

Free - Take One

Shaqah

*“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ.”
Colossians 2:8*

Issue #51

www.livingspringsinstitute.org

November & December 2010

Step Into the Springs!

Here at Living Springs Institute, we publish a planning calendar which, in a real life, day by day way, will give you the Biblical calendar alongside the Gregorian calendar we are all familiar with. This planner is a Biblical education as well as useful in organizing a person's daily life. We think this is an exciting teaching product, and we would like to send you one for FREE.

To get your FREE, 2011 Planning Calendar, you can simply write, e-mail, or visit us online. For online orders, just go to www.livingspringsinstitute.org and click on the “Resource Shop” button. The calendar is right at the top of the form, and you can type your mailing information into the lines provided. If you are using e-mail, send your request to: resources@shaqah.com. If you're using regular mail, write to us at: Living Springs Institute, P.O. Box 271, Loveland, CO 80539. Just tell us you would like a calendar; be sure to give us your physical mailing address, and it will be on its way!

One note I would like to make is, it does save us on postage to send more than one calendar in the same package. So, if you know of others you would like to give one to, please, don't hesitate to order multiple copies all at once. Regular mail subscribers to this publication should have received a calendar with this issue, but you may also want others to share. Please, don't hesitate to order more. We would also like to send calendars to all of our e-mail subscribers, but we did not automatically send calendars because we don't necessarily have your current physical mailing address. So, go online and be sure to order yours today!

Because of the requests and/or suggestions people have made in the surveys we sent out about the calendar project, we have posted a “Survey Response” page on our website. For those who would like to see what we did with most all the feedback we received, we talk on this page about, both the positives, and the negatives brought up in/by the surveys. We invite anyone who wants to give feedback, to drop us a line or

use the electronic survey. You can find both the electronic survey and the survey response page links by visiting our website. Just click on the “Learning Center” button, then “Calendar Project.” We are always open to suggestions, and desire to hear about problems we might be able to fix.

Of course, we continue to talk about the big addition the Calendar Project has seen this year, and that is the production of the PDF version, which you can download from our website. This is a very printer friendly version of the calendar, giving individuals the chance to print out their own calendar(s). In doing this, you can play with the size the calendar is printed, put it in the binder of your choosing, etc. We have even went the extra step of making the previous two years of the calendar available for study and reference purposes. All the information about what the PDF calendar is, more tips on how to use it, and even the ability to share your own useful tips, can be accessed by visiting the Calendar Project page of our website!

I wanted to make it clear that ordering a calendar will not put you on any mailing list! Living Springs Inc. does not share your personal information, and we are happy to send you only what you request. By the mighty hand of The Lord, we are continuing to offer this calendar for free; and speaking of that, don't forget to request your free subscription to this publication (*Shaqah*), when you write. If you would like extra copies or back issues of *Shaqah*; our free book, *A Sabbath By Design*; or anything we offer, please let us know. If you are using our online order form, and the form will not allow you to order the quantity you need, please make your request for extra copies in the comment box at the end of the order form.

In closing, I just want to say thank you again to all those who have taken part in this ministry and specifically this Calendar Project! Please, remember to share Living Springs Institute with others. God bless, and as always, we pray you will be blessed by this issue of *Shaqah*!



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Following the Biblical Stream:

By Philip Busby

Last time, we primarily talked about the differences between the instructions God gave to Adam and Eve verses the instructions God gives to Noah and his family, post-flood. One of the most summary statements of our last segment, which pins down what we were talking about, is the point that man should not be looking for redemption of this life, but salvation from the death it inevitably brings. The fact we all need to get this point clearly in our minds, is a primary reason for God's allowance of humans killing and eating animals. It also brings us squarely to the issues laid out in verses 4 and 5!

