been given an opportunity to be a light unto the nations. They were to live only to YAHWEH's words given them through the Prophet Moses, as the saints have been given the words of CHRIST through HIS disciples. And yet the COY rejected the light it had been shown. I.e., it became foolish. For losing their savour and becoming foolish, this nation was cast out of its land, and has been trodden underfoot by other nations, even unto this day in modernity. What a great example of what CHRIST was warning HIS disciples against.

The saints were given further warnings by these same disciples, now the apostles of CHRIST.

- Heb 10:26 For **if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,** Heb 10:27 **But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation,** which shall devour the adversaries.

Saints must understand that once they receive the knowledge of the truth, they have become the salt of the earth. Consider what we have just learned together. The Apostle is explaining what CHRIST was actually saying. Willful sin is foolish.

As the Apostle continues his teaching, it becomes clearer the increased level of scrutiny that the saints, those committed to the knowledge of the truth, must face.

- Heb 10:28 **He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:** Heb 10:29 **Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God,** and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

This simple comparison between despising Moses and treading YESHUA underfoot should present a concern for the saints living in modernity under the New Covenant to ensure they do not become foolish and tread underfoot the SON of ELOHIM, as the COY did to YAHWEH of ELOHIM. I.e., the punishment for saints is far greater than that for the COY.

Another important point, saints should totally recognize that the knowledge of the truth was first defined by the prophets.

- Isa 8:20 **To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because *there is no light in them.***

The Prophet Isaiah made it simple, that is, if they have put on the “sword of the Spirit”, which is the WORD of ELOHIM. When YESHUA taught that the Spirit of Truth would teach HIS disciples all things, this shouts out loud the confirmation of the Prophet’s words. The same YAHWEH that gave the law to the COY is YESHUA the CHRIST who gave the testimony to HIS disciples. This consistency continued as YESHUA’s Apostle taught the New Covenant church the following.

- Eph 2:18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Eph 2:19 Now therefore **ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;** Eph 2:20 **And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone;***

This is the foundation of the New Covenant church, the apostles of YESHUA and the prophets of YAHWEH. Now, there are many who teach a variety of lessons that deceive many on this. One is that the Apostle's words were only for these Gentiles of Ephesus and not to Yisraelites. Others are taught a form of the New Covenant that separates its teachings from the Old Covenant.

Yet, the Apostle informs his audience that CHRIST is the corner stone of the saints and the Household of Faith, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. This is applicable to all truly "called-out" Christians. Anyone asserting themselves to be a Christian that does not accept this is not a "called-out one", i.e., not a saint. For those that do, Hebrews 10:26 applies to you.

We have learned that the Apostle Peter taught Christians that the writings of the Apostle Paul were sent also to his audience in 2 Peter 3:15-16. We have also learned that the Apostle Paul was sent by CHRIST to the nations, kings and the COY (Acts 9:15).

So, to the saints, the knowledge of the truth encompasses a commitment to ELOHIM's WORD as presented to them by both the apostles and the prophets, with reliance upon the Spirit of Truth for their total guidance of the WORD of ELOHIM. Those saints having accepted and committed to this standard are held responsible to the Apostle's teaching about the knowledge of the truth.

And, as CHRIST informed HIS disciples of their great commission, HE also dispelled the notion of silence in their roles as preservers of the WORD of ELOHIM.

- Mat 5:14 **Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.**

- Mat 5:15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Mat 5:16 **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**

Let's not forget that the Prophet Isaiah taught that if anyone speaks not according to the law and the testimony, there is not light in them. Not only are the apostles and fellow saints the salt of the earth, they are "the light of the world". This testifies that their light is based on the teachings of the prophets that came before them, and the testimony they will now receive from YAHWEH HIMSELF, as CHRIST.

HE then compares them to "a city that is set on a hill" that "cannot be hid", and a lit candle that gives light "unto all that are in the house"; the Household of Faith first, their families second, and all others as they have opportunity.

Now obviously the disciples were called out to a far greater commission than modernity's saints. However, these are not simply directions for the disciples. For sure, the disciples were the original saints of the New Covenant. They were the original salt given their commissions directly from YAHWEH of ELOHIM, in person. However, each saint is called out of this world through the words by ELOHIM the FATHER to the same YESHUA the disciples were "called out" to. And once we commit to HIM through repentance and baptism unto HIM, we have committed to the knowledge of the truth.

