

TRANSCRIPTION – George Meeting SA - Ritual or Relationship

Greetings! Shalom, shalom! First of all I want to thank you for inviting me here. I feel honored to be before you and to be able to share some things with you. If there's anybody here who has no idea who is that man standing up there and what is he doing in our Congregation...my name is Don Esposito; I am originally from United States. I've been living in Israel the last twenty years and doing ministry over there. I was the one who did the translation of the Hebrew Roots Bible. I believe you have some Bibles here, right?

We have Bibles and books; we don't sell anything, so please take whatever you like. If someone wants to give a donation, that's up to you; but they're there for you; it's a gift for you. If you'd like to take anything if it will bless you then it will bless us. So feel free afterwards to take whatever you would like.

I also worked with archeology in Israel for the last twenty years...so if there's any questions when we're done about anything with Israel or anything over there, please feel free. But today I'm going to give a message that I think is a little deeper to our heart; it's called *Religion, Rituals or Relationship*.

Because there are a lot of things I've learned and seen in my years in Israel. And just start by telling a little story...that a few years back I was on an airplane and there was a man sitting next to me and I started talking to him and I told him that I was a pastor. And he said, "Oh, I hate religion!" And I said, "I do too!"

"You're a pastor and you hate religion?" I said, "Because the word religion is not in your Bible." And I think it's religion that has kept us from relationship. And I don't know all your back grounds, but I'm guessing that many of you were probably part of an organized church before coming here. You could have been Catholic or Protestant or Dutch Reform or whatever; but there was something that you started to see that wasn't right what you were doing; and it got you in this chair today.

So hopefully what I can share with you could enhance that and enhance your relationship with our heavenly Father; because you know many times...we're living in a really, really interesting time, right? A time like we've never seen in the history of man; it's so different and yet there's a normalcy bias out there, that to the youth out there they think this is all normal. They think like everything has always been this way. And I'm scared...I'm really scared for our youth because of that.

Because you could say that the world today is anything, but the thing it is not is normal. This is not normalcy the way the things go out there. And there's a lot of people out there who are atheists; they don't believe that there's any...I'll use the word Elohim today and Yahweh for our heavenly Father's name. But I think they wonder if He exists; but I think that **the bigger question to us is to know Him, right; to have a personal relationship with Him; because the Bible says, not only that we know Him; but the fact that, as believers, He knows us.**

And I say, the Bible says He knows every hair on our head; and I say in these things, I'm keeping Him busy because I'm losing a lot of my hairs. But it's true...I mean **our heavenly Father He loves us so much He wants to know us in a personal way;** and I think that sometimes religion and rituals do not enhance that.

I'll show where rituals came. Rituals are in the Bible; they're not bad if they lead you to the heavenly Father; but certainly a religious spirit doesn't, as we'll see over here today. The book of John, fourth chapter in verse 23 says:

John 4:23-24 *But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father also seeks such, the ones worshiping Him. Elohim is spirit, and the ones worshiping Him must worship in spirit and truth.*

I won't go there, but **Acts 17**, pretty much says the same thing; *that in times past, that Yahweh winked at our ignorance's, but now He commands men everywhere to repent.* Because now we don't have to be ignorant; so there's a lot of things we could talk about in the society today that may not be that good...with social media and this kind of thing.

But one that is good and it's a prophecy in Daniel 12, right...**Daniel 12:4**; that *in the end time people will be running to and fro and knowledge will be increased.* And it's unbelievable how much knowledge has increased; but also spiritual knowledge has increased.

So if you really think about it, not only in biblical days, but just until, even maybe two to three hundred years ago, this Bible that you cherish that you're holding in your hands, you were lucky if there was one copy of that Bible that was in the Congregation or even in a synagogue.

So in the days of Yahshua in the first century everybody didn't go around with a Bible. Now there's...and for me, although I love the translation we did...I have many translations; because by looking at the different translations it helps me to understand better. So I'm for more translations; going in concordances, going in Lexicons; because it's helping us to know the Truth more; but it also brings more accountability; because the more you know, the more you are accountable for.

So this is why it's a big question that comes out there today and really, we want to make sure that everything we're doing is not just for the fact of a religious ritual; but it's something that's drawing us closer to our heavenly Father. Galatians 4 in verse 8 and 9 says:

Galatians 4:8-9 *But then, indeed, not knowing Yahweh, you served as slaves to the ones by nature not being Elohim. But now, knowing Yahweh, but rather being known by Yahweh, how do you turn again to the weak and poor principles to which you desire again to come under their bondage?*

And maybe you think about this when you're thinking of...for me anyway...something like in Christianity. You know there were a lot of things like Christmas is pagan; Christmas is coming up soon. But when you look at December 25th, it's not the Messiah's birthday. It can't be; because the shepherds are in the field. If you come to Israel you see that, that the shepherds can't be in the field at this time of the year; it's too cold. So where does December 25th come from?

It comes from Constantine; a Roman emperor, that was a sun worshipper who changed the day of our Savior's birth into the day of what's called Saturnalia; which was a terrible day. It was drunkenness, orgies and all kinds of bad things going on; but that's what Constantine said. When he becomes emperor he says, "We're going to take everything that was done to the venerable day of the sun or everything that was done on Shabbat and we're going to turn it into the venerable day of the sun."

So is that a tradition we really want to follow? And today, like I said, times past when you would say this maybe twenty years ago...you'd have to go to a library...today, it could take five minutes if you have a phone there you could look it up and you could see it's true; that Christmas is not something that is the birth of our Savior.

The other thing that is very interesting, because people ask me, "Well, it is the day of His birth so we should celebrate." And I say you know it's kind of interesting...because there's something I teach called judicial order;

and all that means is: it's the order of creation that Yahweh set out. The same way gravity is part of judicial order. The sun, the moon and the stars to tell time is part of judicial order.

And I say if you could find the heavenly Father's pattern; He never changes; *I am Yahweh, I change not*. So find the pattern, it doesn't change. So I ask people, look in your Bible and find me one birthday...you can't do it. You could find many, many births, right? The birth of John the Baptist, the birth of Samuel, the birth of...all these births; **not one time does it ever mention though, the day that somebody is born. Because the Bible tells us, the day of your death is better than the day of your birth**, right, from Ecclesiastes.