Now, I touched on the blood issue last time, but here in verse 4 of the ninth chapter of Genesis is where the blood issue comes out unequivocally in the instructions God spoke to man after the flood. We are not to eat, much less, drink, blood! If we look into the laws God laid out for the children of Israel (the Torah), we see this instruction having great bearing on the rules Israel was to live by. One of the first and most simple aspects of not consuming blood has to do with health. There are those people who dispute this fact and even go so far as to say there is health benefits to consuming a certain amount of blood. However, this is ridiculous! First, it's ridiculous on the level that God created us to be vegetarians. If we simply believe the Bible, we cannot believe there is health benefits in eating meat, much less blood. Now, I'm not saying we all have to be vegetarian; but the simple matter-of-fact is that before the flood, man was only supposed to eat the fruit of the tree, and the herb bearing seed in the field. (Gen. 1:29) In other words, we were designed to eat fruits and vegetables only. There is no way to make a Biblical argument that it's necessary for man to eat meat. Therefore, it stands to reason that it's, at the very least, a somewhat unhealthy habit. We see this more clearly when we look at the Torah, and realize that after giving these more general instructions and permission concerning flesh consumption, God restricts His chosen nation to an even narrower category of animals considered fit for consumption.

As we talked about last time, one of the benefits to a temporal environment is that it will all pass away someday. This leaves room for compromise on the health issue as it strictly relates to our physical forms. Sin brought the world to a place where man would not only have to work by the sweat of his brow to eat bread, but might have to make a certain amount of health compromises in order to survive at all. This is the primary reason God allowed the eating of animals after the flood. It's more of that destruction sin brings, not the picture of what is good for us, much less necessary. Now, I have heard professional, licensed nutritionists explain why they believe the, "meat is necessary," argument. Their theory is based on the idea that those things which are more like us are the things we must eat in order to obtain at least some of the elements we need. If one follows this logic to its pentacle, one could believe that killing and eating your fellowman would be the highest form of nutritional value. It should not take a high degree of education, and in light of what nutrition-

ists are taught in school, "higher education" might actually blind you from seeing that cannibalism is not a good thing.

You can lay aside all the moral reasons for not being a cannibal, and there is still an entire collection of bad things which come from it. In fact, a disease the world is in fear of today has to do with this very practice in animals. For decades - if not more - people who think they know how to make bigger, better and more beefy cattle, have been feeding their stock those parts of the slaughtered animals which people do not eat or use for other purposes. The theory is the same as the nutritionists' argument. If cattle eat cattle leftovers, they will be able to integrate the materials instead of having to expend the energy it takes to process regular food into what they need. In the end, this cannibalistic practice, forced on helpless animals, has created mad cow disease. It's called such because the cattle start acting crazy as they lose control over their body's functions. They become unable to walk, because of their inability to control their leg muscles, and keep their equilibrium. The cattle waste away and have to be put out of their misery. This is because the cattle, do in fact, absorb the leftovers of their predecessors instead of forming new building blocks from raw nutrients, but it's kind of like putting a burnt out light bulb in a lamp. The building block may be there, but it's not active and alive. This leads to the body being filled with useless cells instead of the proper healthy, active cells each part of the body needs! Because a great deal of the leftovers fed back to the live cattle are parts of the nervous system, the brains and nervous systems of the live animals are the most affected.