So-called Christians of modernity shout out loud their belief and faith in what saints know to be a false Christ, which CHRIST HIMSELF warned HIS disciples would occur in this world of modernity in the 24th chapter of Mathew. Has modernity's false Christ's drowned out the knowledge of the truth which makes the saints of modernity the salt of the world?

Has this Easter celebration become a curse unto the saints of modernity so that they, as the salt of the world have lost their light?

As I watched these TV personalities proudly broadcast to the world their faith in their beliefs, I was suddenly hit with the thought that from a spiritual perspective, Easter is a far greater danger than all of the other celebrations of pagan origin. One might ask, is it greater than Xmas?

Well, consider that this celebration actually lasts approximately 47 days, give or take a day or two. It begins with Mardi Gras; continues with Lent; and ends with Easter. It occurs as the new year is approaching, and yet, in a manner that suffocates the knowledge that the new year sanctioned by ELOHIM is near. As such, it serves as an unworthy major substitute of the commandments of CHRIST to the world.

The saints have been cautioned to not lose their savour, which we now know is to become foolish regarding their being “the salt of the earth”. It should be no wonder to saints that the same Apostle who cautioned them not to sin willfully was also called-out by ELOHIM to provide saints with a powerful teaching on the Passover and Unleavened Bread that would help them once again regather their savour to be the light they were called-out to be.

This to the saints is the essence of what the Passover is all about.

- 1Co 5:7 **Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened.** For even **Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us:**

In this one verse, the Apostle destroys the false Christ of Easter, which anyone in modernity could research and discover it to be a pagan goddess of fertility. First, he instructs the saints to purge out the old leaven and become a new unleavened lump. Then the Apostle clearly informs those who accept his teachings that CHRIST is their Passover.

Now, saints must read these words in context. As saints begin their approach to each new year, they are to begin their purge of the old leaven they have taken on during the year to ensure that they are unleavened. Next the Apostle reminds saints that CHRIST is their Passover.

Do you think any of the Easter Christians have ever heard this? If not, why haven't they? You see, it is not the job of saints to call anyone. It is their responsibility, and, their duty to be a light to the world that includes these false Christ worshippers.

- 1Co 5:8 Therefore **let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**

He then instructs them in verse 8 to keep the Feast, with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, rather than the leaven of malice and wickedness. The saints understand that this is the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The recap here is that as each new year approaches, saints must begin their purge. They then appear before ELOHIM on the Passover as unleavened saints to once again renew their commitment to CHRIST, their Passover. They then observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread to strengthen their resolve to remain unleavened during the new year so that they can “endure until the end”.

If ever a Christian needed guidance on which calendar observance is of ELOHIM under the New Covenant, the Apostle Paul makes it clear here. Any pastor claiming to be a Christian should have studied this and discovered that the Passover, not Easter, is immediately followed by the seven days of Unleavened Bread. With study and the guidance of the Comforter, a greater understanding of the spiritual nature of the Apostle's words would then be taught to modernity's Christians.

The question to each of the saints of modernity is whether or not their light is shining as they have been called-out. There is a reason why ELOHIM set the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread at the beginning of each year as life is anew with the freshness of springtime. It serves as the appropriate vehicle for saints to not “lose their savour” at the beginning of each year. And as saints in modernity prepare themselves for this commanded observance, the Apostle further guides them.

- 1Co 11:24 And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 1Co 11:25 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

The Apostle here is quoting CHRIST’s own words in the 14th chapter of Mark. Unfortunately, to most Christians this has become so controversial because the popular teaching is that this is some form of communion to be observed every 1st Sunday of the Roman calendar, rather than the New Covenant Passover on the 14th day of ELOHIM’s recognized calendar. However, saints who have been “called-out” know these were instructions given on that transitional Passover we read of earlier, when CHRIST transferred its observance from the blood of goats and lambs to HIS body and blood, the bread and the wine.

A major part of the instructions for the saints to purge out each year is to also train in how to let their light shine and to remember the warning by CHRIST HIMSELF about the result of losing their savour and becoming useless. The Apostle teaches them against willfully abandoning their savour. This is why the Apostle additionally taught this about the Passover.

- 1Co 11:26 For **as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.**

- 1Co 11:27 Wherefore **whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.** 1Co 11:28 But **let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.** 1Co 11:29 For **he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.**

And here is the quest for modernity's saints. How do we ensure that we will not eat this bread nor drink this wine in an unworthy manner? Well, this is why the Apostle also instructed them, as we read earlier, "to purge out the old leaven" before they appear before ELOHIM on the Passover.