And actually, to the early believers in the first century, you know what day was important to them? Not the day they were physically born; the day they were baptized. Because when they were baptized, they were spiritually born and that was the day that they used.

And that's why today, if you look at January 6th...is the Russian Orthodox and the Greek Orthodox Christmas... that comes from the fact that in ancient time they believed that's when the conception happened of Yahshua and they believe...that's why they use that day as Russian Orthodox and Greek Orthodox Christmas when it changed back then.

But you don't find it...you don't find it because birthdays really aren't that important; because in ancient times, only kings, people that were filled with vanity...look toward, this is *my birth, this my day*. So things that are coming toward your self is not something that is going to be really outlined in Scripture.

We have Yahweh's Holy Days; we have Pesach and we have Shavuot and we have Sukkot; because **these are all days that don't point toward us, but they point toward Yahweh's Plan of Salvation; and they point toward us being part of that Plan of Salvation.**

So, like I say, that's just one small avenue, but **that's the way we should be looking** for because if we want a relationship, He said it right here: ***Yahweh is Spirit and we must worship in Spirit and Truth***. And **we can't expect Him to accept things that aren't true or things that are pagan because it's not part of His character**. And this is the point of coming out of organized religion...that we start to see, wow...like looking around and seeing the Shabbat and it's like wow, this is great because the Shabbat is something that frees you.

And I don't know if you've ever had people tell it, "Ooo, you're in bondage. You're going back to that law!" And when I was...I've been a Shabbat keeper for thirty six years and at that time I was young...I was working eighty hours a week. I was killing myself getting up at five in the morning, working until midnight; and then I learned about Shabbat and it was so much a freedom to be able to rest. And as people telling me it's putting me in bondage, I say, "Are you kidding? You want me to work a hundred hours a week?" It was freeing me...it was really giving me time to free my mind.

And that's when you find out that the Torah of Yahweh...and I don't like to use the word Law...because the word Law, it's not really a good translation of Torah. The word Torah comes from the word *moreh* which is teacher. So I like to say the Torah, really the definition of Torah is, instruction; and its instruction for life.

So the Bible never tells us to make a choice between Torah and grace. I tell people all the time, show me one time where that's saying that. In the book of Romans...people say Romans say the Torah is done away with. I say, if you really logically think about it, the book of Romans was written thirty years after the crucifixion; and it's a letter that Paul is writing to a congregation. He quotes the Torah more than seventy times in that one letter! **Is it logical that it's going to be done away with**; thirty years before that if he's quoting it seventy times?

So this is why **how we look at something we have to be looking at it to want to get into Truth** because it's just...and again I've had the blessing of being able to stand with people that were against the Torah...and in a very polite way to share...you know, show me the Scripture and I'll show you this and we'll see which is really the Truth...because I don't mind that. I say I'll stand here against the Pope and I can show that Saturday is the Sabbath.

There is not one Scripture from Genesis to Revelation that ever says that Saturday was changed to Sunday. And a matter of fact, if you look in the New Testament...because people say every commandment was reiterated in the New Testament, the Brit Chadashah, except the Sabbath...and it's the total opposite. There is more references to the Sabbath in the New Testament than any other commandment that's there. So it's important.

But sometimes when people get in religious spirits, it's hard to talk with them. And when I talk about religious spirits, I'm talking about people in organized religion, like Catholicism, Greek and Russian, Orthodox and unfortunately even Orthodox Judaism.

I'm there in Israel and like I said, I'm living there twenty years and when I first got to Israel I felt like I was in awe of the Orthodox. I couldn't wait to meet them. They were in uniform, right? They had the black...curls...and yet when I talked to them, I'd say:

"You know the Torah"

"No, no"

"Well, the Torah this...the Rabbi's say this...and the Torah"

"No, no"

"But the Rabbi's say this"

And it seemed like they were more worried with the traditions of their Rabbis than they really were with the Torah and it really disappointed me. And being there over twenty years, I had many, many, many discussions with ultra-Orthodox and Rabbis about the Torah. And I found out because of their religious spirit that there were many things that they compromised with...that was sad to say.

Unfortunately, even recently just in the last two years, during Pesach now they no longer un-leaven; they say that baking soda is not a leavening agent. And I wondered why would there be rolls there during Passover, that doesn't seem right. But it's again it's according to the tradition of the elders.

And what happens is, **when you get a religious spirit, it brings a false perception;** because you're going from the priest before and the priest before that; and I just say look at Catholicism, how much have they changed in two thousand years...virtually nothing. And if you want to know a congregation that's growing, see how much they've changed when something was brought to them that's true.

So Catholicism...and I was born into Catholicism...it's not something that I see to me is that they're seeking Truth; it's a ritual. They don't do what we're doing here. They come, they do a repetitious prayer, you run through a couple of these things, you eat the little cookie and then everybody runs out. **But there's no relationship; there's nothing that you're really learning. You're not going out of there filled; you're not getting the Holy Spirit that's going with you.**

So this is what we have to hear with the religious spirit...in Galatians 3...Galatians the third chapter...I'll start in verse 1. Because this was a problem in the first century...**this was the reason why the Pharisees could not accept Yahshua in the first century; because they had this religious spirit.**

And Yahshua said...used the analogy of a skin of wine. He said when the wine and the skin becomes too over-bound, right, what happens? It bursts because if there's not elasticity for your mind to learn then what's going to happen is, you've hit at the point where there's nothing else that can go in. And unfortunately that's what happens with a religious spirit. **There's nothing else that they can learn at that point.** And here it says:

Galatians 3:1-10 *O you lacking exile Galatians, who bewitched you not to obey the truth, to whom before your eyes Yahshua Messiah was portrayed before among you crucified? This only I desire to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by works of Law or by hearing of faith?...Now it's very interesting is that term works of Law is not talking about the Torah. How do we know it? Because even in the Dead Sea Scrolls, they used this very term as works of Law and it's dealing with animal sacrifices. The works of Law are meaning the animal sacrifices. So think about it...if you were living in that day and Yahshua...you're there in 30AD when Yahshua is crucified...He dies, He's resurrected...remember the Temple was still standing. So in 31, 32, 33, even people that believed in Yahshua, they're still going to the Temple and there's still sacrifices. And today we don't think about it; we know the sacrificial system has been superseded by the Melchizedek priesthood. But in all honesty, how would you have felt if you were a Jew living in that day? And you're living in 31AD and now you are believing that Yahshua is the Messiah; but the priests are still killing animals. And this is what he's saying...this is what they're asking here: *Did you receive your salvation by the Spirit by the works of Law...because the works of the Law is not only the sacrifice; there were other things that were with the sacrifice. There were rituals that had to go with that sacrifice. So he's saying is it by this or is it by faith?...Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, do you now want to complete yourself in the flesh? All of these vanities you endured. Oh that it might not be for no purpose. Then He supplying the Spirit to you and working works of power in you is it by works of (Levitical) Law or by obedience of faith? Even as Abraham "believed Elohim, it was counted to him for righteousness." You must therefore know that those who trust in faith are the children of Abraham. Because Elohim knew in advance that the nations would be declared righteous through faith he first preached to Abraham, as it is said in the Holy Scripture, "in you shall all the nations be blessed." So that the believers are blessed by Abraham the faithful one. For those who rely on the works of the law are still under the curse.**

Why? Because there's no salvation in the first Covenant. Right? The first Covenant was a Covenant of cause and effect. And what does it say in Deuteronomy *that cursed be anyone who does not keep every Law of Torah.* So what happens if you break the Torah? You get a death penalty.

A matter of fact, in the first Covenant, breaking Shabbat was a capital offense; it was the death penalty. Murder was a death penalty, adultery was the death penalty. And even on Yom Kippur, those sins could not be forgiven; it's the death penalty. So **there was no salvation in the first Covenant.** Now, you might think, "well, I never commit adultery and I never murdered," but what does Yahshua do? He comes and He doesn't do away with the Torah; **He magnifies the Torah** and He says, "The Torah says, you shall not murder. I say, if you've ever gotten angry, you've already murdered."

So what does He do? He shows us **Romans 3:23**, all of us...according to the intent of the Torah...**all of us are under this death penalty.** So **if you even thought anger to Yahweh's concept; that was murder.** So now what does it show us...that **every one of us can not earn our own salvation.** You can't go out...the Torah says, *eye for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life...*and what does that mean? It means let the punishment fit the crime.

And **the death of an animal is not equal with the death of a human**; it's just not equal. So you can't go and kill somebody and then come and slaughter an animal and say, "Whew, I feel better! Boy that's off my shoulders now." It's not equal. So getting angry with somebody is equal to murdering that person.

And this is why the Apostle Paul is trying to show that no longer can you go to the Temple and simply do an animal sacrifice and get your sins forgiven; it's not going to work that way. **There's only one way; faith in Yahshua.** That's the only way.

This was a big difference in the first century. So **in the first century, it was never "do we still keep the Torah?"** That was never even a question. That was never even a debate. The debate was, "do we still have to do animal sacrifices if we believe in Yahshua?"

And this is what he's talking about in Galatians and Romans and almost every book that you go into with Paul when he's dealing with the Gentiles; and of course also circumcision was another matter that they were dealing with. So he says:

Galatians 3:11 *And that no one is justified by the Torah before YAHWEH is evident because, "The righteous will live by faith."*

Very clearly...why are you not justified by the Torah? Because you broke it. I say it's like going into the judge and you're up for murder and you tell your lawyer, "Don't worry I got a great defense." You're like "Okay." And the judge comes up, "Would you like to say anything Sir?" "Yeah, I got a great defense. I'm guilty! Now let me go free!"

He's not going to let you go free if you're guilty. So **how could you be justified by the Torah when you broke the Torah? It's not against the Torah; it's against our breaking of it; our inability to keep it. So no one is justified by the Torah.** And what does justification mean? Being right before Yahweh, right? Our works are filthy rags to the Father. So on Judgement Day, there is not a soul that ever lived, except for Yahshua, that can go before the Father and say, "Yes, I've kept every word of your Torah, please take me into Your Kingdom."

We cannot be justified; we cannot be made right before Yahweh by Torah or there would be no reason for the Messiah to have to come. So why do we keep the Torah? **To sanctify us; to set us apart; to teach us right from wrong.** And that's why I say, Law is really not the best definition; it's instruction. Torah is instruction for life.

Because after you become a believer, your life doesn't end there...you still have to live every day. You have to wake up, you have to eat, you have to wear clothes, you have to go to work. How do you do it? And the Torah tells us this; it tells us how to keep our family, it tells us how to treat other people, it tells how to worship Yahweh; it tells us everything we need to live by and that's the purpose of the Torah.

It's an instruction manual for life; but it was never meant for salvation because the only way it can give you salvation is if you keep it perfectly; and none of us have done it. And that's why when you understand that, some of the things that may sound a little difficult in Paul's letters, become totally clear. Because Paul, he's a Rabbi, so that's what Rabbi's do; they midrash. They tell you one end and then they tell you the other end and they want you to come to the conclusion yourself; and that's what Paul does in most of his letters.

But like I said, *never* does he ever talk against the Torah. And he even says in **Romans 3:31**, *the fact that we are saved by grace or by faith, does it annul the Torah? Yahweh forbid; it establishes the Torah.* Because

once you understand this, now you should want to be obedient as anything because you're so thankful to Yahweh for what He did in your life.

And I equate it...if you're driving down the highway and you're speeding, right? And a policeman pulls you over and now you broke the law, you're speeding...you need to get a ticket, but the policeman wants to give you grace. But there has to be a penalty to the crime. He can't just forgive you because that's not justice; that's not righteousness. So he says, "You know what? I can't just forgive you, but I'm going to give you grace. I will pay your ticket. It's my whole day's pay, but I'm going to pay it." Now, when he pays that ticket, did he give you a license to go back on that road and continue to speed?

Of course not; and do you want to...knowing that there was a penalty now? That's why I say, grace may be free, but it's not cheap; there was a penalty. And **every time you're ready to sin, think of Yahshua on that tree of crucifixion, being mocked and spit at, being jabbed with that spear...His blood gushing out...and He did it willingly because He wanted to do it for us; but He did that to pay the penalty for our sin.**

So why would we want to continue in sin once He did that? And that's the point that Paul is trying to make over here. But when you have a religious spirit, you're not looking at any of that; you're only looking at rituals...you're only looking at rituals.