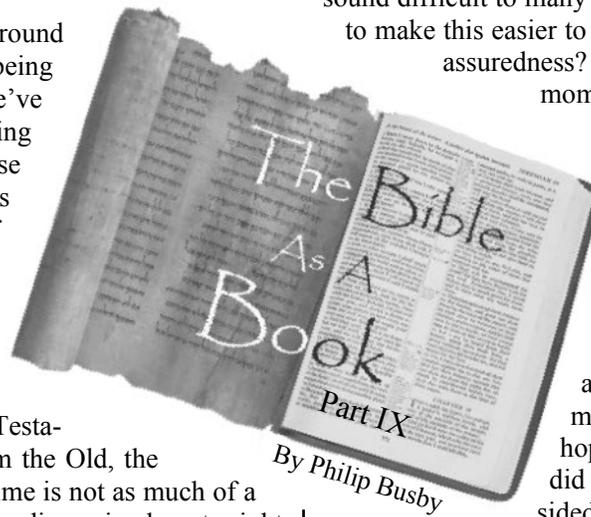
The truth is, we don't want to eat what is most like us, we need to eat what God designed our bodies to process into what we need. Those food items are living, not dead like animal flesh, and they are very unlike us. Plants draw nutrients from the soil which is something we cannot do at all. Plants utilize sunlight to process what it needs to create the building blocks of life. While humans get benefit from sunlight, even the direct absorption of it, we know that our bodies are not designed to be in direct sunlight for prolonged periods of time without protection from it. Plants do what our body doesn't do, and in turn, gives us what our bodies need in order to do what they are designed to do. Meat can serve as a partial substitute for our lack of plant material, but it takes far more energy to break down what an animal is made of in order for our bodies to reconfigure the elements into what we need, than it does for our body to build what it needs from the more basic elements it receives by eating plant material. If our body gets a hold of something too similar to what it was going to build in the first place, it doesn't take the time to break it down into pieces and reconfigure it. The more this happens, the more we are in danger of becoming just like those cattle. We are filled with something worse than holes, we are filled with dead cells.

We have covered a lot of ground in talking about the issue of time being in-between the testaments, and we've covered the point of there also being time between books, especially those of the Old Testament. Then there is the issue of time in the writing of certain books. We have talked some about the Jewishness of the Bible as a whole, and why God made it that way. In talking about these facts, we covered the simple basics about the New Testament not being truly separate from the Old, the truth it's also Jewish and the fact time is not as much of a divider as some believe. Thus, when discussing how to rightly divide the Word of God (II Tim. 2:15), all this brings us down to the issue of authority within the Bible!

There are those who believe this conversation is not relevant because of things such as what Paul said in II Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." They would argue that all Scripture has the same authority and there is no need to talk about authority within the Bible. However, this is a mistake, and comes because people do not know their entire Bible. There are many things Jesus said which people can point to, and attempt to make them some kind of New Testament only thing. However, as we have talked about before, Jesus was not changing the things of God, He was changing the things of man!

Man had a lot of thoughts about what God wanted, and while many people easily jump on the idea that the Jewish leadership (many like to say the entire nation) was wrong in their thinking and that is precisely why they crucified Jesus; the truth is, most people fail to see how the Jews were only serving as an example of something we all do. It was misunderstanding or misinterpreting of the Scripture which threw them off course, and which Jesus was trying to correct on more than one level. Jesus was trying to get us all to see what God intended all along, without the misinterpretations man had put around the Word. Yes, Paul said "All scripture..."; but what he meant by this was not that all Scripture stands alone. In reality, what he meant was just the opposite. He was telling us, we should use "All" the Scripture to make righteous judgments in life, not just take what we think sounds like it fits with what we want! This is a trick far too many people calling themselves Christians, and even ministers, get away with. I like to call it fractionalization, and we should understand that when we hear a portion of Scripture used to teach a certain doctrine, we still need to hold that doctrinal teaching up to the light of the Word as a whole. This may

sound difficult to many people, but the Bible gives us a way to make this easier to do. How do we know this with such assuredness? Because if we look at one of those moments when Jesus was trying to set us all straight, He confirms that there are, in fact, authority issues within the Scripture itself; and we can use this knowledge to move forward in the living of our lives!