Now, many saints may believe they have this under control on their own as they approach this vital day? And yet, have they truly discerned the standard that they must measure up to? You see, is it enough to simply know that those Christians who observe Easter live in deceit? So, you now know CHRIST is the Passover LAMB. Now what? You eat some unleavened bread and drink some wine and then think you are covered. Did you consider the Apostle's worthiness instructions? Did you consider CHRIST's cautions about your being the salt of the earth, when HE said, don't lose your savour.

Remember, HE did not pray for the world. HE prayed only for HIS disciples and those who should believe on HIM through their words. Modernity's saints must seriously consider why CHRIST, the CREATOR of all things, limited HIS prayer in the 17th chapter of John (Yochanan) in the manner HE did, just prior to HIM becoming the PASSOVER (HIS death). Don't you think HE knew how difficult it would become for HIS disciples, as well as to those who would believe in HIM through the disciples' words? Did the saints think that learning a little truth and walking in these truths would be an easy transition? The more the saints would begin to let their light shine, the more they would discover opposition in some very surprising places.

We read how that saints must each year determine their worthiness to partake in the bread and wine of Passover. Saints know that in eating this bread and wine, they are eating and drinking CHRIST HIMSELF.

I recently shared with two persons that eat the bread and the wine each year, that children should not partake of the Passover. Both disagreed with me. One initially did not accept that one had to determine whether or not they were worthy to partake in the Passover. However, he did not run from the discussion, and, once we read the Apostle's teachings in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, he agreed. I then ask him whether or not children were capable to perform this all-important determination. He said no. The second person simply threw up his hands before there was any discussion and said we couldn't talk anymore. End of discussion.

This my Brothers and Sisters is a part of the curse of modernity's true Christians, the saints. All Christians must first determine who they should follow. You see, whether a Christian observes Easter or Passover, the odds are that they do so more than likely because of a pastor or teacher they have come to believe in. As such, anyone teaching a different message is tuned out. We read this earlier.

- Mat 27:20 But **the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.**

Who are the chief priests and elders of modernity's Christians? Primarily the pastors and teachers. We read the following words by the New Covenant Apostle recently.

- 2Co 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, **so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.**

- 2Co 11:4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*.

The Apostle refers to another Jesus being taught in modernity that corrupts the minds of Christians from the simplicity that is in CHRIST. What about the saints?

In modernity, it has become very evident that there are becoming more differences even amongst the saints than there are agreements. This in part is the curse of modernity's Christians. We recently discussed the subject of "the simplicity that is in CHRIST". Is it possible that these differences are impeding the ability of the saints of modernity from allowing their light to shine, because they themselves are impeding "the simplicity that is in CHRIST"?

Before CHRIST taught HIS disciples that they were "the salt of the earth", HE taught them a few other sayings as HE began HIS ministry. After HE chose HIS disciples, HE began to teach them how they should walk.

- Mat 5:2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Mat 5:3 **Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

This is the very first thing HE taught HIS disciples. And this is obviously important because HE says that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to the "poor in spirit". Don't you think that saints need to make sure that they are the "poor in spirit"? The word poor here means exactly what the word implies. CHRIST used this word when HE would later read in the synagogue.

- Luk 4:16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. Luk 4:17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, Luk 4:18 **The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,**

These words we read in both sets of scriptures could become a curse to modernity's Christians if they think otherwise of themselves.

First CHRIST teaches that the Spirit of the Lord was upon HIM. Remember, HE was given HIS words by HIS FATHER in Yochanan 17:8. Based once again on context, the spirit that was upon HIM were the words given HIM by the Lord, the FATHER. And, they were upon HIM to first "preach the gospel to the poor". CHRIST then says HE was sent to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, to recover the sight of the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised. Aren't these then the poor HE was sent to preach the gospel to? You decide. These appear to be "the poor in spirit".

Modernity's saints have the difficult task of discerning how these categories apply to each of them. If saints are honest with themselves, before they were drawn and called to the knowledge of the truth, they were as spiritually blind as modernity's so-called Christians continue to be. When called out, is it possible that each saint was brokenhearted, held captive, blind and bruised?

This is why YESHUA commanded, not simply admonished, saints to be converted unto HIM and HIM alone, and to walk as little children. Again, HE knew then, and HE knows in modernity, how difficult it would be for saints to do this.