And unfortunately, whether it's Catholicism or Greek Orthodox, most of it does come from paganism. If you look at the origins of these things, it does not come from Truth; the basis of it was not Truth. It come from like Catholicism as mystery religion...you know that they have...all the things that they are doing. And like I said, it's a way really to get a one on one relationship with our heavenly Father. Colossians 2 in verse 13, we see Paul going over this again...Colossians 2 in verse 13 he says:

Colossians 2:13-14 *And you, who were once dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has granted to live with Him, having forgiven all your sins, and, by his mandates, he canceled the legal contract of our sins, which existed against us, and He took it out of the way, nailing it to the torture stake.*

So by far, **there's nowhere ever, that even remotely, it is said that the Torah is nailed to a torture stake. What's nailed to the torture stake? Your legal contract for sin; He's taken your death penalty and nailing it to the torture stake;** because in ancient times...and actually in Israel...we actually have found trees where people were crucified. So we know exactly how a crucifixion works; because they found the bone of the foot still on the tree.

When the person was crucified they couldn't get...I guess the nail was in the knot on the tree and they wound up pulling it and they ripped the body off and they find the bone of the foot is still there. So we know how they sat, we know why they did it in a certain way. It's really interesting why they did it and they didn't have a seat to make the person comfortable; they did it to make him last longer...to make him suffer.

So that's what He's taken away, but what they did was, they also nailed above the person what was his penalty for death. Here is Joe, the murderer. And what did they put above Yahshua...here's Yahshua, King of the Jews...that's what they were accusing Him for.

It's very interesting though because when you look at it in the Hebrew and it talks about...here is Yahshua, the Nazarene and the King of the Jews...it actually spells the Yod, Hey, Vav, Hey; the name of the Father. And that's why the Jews were saying, "Take it down, take it down!" And Pilate said, "It is what it is."

So it's really interesting that even the name of the Father was there when He was being crucified. But it's our legal contract of debt that He takes out of the way and he says...

Colossians 2:15-17 *And by putting off His mortal body, He exposed the powers of evil, and through His person put them openly to shame. Therefore do not let anyone...outside of the Congregation, he's talking about... judge you what you're eating, what you're drinking, how you keep the feast days, or the new moon, or the Sabbath day, which remain shadows of coming things...they remain shadows of coming things because they tell the whole plan of salvation.*

And for me, like I said, I'm thirty-six years keeping these holy days; and it's a circular pattern in the holy days so I never forget the Plan of Salvation. But sometimes I do meet some Christians that have never kept the holy days and they don't understand the Plan of Salvation. So they need to understand it because if not...if you're just keeping Christmas and Easter and some of these other things, then theirs no meaning behind them.

You know it could be a nice celebration to meet your family; but there's nothing there in like the holy days...like Pesach and like Sukkot that actually bring you closer to the Plan of Salvation.

So by far, this is not condemning the keeping it; it's saying, don't let these people outside judge you. And I'm sure some of you that are keeping the Sabbath and the holy days, you probably been judged by friends, by neighbors, by even relatives, maybe; because it's not easy.

But I say that, that in the world we're living in today...particularly in western society...we have all these mega churches and you get twenty or thirty thousand people coming to a stadium for fifteen, twenty minutes...and you'll get the preacher going up there and saying a few words and saying a few jokes and then collecting as much money. But **that is not the body of Messiah that we've been built on.**

If you look at the early believers...and read my book, *The Gates of Hell Shall Not Prevail Against Her*...I go over...you don't know how many people died that we could be sitting in these seats today; the Waldenses, the Paulicians...all throughout history.

In Europe, from one thousand, they talk about the price of Reformation, which is true...but from one thousand to fifteen hundred, we had three to five million Sabbath keepers that were killed in Europe that you hardly ever hear about. And **they were killed because of their belief; because they would not bow down to the Catholic Church; because they were not baptizing their children as babies.**

So that's the point of it...that **we need to stand firm. If our Messiah made such a sacrifice for us, then we need to take that serious; because it's life-changing.** Because now, through baptism and the laying on of hands, now **the Holy Spirit is living in you and that's the whole point of it.** The whole point of it isn't rituals. Some of these rituals are good rituals because they can lead us to Him.

But the point of it is, **He's living in you and it's changing you and it's transforming you.** And now you're corrupted nature...you know that goes all the way back to Adam and Eve in Genesis...is being transformed into the very mind of Messiah. And you might be thinking, wow; as the Holy Spirit is telling you something different...*no, no you can't be going to that Sunday church anymore.* It's the Holy Spirit telling you that. It's not you thinking it; **it's the Holy Spirit convicting you and you have to act on that conviction because that's what the whole plan is about.**

Genesis 1, Let Us make mankind I Our image and Our likeness. And we're created in His image, right, meaning we have hands...the Bible says Yahweh has hands and eyes and a mouth and a nose...but **you**

have to grow into His likeness...you have to grow into that. And it's like, it's amazing to think that He's taking humans like us and transforming us to think like Him.

Because I say, some of it is actually even un-human. It's hard enough to love your neighbor, right, that you like. It's hard enough to love your family members that may be sometimes be confrontational; but **it's actually not human, to love an enemy; it's un-human. But with the Holy Spirit, you do...you love your enemies, you don't hate anybody. You pray for those who persecute you.**

And this is the Spirit of Yahweh transforming your life. And this is the power of it...that you're somebody different that you weren't before. You're not the same person you were that when you came to faith. And this is why I say, religious spirit, it just stops that. **There's no transformation with a religious spirit.**

Like I said, it's just the same pagan ritual over and over, year by year, decade by decade; but it doesn't lead to anything; it's an empty road. And its ideally...it's a way for the enemy; because he knows in the time we're living in...like I said, knowledge will be increased.

And he knows that Yahweh is calling people from the four corners of the earth and there's something amazing happening and He's transforming human beings...and he's trying his side...the enemy is trying to keep us away from that. And one of the way's he does it...like I say...is with a religious spirit.