In Matthew chapter 22, Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was/is. Many thought, or at least hoped, this would trip Jesus up, but it did not. The answer was simple and resided in the Scripture text they had been

reading since the very beginnings of having a written Word. (Deut. 6:4-5, Lev. 19:18) Jesus' answer was that we should love God with everything we are, and the second which is like to the first is that we love our neighbor as ourselves. We will come back to this teaching more times than I currently know, but the point we want to focus on right now is the statement Jesus followed the commandments themselves with. He said, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matthew 22:40 We get mixed up sometimes about what is being said in certain places and in certain stories in the Bible. We find it hard to interpret the prophesy or see how certain events are the unfolding of those prophesies, because we do not understand that almost none of the Bible is a stand-alone portion! If you are reading a more foundational commandment such as Jesus was pointing out, you will benefit from further portions of Scripture in order to determine the proper interpretation and applicability of that foundational commandment. If you are reading something which relates back to one of them, you will have to be knowledgeable about the foundational commandments, to have any idea what is going on or being said.

Everything you have ever heard taught should be compared to what you know about the Bible as a whole, not just the portion of Scripture the person is using to make their point. Then there should be the understanding that what you think you know could already be tainted by fractionalized teaching, or the simple fact you have not gained all the knowledge you need to make certain determinations. The fact we are not all perfect, and still growing (or should be attempting to), is why God tells us we are not saved by our works but by His Grace. (Eph. 2:8) This is why it's so important that, first and foremost, people read the Word for themselves - and keep reading it!

Learning can be quite a process, and God sent His Holy Ghost to help us all with exactly what we are discussing (II Tim. 1:13-14, Heb. 10:14-17); but there is an organization to the Bible which makes it more uncomplicated than many people are led to believe. Now, I have come to another one of

those points in this study where I want to be very clear on the fact: I am in no way saying people can fully understand the Bible without the help of The Holy Ghost. However, in this study, we are trying to talk about the fact that while this is very true, the Bible itself is not some code which needs to be cracked. In truth, it has been put together in the best way possible for generation upon generation of changing seasons, times, and technology, to be able to pick up the very same book and understand its meaning. There is a way to see the Word, which is especially helpful when we find ourselves marred in the world, and not as in tune as we should be with The Holy Ghost. In fact, if we were all good, all the time, at keeping ourselves clean, and The Holy Ghost close, we would not need a written Word. This is not because The Holy Ghost would then teach us something different. It's because He can teach us the Word directly, and it's much easier to walk day by day receiving tailor-made instructions straight from The Master than it is to depend on written instructions from a book. However, we are not all good at keeping in tune, and the way we can help ourselves is to reach for the tangible Words of God which God by His grace knew we would need. No matter what state we find ourselves in, we can access the Bible. This is one of the greatest arguments for memorizing as much of the Word as you can; then even physical limitations to a Bible cannot stand in the way of knowing what you need to do in order to get back on track with God, or simply make the right move in the next situation you encounter. Let me be clear, we all need and will continue to need, The Holy Ghost in order to succeed, but just as people who have never chosen to serve God, benefit from the voice of a witness (Rom. 10:12-15), we all benefit from having personal understanding and preparedness. (Matt. 17:14-21) The better you know and understand the Word for yourself, the more you will grow personally, and the quicker you will be able to discern your next step in any situation. (Heb. 4:12) Individual, personal ability to walk a righteous walk, is the life The Holy Ghost is here to lead us into!

In this study, we have talked about the fact the New Testament is nothing without the Old, which is already a discussion based on authority. What we are saying is that if you take the New Testament by itself, it has no meaning because it's out of the higher context of what came before it. This truth does not end with the "New"/"Old" split. We can go deeper than that in our understanding. We can be more aware of the Bible's organization. We can compare what we hear, first to what we know all things in God's Word hang on, then move our way out from there into those things which give us life examples, in order to know for sure if teaching or theology holds up! Now, we have already touched several times in this study on the next step inward, and that is the first five books of what many call the Old Testament - this is the Torah. Just as it can be said the New is nothing without the Old, it can be said a majority of the Old is nothing without the Torah! If you have been paying attention so far, you know what the final step is. However, there is even another step in-between which you may be able to guess. If not, that's OK; because in this study, we will specifically discuss them all. In a way, we have started at the bottom of the chart and are

working our way up. This is due to the fact that when it comes to how to see the Bible, so many people are wrongly taught chronological change, instead of increasing perspective. We have started our conversation talking about the fact many people believe you can throw out the Old Testament now that we have the New, or, at the very least, feel the Old is nothing more than background to the New. However, the authority within the Scripture issue is actually where we have been heading all along. I have attempted to follow the example of God in this study, and meet people where many are, bringing all those who are willing to hear the truth into a greater understanding. Most people, at least among those who call themselves Christians, are in an upside-down position of believing the New Testament in some way trumps the Old, when in fact, just the opposite is true!