And yet, the words of YESHUA present the abnormalities that the saints must wrestle with. HE said the Kingdom of Heaven is to those “poor in spirit”.

Well, let’s ask ourselves this question. What is the opposite of poor? Is it not rich? I.e., the rich in spirit. Who are these? In modernity, is it not a desire of every human to want to obtain a comfortable, if not an abundant status of living, to enjoy the fruits of modernity for themselves and their families? In fact, there are many so-called Christian congregations where the material abundance of modernity is highlighted to become the goal of its members.

How does this reconcile to the words we read by YESHUA? ELOHIM’s WORD testifies the following to the saints of modernity.

- Mat 19:16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, **Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?** Mat 19:17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God:* but **if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.**

This was a simple answer by the “CREATOR of all things” to a simple question. Just keep the commandments. End of the story. It would now appear that if modernity’s Christians simply kept the commandments, they would have the assurance that they are not treading the SON of MAN underfoot.

- Mat 19:18 **He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,** Mat 19:19 **Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**

YESHUA went on to specify those commandments that saints know are the Ten Commandments that HE is saying that must be kept to enter into life.

Keep in mind here that this is prior to the actual implementation of the New Covenant. At this time, a lamb continued to be killed at Passover. And although baptism was now in play by Yochanan, physical circumcision was still the standard Yisraelites lived by to partake of the Passover. There was no purging of the “old leaven”. To most Yisraelites at that time, their spiritual lives were probably pretty simple. Yet, this young Yisraelite had a curiosity that taught all future followers of YESHUA an important lesson. The young man now shows an air of certainty about his spiritual walk.

- Mat 19:20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

The young man was given a simple answer. He said he had kept all of the commandments from his youth. Do you think this young man was “rich in spirit”, rather than “poor in spirit”, based on his response? And yet, he obviously sensed that he was lacking in something. Perhaps there was something in his spirit that was brokenhearted, feeling captive, blind and bruised, without him truly understanding it.

What about modernity’s Christians? Do most believe that they are keeping the Ten Commandments, which are read in most congregations each Sunday? And what about those Christians that observe the Passover and Unleavened Bread? Uniquely, this young man wasn’t satisfied. There must be something more. He may have been poor in spirit and didn’t know it. This provided YESHUA an opportunity to teach something HE had tried to get through to the only nation HE had ever known.

- Mat 19:21 Jesus said unto him, **If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* follow me.**

If you have kept the commandments, and feel the need to accomplish more, be poor in Spirit and follow HIM.

This challenged the young man's ability to put his heart where his mouth was. And this is where one of the primary curses of modernity confuses too many.

- Mat 19:22 But **when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful**: for **he had great possessions**. Mat 19:23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That **a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven**. Mat 19:24 And again I say unto you, **It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God**.

What is important about this lesson to HIS disciples is that HE never said that a rich person could not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, only that it was significantly difficult. Now this saying amazed HIS disciples as well.

- Mat 19:25 When his disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? Mat 19:26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, **With men this is impossible**; but **with God all things are possible**.

The saints of modernity must not allow themselves to become a curse unto themselves. This too is why YESHUA commanded saints, not simply admonished them, to be converted unto HIM and HIM alone, and to walk as little children. Regardless of one's material status in this world, if ELOHIM draws you and calls you, you have a choice to make. And it is only with ELOHIM, putting all your care in HIS hands that this is possible.

Why did this response by YESHUA amaze HIS disciples? Is it possible that the Yehudans of that day had become materially comfortable under the rule of the Roman empire? Several disciples were fishermen. One was a tax collector. They may have all had comfortable lives.

What about modernity's Christians?

When materially rich celebrities and others die in modernity, it is very common for those they leave behind to endorse a version of Christianity that teaches that these dead are now at peace in heaven with crowns of glory looking down upon those mourning their death. What was the criteria for these Christians to believe and so vehemently accept this to be true, when the WORD of ELOHIM is quite consistent in its teaching on the dead and a resurrection of the dead?

What if YESHUA came today and told modernity's Christians face to face what HE said to this young man and HIS disciples? Would they too walk away sorrowfully? Well, this is also a curse for modernity's saints because YESHUA did say these things, that those Christians that "study to show themselves approved" know is part of having the knowledge of the truth. This creates a dilemma for all Christians seeking the Kingdom of Heaven, rather than heaven itself.

Many of modernity's Christians perform charitable acts. No one can deny this. The young man probably did so as well. However, the thought of giving up his material wealth was unfathomable.