When we're dealing with rituals...there's some rituals in the Bible...I'll read one here in Exodus 29. And in Exodus 29, it's talking about Aaron the priest, and killing an animal and what happens here...I'll start in verse 18:

Exodus 29:18-20 *And you shall burn all the ram on the altar; it is a burnt offering to YAHWEH, a soothing fragrance; it is a fire offering to YAHWEH. And you shall take the second ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram...why is that? Because it's transferring the sin over to the animal...And you shall slaughter the ram; and you shall take of the blood and shall put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and on the tip of the right ear of his sons, and on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of the right foot; and you shall sprinkle the blood on the altar all around...and at first, you might think, well that's sounds kind of weird...putting the blood on the tip of the ear, on the tip of the big toe...but it's symbolism, right, because the ears are what we hear with; the feet is what leads us into something. So here it is...this is a ritual that Yahweh tells us that at that time, it's a good ritual. It's making the people think. The same way the holy days are rituals, right? Sukkot, why do we stay in sukkot? He tells us; because we're supposed to remember the children of Israel coming out of Egypt.*

This last year was the first year that we kept Sukkot in the very wilderness in Jordan where the Israelites were. It was amazing...staying in tents during that time. So I say, wow, if there's ever a time that you're going to think about the children of Israel and staying in tents...is when you're in the same place staying in tents...and it was awesome.

I learned so many lessons this Feast that I couldn't believe it. And I've kept thirty-five Feasts already, but this was the most amazing Feast I kept because I was in that same spot that they were. And it's the same in Israel...when you come there and you're in the very places that Yahshua walked...the very road, two thousand year old road that they have that He walked on. The Sea of Galilee, the very sea that He walked on and Peter walked on; and you could take a boat ride in there. It's amazing!

It builds your faith and you come back and you never read the Bible the same way again. It's like there's a reality of it there that you get when you get it. So I say...rituals aren't bad. Another ritual is Numbers 15 verse 37, he says:

Numbers 15:37-41 *And YAHWEH spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel and you shall say to them that they shall make themselves fringes on the corners of their garments, for their generations. And they shall put a thread of blue with the fringe of each corner. And I shall be to you for a fringe...so Yahweh is literally putting His name on you with that blue thread; and the blue thread is the representation of the Messiah...that you may look on it and remember all the commandments of YAHWEH, and do them; and that you do not go about after your own heart and your own eyes after which you fornicate; that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy to your Elohim. I am YAHWEH your Elohim who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your Elohim. I am YAHWEH your Elohim.*

So again, it's again... it's a ritual, but it's a good ritual. Because the people are remembering, right? They're remembering the Commandments. And I say, you know we're living in a bad world today...a lot of these sins happen...fornication happens, adultery happens; and I say, I wonder though, how many men that may commit fornication or they commit adultery...that if they were wearing a tzitziyot, when they're ready to pull their pants down and they see that tzitziyot, they pull their pants right back up again.

So we're humans right? But it's as a reminder...and that's why I say, it's a good ritual; it's something good. It's something that reminds us, but not every ritual is good; like coming in and saying a repetitious prayer and like they do in the Catholic Church and doing all this bowing down and all these things. That's not something that's embracing your relationship.

Another ritual that I found out that is not good is...in Judaism, the wearing of the sun cap. Because if you look at **1st Corinthians 11**, *it says, every man praying or prophesying, having anything down over his head; shames his head; because we're made in the image of Elohim. So we're not supposed to put something on our head. He says in verse 7, For truly a man ought not to have the head covered, being the image and glory of Yahweh. But woman is the glory of man.*

So, in particular, like some people say, well what about the priests? It's a good question, right? But the priests had a turban and that was the high priest. So if somebody here is a Levitical High Priest, feel free to wear a turban. But **as a New Testament believer, we're told we're not supposed to cover our head.**

And you know it's really interesting because we've lost a lot of...even tradition in our society that's good. Like if you back a hundred years ago, what would happen? If a woman came into a room, what would the men do? They would take off their hat, right, because you would show a sign of respect. And even in many places you would never wear a hat inside...in the house...because it wouldn't be respectful. We've lost a lot of that stuff in the day we're living in.

But a lot of it does go back to Scripture, that a man should not be covering his head. So where does it come from? I'm going to read you here from 2nd Maccabees...not a Bible book, but a historical book...a very good book and it tells us where this came from.

Because during the Hellenistic period...and what period do I mean? After the time of Ezra, which is about 5th Century BC...even the Rabbis say this...from that time, until the 2nd Century, they say there was no famous Rabbis...but what happened at that time, was that's the time of Alexander the Great, right...coming throughout the world. In twelve years he goes all the way to Mongolia and basically makes the world empire at that time...and he Hellenizes the world; meaning he brings the culture of the Greeks worldwide; and in Israel too.

If you come there, I can show you places like Tel Dan that have the ancient stones from the time of the Israelites. But most of the remains that you're going to find there are Greek and Roman; the columns, the pillars...the same way that you find them...because that's the majority of it...because that was the world govern.

So during this time, what they were trying to do was they wanted everyone to be equal; to do everything the same way. And if somebody wasn't doing it the same way, there was going to be a problem. And that's why Antiochus Euphianes who was a Seleucid, from up in Syria, King...he came there in 169 right? And he said Jews were not allowed to circumcise their children and he comes and he even sacrifices a pig on the altar in the Temple at that time. It's been called the abomination of desolation.

So there's a Hellenization going on and what is it saying....the book of Maccabees...that's when the Chanukah comes from. You know Chan-u-kah, what does it mean? It mean re-dedication and that's when the Maccabees...Judas Maccabee and Mathias Maccabee...that's when they come and re-take the Temple and re-dedicate it to Yahweh...but this is what's written about that time with it.

He says, for he gladly...talking about Antiochus Euphianes...built a place of exercise called *gymnasium*. That's another Greek word...gymnasium means naked men...that's what it means because they go into these gymnasiums and they sometimes wouldn't wear anything or very scantily and they're dicking and they're doing all these things...just like we see where the Olympics guy is from. When the Olympics start what do they do? They still do the Greek torches and all these things.

So he says, *for he gladly built a place of exercise (gymnasium) under the tower itself and brought even the most normal men under his subjection and he made them wear the Greek sun cap*. I don't if they do it here, but in America when they graduate school, they wear that gown and the cap. And this is what it is...it's a little sun cap because it's for sun worship; because they believe that the sun god made them smart. And that's why they started wearing this and they started forcing the Jews to wear that little sun cap.