Depending on how The Lord leads, we may talk some in this study about how people divide the books of the Bible into historical, prophetic, wisdom, and the like. The non-Jewish version of this kind of breakdown is taught in many Bible classes, but the foremost and utmost important way to break down the Scripture is with the understanding that the Bible is not really divided at all. It's all useful for making righteous judgments because as time has moved forward, God has given us the information and teaching necessary to apply to our everyday lives, the highest truths, which He gave us right at first!

One could say that the Bible is a target. There are those outer layers of things we read which are obtainable goals, even for the very corrupted by sin. However, in making everyday life choices, we should not just hope to hit the target in general. We should always aim for the center. Because so many believe the ideas that as time moves forward God reveals more truth, which on some level negates the older truth, many people are aiming more and more for the outer edge instead of the center. People are always looking for that outer perimeter they can, "get away with." In truth, the outer layers of the Bible are attempting to draw our eyes to that more perfect place where we are following in ever greater ability, the top two commandments Jesus pointed out. These top two go all the way back to the beginning; and, in fact, are the reason why Adam and Eve had such freedom before the fall into sin. If we all followed the top two commandments to even a good, much less an excellent level, the world would have far less to worry about. This is something Jesus was trying to get us to see as He talked one day about the commandments in the Torah. Jesus said that it had been said of old, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; but Jesus instructed us to, instead, turn the other cheek; give the coat and the cloke; and walk the extra mile. (Matt. 5:38-42) Some would say this is an example of the New Testament nullifying the Old, but it's just the opposite. The eye for an eye thing is not just about punishment, it's about truth and consequences. The outer perimeters of the target attempts to bring all people, no matter how corrupt they have previously been, into a justice system which keeps people from stealing from, and damaging others for their own gain. It teaches that you do not have rights above others. If damaging others, and stealing

from others is what is necessary in order to make the gain you want, then you have no right to that gain. If it simply gets you where you want to be or what you want to have, faster, or with less work, you have no right to take that path. You and your desires are not so important that getting to them faster, with less work, or even at all, is justifiable cause to create for others, setbacks in their life and/or goals. Jesus was not nullifying an old rule by making a new one. We only see it that way because God is reaching out to us in the very corrupted state of sin we have fallen into. Jesus was explaining the greater truth that the old rule was actually trying to draw us back to: which is an even older and higher way of walking!

Everything God wants from us hangs on just two commandments. The second of which deals with how we interact with other humans, and states that we are to treat our neighbors the way we would like to be treated. Even this is not perfection, because some of us do not love ourselves and the life God gave us, in the way we should. However, it's the most across-the-board thing anyone (especially those far away from God) can be asked to do in order to understand love in our day by day situations. The fact, this practice will still cause us to fall short of God's perfection, is exactly why it's not the golden rule. The true golden rule leads us into perfection because it has to do with us accomplishing what we were created for in the first place, and that is to love; and thus, serve The Lord with everything we are made of. Turning back specifically to what Jesus was teaching us on that day so long ago - you turn the other cheek, not because the person who struck you deserves it, but because we all need a second chance. Without a second chance, we get no opportunity to make things right. If we are trying to hit the center of the target with our actions, we have to attempt to make things right with others when we make mistakes. (Matt. 5:23-26) Because our rights do not exceed the rights of others, we cannot expect to be given this opportunity if we do not give it to others. Even God tells us this is part of His judgment. We all need more mercy than we can show; but how can we expect to receive the mercy we need, if we never learn, or, more importantly, desire, to show mercy to others. (Matt. 18:23-35) Jesus was only using the examples of being hit on the cheek, being asked for our coat, and being asked to walk a mile, as illustrations of how we can apply the commandment in an everyday environment.