As Christians, the only question is who do we follow. Many deny the relevance of the prophets and the COY under the New Covenant. Well, what about the disciples that became the apostles and a key part of the foundation of the New Covenant?

- Mat 19:27 **Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?**

The Apostle Peter said plainly that he and the other eleven disciples had forsaken all, to follow CHRIST. Didn't this in essence make these disciples the poor in spirit? Thus, theirs was the Kingdom of Heaven as YESHUA informed them of their future reward in the Kingdom.

- Mat 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, **That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

Have modernity's Christians ever been taught these words? Have those that believe that their rich loved ones who passed and now reside in heaven ever heard this before? What about those Christians in modernity that have begun to be given the knowledge of the truth? YESHUA follows HIS promise to HIS disciples with another major statement of truth about others.

- Mat 19:29 And **every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.**

As we read these words of the disciples and others, do we notice a consistent theme applicable to these who shall receive thrones and a hundredfold while inheriting eternal life? They all have forsaken much. Based on what HE said earlier in Mathew, these are the poor in spirit, would you agree? So, what does forsake mean? It is translated from a Greek word "aphiemi" which can mean to leave, forgive, suffer or forsake. We know the following.

- Mat 8:14 And **when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.** Mat 8:15 And **he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.** Mat 8:16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and healed all that were sick: Mat 8:17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.

These events apparently happened in Peter's house, where his wife resided.

This occurred after CHRIST's words to the disciples we read earlier where they were the light of the world. Now we know that Peter forsook all for CHRIST. Yet, he maintained his marriage. What this should say to modernity's saints is that whenever the Apostle had to make a choice between his marriage and CHRIST, he forsook his marriage. He did not end his marriage. Perhaps all Christians have heard or read the story of the afflictions suffered by Job. At some point the following dialogue occurred between Job and his wife.

- Job 2:9 **Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.**

In many ways Job's afflictions had become a physical curse to him. His wife was foolish and encouraged him to curse ELOHIM and die. I.e., give up on ELOHIM and yourself. Yet his response tells us much about Job and his willingness to maintain and forsake his wife.

- Job 2:10 But **he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh.** What? **shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?** In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Job did not forsake ELOHIM for his wife. So too did the disciples. Right after speaking of the "poor in spirit" YESHUA spoke these words.

- Mat 5:4 Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Mat 5:5 **Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.** Mat 5:6 **Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.** Mat 5:7 Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Mat 5:8 **Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.** Mat 5:9 **Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.**

- Mat 5:10 **Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** Mat 5:11 Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

It is entirely possible that in these sayings, YESHUA was describing the “poor in spirit”. Job mourned, and yet sinned not. He was ultimately comforted. What would the typical Christian think about the meek inheriting the earth, and then those that are persecuted for righteousness sakes inheriting the kingdom of Heaven?

Those who have learned that righteousness is all YAHWEH’s commandments and meekly and humbly live by them, also know that the Kingdom of Heaven shall occur on the earth. As YESHUA completes this phase of these sayings, HE informs HIS disciples and those who would come after them how they should receive these words.

- Mat 5:12 **Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven:** for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

True believers in ELOHIM’s WORD are called out of this world for the purpose of being the salt of the earth, the place where the Kingdom of Heaven shall occur. They are supposed to shine their spiritual light. And yet, to do so often brings about some form of persecution, even from loved ones.

As we stated earlier, obviously the disciples were called out to a far greater commission than Modernity’s Christians. And yet, the MESSIAH made it plain that HIS followers must all bear fruit.

- Joh 15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

- Joh 15:2 **Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.**

This is the commission for all saints, the salt of the earth, the light of the earth. As Christians, wouldn't it be wonderful to simply be able to share the precious truths that ELOHIM has taught you as you continue to "study to show yourself approved" without others being offended at you, or telling you that's what you believe, without even considering it?

Look at the many vices of modernity that temps to shame you for the lack of participation. My sister, a Methodist minister, once told me that I should show up for Christmas just to be with family. What if I did so? Yes, my failure to do so probably has brought a measure of persecution my way. This has become my curse.

None of modernity's saints have desired to live as separatists. The Messiah did not pray that HIS followers would be taken out of the world. HE prayed that they would be kept from evil, knowing that evil would lurk all about them all the while they walked in their earthly tabernacles. This evil would become their curse once they truly committed themselves unto HIM.