Then he says, *Now such was the Greek fashion and the increase of hedonish manners through the exceeding profanes of Jason...*that's the Priest, Jewish Priest...that ungodly wrench and no high priest; because he was somebody who bought into the high priesthood at that time.

So that's why I say, praise Yahweh we're living in a time that we don't have to be deceived. That we could look up these things and we could see these things. And like I said if it's a good ritual, by all means do it. **There's nothing wrong with rituals if it's seeking us to Yahweh.** But if it's something vain and it just came from paganism and people are just doing it out whatever...it's not something that's going to enhance your relationship.

Another thing that's very interesting is, sometimes I've met believers that they believe we should be praying to the East. They say you're supposed to pray to the East and they go by this Scripture in Daniel 6 in verse 10; because it says:

Daniel 6:10 *And when he (Daniel) learned...remember what happened...that the decree went out if anyone prays to any other god in the next thirty days, they're going to go in the lion's den; and now Daniel's going to pray and it says... And when he (Daniel) learned that the document was signed, Daniel went to his house. And his windows were open with his roof chamber toward Jerusalem. He knelt on his knees three times in the day, and prayed and praised before his Elohim, as he did before.*

So people use this Scripture; and say, "See we're supposed to pray to the East." There's only one problem; **Jerusalem is west of Persia where he's praying from. So we're not to pray to pray to the East.** You could pray to Jerusalem...so from here, Jerusalem is east of you. So if you're praying toward Jerusalem...nothing wrong with that, the Scripture says it.

Oh, you're not in the east...of course, its north...northeast. Wow, very good...see I've just learned something. I say this is the first time I ever traveled that I traveled this many hours without changing a time zone. Yeah, but I

mean from Israel...it's the same time zone that is down here. And even though all the way in the southern hemisphere, I'm not upside down. So I know the earth is not flat, but I'm not going to get into that tonight...I know that's another thing that has come up...but we won't even talk about that one.

But so what we see here is though, if somebody wants to pray toward Jerusalem...because you want to know something in Israel when we find a structure that we know it's either a church, a mosque, or a synagogue...how do we know which one of the three it is?

Sometimes you can tell by the time period because you find the pottery and what not; but a lot of times the three then will look very similar. But one of the first ways that an archeologist can tell is where it's situated toward; because mosques are always situated where; toward Mecca. Churches are always toward the East...the rising of the sun...because they're sun worshippers; and most synagogues are toward Jerusalem.

But Jerusalem isn't always in the East...so that's the point for believers; **you don't want to just always be praying to the East because that's what the pagans do.** The pagans pray toward the East. And a matter of fact, if you look at the Temple in Jerusalem, Solomon's Temple, it's the very opposite. It's toward the West; it's not toward the East. So if Jerusalem is east of you and you're praying that way for that...that's fine. But like I said, this is something we need to think about. **We don't know want to just arbitrarily use man-made traditions without searching them out.** Deuteronomy 4:2 says:

Deuteronomy 4:2 *You shall not add to the Word which I command you, nor take from it, to keep the commandments of YAHWEH your Elohim which I command you.*

So that's all of our responsibility. **It's our responsibility to be keepers of the Torah and to be looking at it and to be searching these things.** Like the Bereans, right, the first century Bereans; they searched it out because they were excited about it and they wanted to serve Yahweh...they wanted to do the Truth.

Because what we're really looking for is the relationship...that's what we're looking for; to know the heavenly Father and our Savior in a personal way. And I'd like to finish on this in Hebrews 7...we'll go through several Scriptures on this...Hebrews 7 in verse 19...Hebrews 7 in verse 19 says:

Hebrews 7:19-28 *For the (Levitical) Law perfected nothing, but a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to Elohim. And He confirmed it for us by oath; For they became priests without an oath; but this man...talking about Yahshua...by an oath. As He said to Him by David: "YAHWEH hath sworn, and will not lie, You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."...that's coming from **Psalms 110**; and some people, they misinterpret because they're thinking Melchizedek is a personal name; but Melchizedek is a title. Melchi means righteous...or *Melchi* means King and *zedek* means righteousness; it means King of Righteousness. And when you look at Hebrews, it's very clear Yahshua is Melchizedek. There's not two kings of righteousness...there's not two High Priests and this was the thing why he's saying this...this goes all the way back to Psalms. Can you imagine? And that's why in Genesis does this figure Melchizedek come from nowhere and Abraham...when they're telling Abraham that the kings that are there are going to give him booty. He's saying, "No, I don't want nothing." And then he tithes to Melchizedek, right? And then only four chapters later, he sees three people coming...one is called Yahweh...and I believe it's Yahweh, the Son...with two cherubs with Him...and he knows who the person is. He runs right up. He says he's going to make unleavened bread and kill an animal and whatnot. So clearly when we look at the book of Hebrews, this chapter 7, we see that Melchizedek, the King of Righteousness is actually a title for Yahshua... *So thou became a priest after the order of Melchizedek...Melchizedek... All these things make a better covenant because Yahshua is its surety. And these priests were many, but being mortal they were prevented from continuing because of death; but this one (Yahshua), because He is immortal, has the priesthood which remains forever. And from this He is able to**

save forever those who come to Elohim through Him, because He lives forever to intercede on their behalf. For this is the kind of High Priest proper to us: holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners, and having become higher than the heavens; who has no need, as do the high priests, to offer sacrifices day by day, first for their own sins, then for those of the people. For He did this once and for all, offering up Himself. For the (Levitical) Law makes men high priests who are imperfect, but the word of the oath which came after the (Levitical) Law appoints the Son who is perfect forever.