One day, a man told me no male could possibly follow the Bible because the Bible doesn't even allow a man to look at a girl and think she is beautiful. Of course, he was referring to another of Jesus' instructions which concerned the adultery commandment. (Matt. 5:27-28) This again, is so far off base from what Jesus was talking about, you are almost claiming the opposite of what was intended. Let's face it, God specifically made the female human's physical appearance to be attractive to the male human. This is far more true for the male when it comes to the female than it is for the female when it comes to the male. This is just the way God physically set it up among humans. In some species of animals, it's just the opposite. Indian Peafowl, for instance, are

not prized, even among humans, because the female of the species is something to behold. It's the male who was created to strut his stuff. The point is, all this is fleshly concerns which while originally being made by God to be enjoyable, they are not the things which should be guiding our thoughts and thus our actions, especially now that we have walked so far into sin. For reasons I could write a book on, and at the same time are simple to anyone who just takes the time to consider - adultery is not loving others. It's loving yourself! If you commit adultery on the actual physical level, you have missed the target of righteousness altogether. Thus, God commands us not to commit adultery - point blank. What Jesus was telling us is that without sin, a male should be able to look at a female and appreciate the beauty God created in the same way a flower is beautiful, or a crystal clear stream. The problem is, we go further than that, and we look at the woman for the purpose of lusting after the physical action we will miss the target altogether by doing. While society as a whole can function well with people who, at least, respect the bonds of marriage and its purpose which restrains both those in a marriage and outside a marriage, great harm can be done - not just to others, but to our ability to follow the first commandment about loving God - when we allow lust to reside in our hearts. This is true, even putting aside the fact most people don't contain it there!

The truth is that in a perfect world, lust would not be a problem. This, in fact, has a lot to do with why Adam and Eve did not start out wearing clothing; but clothes wearing was one of the first things Adam and Eve realized was necessary after taking of the fruit they were told not to. Sinful man will take beauty into the realm of lust. Sinful man will build an entire industry around it, which is very abusive to other humans - in particularly, women! This is why Jesus instructs men not to even look at a woman with the intent to lust after her; and females are instructed, in the Word, to be of modest apparel, as well as overall appearance. (I Tim. 2:9) While males should not violate the highest commandment by having lustful thoughts in their minds and hearts which greatly hinder them from having a focus on God, they also should not violate the privacy and personal integrity of fellow humans. Nor should they be a part of supporting others (whether male or female) who take part in such activities. They should also keep in mind, they are commanded not to be a stumbling block to their fellowman, by abstaining from all appearance of evil in this matter. (I Thes. 5:22) The bottom line is that men will never stop seeing women as attractive, but you can't let it go further than that, even on an, "I just like to look," level!

On the other side of the issue, women should be considerate and loving toward their fellow human. They should not use their bodies to gain attention, even suppressing the urge to make themselves stand out on an attraction level, especially when they are not doing it exclusively for their husband's attention. (Rom. 14:12-13) Women don't like to hear this kind of instruction, anymore than men like to hear what Jesus said and meant by it. However, we see clearly in our world today that this is a problem, and true believers should not be

looking for the outer edge of the target on this issue. If we are stepping things out in the way Jesus is trying to get us to, we should also understand that there is no greater time to consider our modesty (whether male or female) than when we prepare to go and gather with others of like precious faith, for a time meant to be an absolute focus on the things of God!