I once told one of the most beautiful persons I have ever met that Christmas was not in the Bible. She responded to me that she would have to think about that. This dear sister occasionally is a speaker at her Sunday congregation and probably never followed up on that conversation. In fact, once modernity is aware of the uniqueness of a saint's knowledge, that lives only by the WORD of ELOHIM, there becomes this unseen barrier that seeks to choke the WORD of ELOHIM. And this has multiple results to modernity's saints.

YESHUA continues HIS instructions to HIS disciples and saints

- Mat 6:19 **Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:** Mat 6:20 **But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:**

I can guarantee each of you that no one is trying to steal the knowledge of the truth from any saint. However, even in the midst of the challenges of modernity, saints must decide if they are truly converted to CHRIST.

- Mat 6:21 **For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.** Mat 6:22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. Mat 6:23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness! Mat 6:24 **No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.**

There are powerful dualities in these words by CHRIST to all saints. Saints cannot serve two masters, one being money. The primary reason the rich in material wealth have a difficult time entering into the Kingdom of Heaven is the vices that become desires and entrapments. It becomes much more difficult to become and remain converted. Thus, this material wealth can become a curse unto them.

I know someone who was raised in a family that as a child was taught to observe ELOHIM's appointed times, and to never observe the pagan days of modernity. However, this person went on to achieve a powerful status in his chosen profession and immediately converted to observing the pagan days of modernity. Perhaps to this person, to do otherwise would bring on unwanted persecutions and challenge his successes.

To him, conversion to CHRIST became a curse because of mammon, and so, he converted to a false Christ. The Apostle of CHRIST, Peter, gave the saints the following words.

- 1Pe 4:16 **Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.** 1Pe 4:17 **For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?**

The Apostle is simply echoing the words of CHRIST and the Apostle Paul. The calling of a saint is to glorify ELOHIM and ELOHIM only.

- 1Pe 4:18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? 1Pe 4:19 Wherefore **let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.**

Saints have the task of never allowing themselves as the salt of the earth, to lose their savour. Thus, they must continue to study to show themselves approved. They must continue to bear fruit. They have the task of letting their light shine before men. They must have the faith that ELOHIM has given unto them HIS Comforter. They must have the desire to be subject one to another. The Apostle wrote this.

- Col 4:5 **Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.** Col 4:6 **Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.**

This is how modernity's saints must maintain their savour and defeat the curses of modernity.

- Eph 5:1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

- Eph 5:2 And **walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.**

CHRIST offering HIMSELF was a sacrifice unto ELOHIM “for a sweet-smelling savour”. According to their calling, each saint must at some point offer themselves in accordance to their calling.

- Eph 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Eph 5:4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. Eph 5:5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Eph 5:6 **Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.** Eph 5:7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

This is how modernity’s saints must maintain their savor and defeat the curses of modernity.

- 2Ti 2:24 And **the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,** 2Ti 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 2Ti 2:26 And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

This is how modernity’s saints must maintain their savour, defeat the curses of modernity, and let their light shine before men.

Differences, refusals to listen to one another, serving mammon rather than ELOHIM, pride, hate, false teachers, places of employment, friends and families, are all potential curses to modernity's saints. As such, let's once again allow the chief Apostle of YESHUA HAMASHIAC, YAHWEH of ELOHIM, finish his words we started earlier in the 4th chapter of 1 Peter that teach the saints how to withstand all of the curses of modernity's Christian saints.

- 1Pe 5:6 **Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:** 1Pe 5:7 **Casting all your care upon him;** for he careth for you. 1Pe 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 1Pe 5:9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 1Pe 5:10 **But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.** 1Pe 5:11 **To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.**

Brothers and Sisters, the word disagree does not exist in the New Covenant. Does that surprise you? We persecute and become a curse to one another when we fail to patiently help one another grow in the knowledge of the truth, and into the oneness required by ELOHIM through YESHUA, our CHRIST.

The Prophet Amos asked the following:

- Amo 3:3 **Can two walk together, except they be agreed?**

The answer to all of the saints of YESHUA HAMASHIAC is a resounding NO". **The failure of the Household of Faith to walk together is a curse unto modernity's saints.**

As we should now be in preparation mode towards our appearance before ELOHIM at the appointed time, when we will once again wash the feet of our fellow brethren while assisting them in the cleansing commanded of them, eat of the body of YESHUA, and drink of the blood of YESHUA, let us each follow the words of the Apostle, to cast all our care upon ELOHIM. For it is only in ELOHIM that these things are possible. This is how modernity's saints escape their potential curses.

Shalom!