So wow, and now we are part of that Melchizedek priesthood, the first-fruits, right? And what does it say in **Revelation 5:10**...*we will kings and priests with Him in His Kingdom*. So this is where the vision comes in, right? We're living in...what the Bible calls, the last of days. One of the main things that we know that we're in the end time...**watch the fig tree**. What's the fig tree? **Israel is the fig tree; Israel becoming a nation...that will start the last generation.**

How long is a generation? Seventy years is an endpoint...we're at seventy years now. So things are coming to an end time with all these things and **what is our destiny from Him; to be kings and priests with Him for a thousand years in His Kingdom.**

So it's amazing...this is why we have to prepare now; and this why He says, in time past, He winked at our ignorance's; but now **He tells us, we got to change...we got to worship in Spirit and Truth**. Matthew 11 in verse 27...Matthew 11 in verse 27, He says:

Matthew 11:27-30 *All things were yielded up to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father, except the Son, and the one to whom the Son purposes to reveal Him. Come to Me, all those laboring and being burdened, and I will give you rest. Bear My yoke upon you and learn from Me. That I am tranquil and I am meek, and in My heart you will find tranquility for your souls. For My yoke is pleasant, and My burden light.*

Wow, that's the kind of King I want to serve, right? What a heart, what a love. I just recently done a whole Bible study on Song of Solomon. We have it on line if you want to see it. And it's interesting because to the Jewish people, they almost did not put that Book in the Tanach because they felt it was a little too erotic, to say; because they didn't understand it has nothing to do with that.

It has to do the Messiah and His Bridegroom and there's no other book in the Bible that shows His love for His Bride and how all the adjectives that He gives and He's waiting for us to prepare our self; and He can't wait for us...and it's like, it's such a beautiful love story! It's an amazing, amazing love story of the Bride in the end time...**and this is the kind of Savior we have.**

But what do we have to do? We have to humble our self. We have to realize that we have done sins that are worthy of death. We have to come to Him and ask for forgiveness; be immersed in His name...and you're literally, that's why I say, you're not joining a religious organization; you're joining covenant.

Religion isn't in the Bible; covenant is in the Bible...that's what's in the Bible. That's why in our translation, I try to keep all the original words...not that He made a covenant...the word literally is, He *cut* a covenant with Israel; because the covenant relationship, you cut it. Because there's nine steps to the ancient blood covenant and third part was cutting the animal in two; and the people would be back to back and you would walk through like a figure eight and then you would come face to face. And then you would give perimeters of the covenant.

But that's the point, **covenants can't be broken; covenants are forever**. Religion is nothing; religion is man's way to control other men. That's basically what the religious spirit is. But covenant is something that Yahweh

makes. And when you look, I say, if you look in ancient times and see Abraham coming...when you call someone friend, you didn't say that lightly.

It wasn't like just...hi, friend. Friend was someone you were in covenant with. And when you were in covenant...you know what that meant? That meant everything you had belonged to that person and everything that person had belonged to you. It's when a husband and wife come together, the two become one flesh and they can't be broken; it's a covenant.

Nothing can break that covenant once it's made that way and that's the point. And by extension, if you make a covenant with another person...my children are part of that covenant and your children are part of that covenant. So if something happened to me, you would take care of my children.

And it's beautiful when you see it that way because it shows that even as believers, right...we're still mortal and we're still going to sin. And **Satan wants you to believe: you can't repent anymore**...you went over the line. Yahweh will never forgive you. That's not covenant...that's not covenant.

His mercy is un-ending...His mercy is forever. Peter, Kefer, asked Yahshua...and most translations say, how many times should I forgive my brother? Seven times? And then most translations say, seven times seven or seventy times seven...but actually in the original Aramaic it says, seventy seven times seventy seven. It's really; He's saying it's out of number. **There's no limit to how much forgiveness you're going to have.**

So if He would ask us to be unlimited in our forgiveness, wouldn't He do the same? And that's why if you ever get down in your life...and it happens to all of us...as believers you going to get it. **Never give up...never give up. Never let Satan make you think you went too far. That's the great part...that's the New Covenant; there's always the chance for repentance.**

But at the same time, time is moving forward if you don't take that opportunity for repentance it could disappear. Not that Yahweh wouldn't forgive you, but you may just not, not think about it anymore. It may just come in one ear and go out the other ear. But this is the kind of Savior that we have. Hebrews 2 in verse 9...Hebrews 2 in verse 9, it says:

Hebrews 2:9-18 *but we do see Yahshua, who humbled Himself to become a little lower than the cherubs through His suffering and His death, but now is crowned with glory and honor, so that He tasted death for the sake of everyone except YAHWEH. For it was fitting for Him, because of whom are all things, and through whom are all things, having brought many sons to glory, so that from the very beginning of their salvation they are made perfect through sufferings. Right...sufferings is something that's good for us. Sufferings humble us; it purifies us...For both the One sanctifying and the one being sanctified are all of one nature; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will announce Your name to My brethren; I will praise You in the midst of the congregation."...this is Yahshua saying this about us...And again, "I will be trusting on Him." And again, "Behold, I and the children whom Elohim gave to Me." Since, then, the children have partaken of flesh and blood, in like manner He Himself also shared the same things, that through death He might cause to cease the one having the power of death, that is, the devil; and might release them, who, through fear of death, are all their lives subject to bondage. For He did not take on the likeness of cherubs, "but He takes on Him the seed of Abraham." Wherefore it was right, that he should in every manner resemble his brethren; that he might be merciful, and a high priest faithful in the things of Elohim, and might make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted.*

Wow, do you really understand that? And do you ever think to yourself, why did Yahshua have to come in a human body for some odd thirty-three years, right? The prophecy was like Jonah; three days and three nights He would die and be resurrected. So to forgive your sins and fulfill the prophecies, that's all He needed.

But think about this...the eternal Creator, Co-Creator with Yahweh...He has no beginning, He has no end...the Bible tells us this. He's a spirit-being; so He's never hungered, He's never felt pain, He's never been sick and for eternity Him and the Father are united. They've never had a contrary thought to each other. A matter of fact, while One is thinking They're thinking the same way and yet they do have separate wills; because Yahshua said, "Not My will be done, Your will be done."