None of these things are truths which Jesus made up or decided was suddenly necessary. Just as I mentioned above, the lust issue is one of the very first truths Adam and Eve came to after taking of the fruit. Jesus was simply laying out a logical path of how to apply the highest truths of God to the everyday issue of male/female interaction. This logic is not just about how to survive as a human society, but how to come closer in our actions, as well as our thought patterns, to following the greatest commandments. We are, or at least should be, grateful for the extra help Jesus was giving us - especially in a day and age where so many reject, not just the "lust not" idea, but the adultery commandment, altogether. In a world of modern technology, utilized greatly for, not just all out pornography, but serious everyday immodesty, true believers should be crystal clear on the fact we can not afford to be partakers of such things, without harming our walk with God. Of course, this will not mean anything to those who are simply trying to get into heaven because they don't like the idea of hell very much; but the true believer in God will care greatly to have the knowledge that this activity is an extensive inhibitor to faith!

Now, the eye for an eye issue comes directly out of the Torah. This is of great importance; but the second thing we talked about Jesus teaching on - the adultery issue - comes from the next level of authority, which if you have not guessed by now, is the Ten Commandments. As I said before, we will want to talk about each of these levels, and both why and how we know they are levels. However, we will continue on our study path of working from the outside inward. So, speaking in the same terms Jesus used when talking about the two greatest commandments, we can say, the New Testament is hanging on the Old; but a point we still have to really hit hard on, is the why even most of what many call the Old Testament actually hangs on the Torah.

For that conversation, I want to start by saying, I understand some find it strange that I keep saying, "what many know as the Old Testament," or the like, but I just can't help myself. We really should call this portion of the Bible, the Hebrew Bible. This touches again on a couple of things we have already covered in this study. First, there are political reasons men, way off the mark, choose to give us the terms Old and New. Second, there is a reason God gave His Words to a specific people, and the name should reflect the fact we believe it is so. Many people of the world may not understand why this is or simply not like it, but if God does something (and we clearly see that God did this), we should not question whether it's good or bad. Instead, we should realize that God had/has a perfect plan and purpose for doing what He does,

and there is benefit whether we understand it or not. (Isa. 55:8-9)

God gave His oracles to one specific nation because He didn't want anyone to have the excuse that the truth was too hard to find. In fact, the truth that the Jewish people, are to this day, the only people on earth a majority of people believe it's justifiable to discriminate against, is a very powerful sign that they hold a truth not of this world, and which this world greatly fears! The fact Jews are discriminated against is an even more convincing argument than any other which could be offered against the idea that the Jew no longer holds the exclusive title of, "Entrusted with the oracles of God." The fact so many fight tooth and nail against the Israeli government being the sole rulers of the city of Jerusalem, is just a magnificent evidence that it's still this city God is working through, and which Jesus will return to!

It may not be so clear to many people, what we should more appropriately call the New Testament, but what many call the Old Testament is clearly and without a doubt, the Hebrew Bible! This is not because the Bible belongs exclusively to that one culture, but because the Word created that culture. I have stated, probably more than once, something which I will continue to hammer at all through this study, you cannot understand the Bible if you do not take it in the context of the Jewish nation. It's the framework in which the Bible is presented. We can use the Bible to gain a Jewish perspective, and it's through this Jewish perspective that the Bible should be seen. This is one of the biggest reasons the Bible is not a book you read through once, and understand in depth. People have studied - and I mean studied - the Bible all their lives, and still come away with new things the very next time they read through, or just meditate upon it. The Bible is meant to be lived, and the truth we have been talking about in this segment is that we should be growing and learning more and more, how to apply the highest truth to our everyday walk.

The Hebrew Bible shows us a people who were commanded to do just that. For the Jew, living the law was literally a command right down to the way they eat food! This is a fact we need to be clear on as we view the Bible. It's the reason we should call it, the Hebrew Bible, instead of the Old Testament; and it's the only way we are going to be able to approach how the Hebrew Bible is rightly divided. Again, we come to that issue of repeating the fact there is nothing old replaced by new. What there is, is a set of commandments and laws which were written down specifically to cultivate righteousness in all those willing to hear. To facilitate growth, laws were entrusted and commanded to be lived by a certain nation of people, as an example, prophesy, and focal point for the rest of the world no matter where or in what environment you live. Especially, for those who are true believers in The God who created us all!