So here it is, **two beings, distinct beings, but with separate wills that are surrendering Their wills to each other and They're eternal Spirit. They're not flesh and blood; they don't get tired.** And yet He comes to earth as a baby...He's pooping His pants and His mother has to clean Him. He's living this way from a child up to thirty years old, why? **Because He wants to know how we feel...**because He wants to know when you get on your hands and knees and pray, "I know you don't understand this, but I was rejected by my friends. I was rejected by my family." He says, "No, I understand. I understand." **He went through that sacrifice so that He could know exactly how we feel...**that's what it says. That He's not some High Priest far off just waiting and saying, "Well, I feel bad for you." No, **He knows exactly what we feel because every single thing we went through, He went through.**

And **that' the relationship He wants to have with us. He wants to know us in a personal way...**and I say, not everybody is going to be a King David or a Moses...these are special people that are set out, right? But when you look at David, what does He say? David is a man after My own heart. Abraham is My friend. And **although you may not be a David, a King David or a Moses; you can have the same relationship that David and Moses had.**

Yahweh and Yahshua, They want that relationship with you...they want that same relationship. He wants to call you His friend. Like I said, read the book of Song of Solomon...read the things, **He talks about His Bride and how He loves that Bride.** And **the only thing that holds us back is us. Because Yahweh is Spirit and He can only be in Truth; He can't be in anything but Truth.**

And every time we use religious spirits or things that aren't Truth, we're only separating our self. Like the old saying, if you feel that Yahweh is far away from you, who moved? He's always there with His hands out. He is so merciful that we can't even imagine how merciful He is...like the parable of the prodigal son.

He's there just waiting day in and day and day out...like I said, **He wants that relationship with us. He wants to know us, He wants us to talk to Him** and not just a repetitious prayer and just telling Him what we need. He wants us to talk, "Dad, you're not going to believe what happened today! This happened today, Dad, and that happened today!" **He wants to know the good and He wants to know the struggles and He wants to be there for us.**

And this is the opportunity that we have. This is the times we're living in. Because if you look at the holy days as three time periods, right? And first you have the time of Pesach; which is the time of the removal of sin that is before the Messiah comes; then from the time of Yahshua...we're living in the time of Shavuot...**we're living in the time of the outpouring of the Spirit. We're living in the time of that relationship and now we're getting ready to physically enter the Fall holy days; which is Yahweh's judgement on the earth because they're rejecting Him.**

It's not He wants to bring His judgement; mankind is forcing the judgement because they're rejecting His ways and they're thumbing their nose at Him and they don't want it. But for us, wow, what an opportunity we have; to have this relationship. To not be some kind of just silliness...like in Isaiah it talks about silly the pagan is, right?

He cuts a piece of wood out of the tree and half the wood he's cutting and he's making a fire to keep himself warm and then he's taking the other part, he's making some god out of it and bowing to it. And Yahweh is saying, "Isn't this kind of ridiculous? Doesn't he see this? That half of it he's throwing in a fire and half he's calling a god?"

And yet, we have the opportunity to know the real Creator of the universe. **We have the opportunity to know Him in a personal way and then miracles happen in your life! You'll know Him in a way like you can't know before and once that happens...a human being could never bring you down again.**

Many times I've counseled people for marriage and I say...if you're getting married because you're lonely, then you're not getting married for the right reason. If getting married for security...there should be one reason you're getting married. Because **the person that you met can make you have a relationship with Yahweh better than what it is now. That you both have that common goal of the Kingdom and you both are going to work together; that's the reason for marriage.** That's why Yahweh joins the husband and the wife into two and makes them one because now two is better than one, right? Now you're a better team and you work together that way and that's the way that He works.

Last Scripture I'm going to go into here is Romans 8 in verse 14 because this is an amazing Scripture, he says:

Romans 8:14-17 *For as many as are led by the Spirit of Yahweh, these are sons or the children of Yahweh...right? Literal children...For you did not receive a spirit of slavery again to fear, but you received a Spirit of sonship by which we cry, Abba! Father!...and the word Abba, it's the Hebrew word...really it means daddy. It's like a term of endearment. It's like when you call our heavenly Father, Abba, you're calling Him Daddy. It's like you're with Him, he says...The Spirit itself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of YAHWEH. And if children, then heirs; truly heirs of Yahweh, and joint heirs of Messiah, if indeed we suffer together, that we shall be glorified together.*

Wow, and you got to read that about ten times and really get it and even then...it's un-believable...because **Yahshua is eternal**, like I said...Him and the Father have been there forever; They're Co-Creators of the universe. So it makes sense that Yahshua is Heir of the universe; and the Bible tells us. But right here, it just said, **as followers of Him, we are co-heirs**...co-heirs. Wow, I can't imagine inheriting a suitcase and never mind inheriting the universe!

This is what He has for us; this is why He loves us. He wants us to be part of it. He wants to give us everything and that's everything He owns. And that's why I say, what is Yahweh doing...if you look in the Bible, sometimes when people become messianic they ask and they say, "What should we call our self?" And some don't like to use the word Christian...it is in Bible three times, but only three times because of the connotations today of maybe what other Christians are doing.

The word believer is there twice, but the word that's there more than two hundred and fifty times in the Bible is disciple. That's what we are...we are a disciple. And if you look up that word, it literally comes from the Hebrew *lamed*, which is a skillful learner; it's apprentice. We are apprentice with our heavenly Father and with Yahshua and what they do best, what do they do? They're creators. **So when His Kingdom comes, we'll be kings and priests with Him re-creating the world that mankind has destroyed.**

And we'll be going...it says in **Isaiah 65**...He'll be sending us to China and sending us...because there's going to be a lot of hurt people there that don't know what happened because they were atheists...they didn't know. And all of a sudden all they know is there's nuclear war and all these people died. And He's going to be sending us there to put our arm on their shoulder and say, don't worry it's going to get better from here.

And we're going to teach them everything from organic growing to how to have proper families; to how to live and worship Yahweh correctly. And **this is what our job is; this is our destiny**. And then from there, we don't know exactly...we know that's a thousand years and we don't know exactly, but He say's here, that He has a big universe out there...and they're finding black hole after black hole that never ends...and Yahweh doesn't create anything He doesn't use.

So you could use your imagination to think what will happen after this experiment on little earth is over. But that is our destiny and you got to believe it in faith and understand it. And praise Yahweh for every single person who's sitting in this chair today...and I just...my prayer to Yahweh is that, you'll really...you'll embrace your calling to the best of your ability and really take it serious. Read your Bible every day, be praying every day, studying every day and getting ready for the great destiny that our heavenly Father's given.

So Yahweh bless!