Let's stay in God's Word!

FBS continued from pg. 2

This is why the Torah restricts the kind of animals Israel was to eat, and would never allow for cannibalistic feeding practices. Even instructing that you do not, "...see the a kid in its mother's milk." Exodus 23:19 Now, one of the animals people are most aware that kosher eating forbids is pigs. If we step back into the medical world of science, we see that doctors and researchers have learned, one of the closest things to human flesh, and thus, useful for transplant, is hog parts. For all our medical technology, most of what surgeons and doctors in general still do is attempt to give the body some help, and hope it will heal itself. If a surgeon replaces a human's heart valve with one from a pig, there is a great chance the body will integrate that part because of its similar cell structure. However, there's a big difference between placing a specific part inside a human in hopes the body will use it for what it is, and sending the animal parts through the digestive system where our bodies try to use the - oh, so similar - elements for routine cell replacement. If we are going to eat animals, we benefit from not eating those animals most similar to us on the level of cellular structure. The better an animal's physical parts are adaptable to our own, the more unhealthy it is to ingest their parts as food.

This has directly to do with the fact God told us not to eat blood. Even though it's possible to test and tell if it's human or animal (and even humans have different blood types), blood is the one element which is very common to all the living things which utilize it. Any eating of blood is going to be harmful to humans. This is not as much a factor for predatory animals which eat meat, but there are a couple of things to keep in mind. First, what we call predators, were made, from the beginning, to eat flesh, and humans were not. We call them predators which brings images of the kill, but the primary job of most of these animals is not to hunt down and kill other animals, as much as it is to clean up animals which have died by themselves. The times they do kill, it's often those animals which are the weaker of the herd and closer to being one of those which die on their own. The times when predators are most able to take a more healthy prey is when the herd is getting overpopulated. Not only does this increase the numerical odds for a predator's success, but a greater factor is that this will often cause the entire herd to become weaker and weaker due to the lack of food, making them easier to pick off.

The predators primary reason for existence is to clean up and maintain the balance. They are often eating something old, and even if predators do take fresh kill, they often store it or leave it for a later time. The point is, their digestive system is designed to do something so different, than humans and those animals which, never eat meat, that they specifically eat things which under no circumstance can a human eat and not get immediately sick from. They are basically in a different category of food consumption which humans were never intended to be in. This brings us to our second fact, which is, again, if we look at the Torah, we find none of the land or air animals which eat flesh, are allowed in a kosher diet. If it's true that you are what you eat, then humans are supposed to be fruits and vegetables, not meat. However, if we are going to

eat meat, we should, at the very least, eat meat which comes from animals made of the green herb of the field, not the animals which are already made of those animal's flesh.

This is also why kosher eating requires animals to be slaughtered in the same basic way a sacrificial animal is killed. When God asks Israel to sacrifice animals, there is always the issue of the blood. If you pay attention to the rules and requirements of sacrifice in the Torah, you find that blood is not really what gets burned on the alter. Sacrifice is performed by cutting open the main arteries in the animal's neck. When you do this right, you almost instantaneously deprive blood to the brain, making death more immediate for that part of the body which causes animals to know pain. In turn, you can have that same reaction which disturbs so many people, and which most people know best by referring to the chicken with its head cut off. However, the animal is not reacting to pain impulse from the brain, it's reacting to the fact it so immediately loses the direction it was receiving from the brain. This is not unlike a car or bicycle in motion being suddenly deprived of its driver. The machine is no longer doing what it's doing because it's being directed, but it's not going to stop until all the energy is expended or countered by another object. Thus, kosher slaughter technique, while being very human on the level of pain, is not dependent on stopping the heart in order to kill the animal, like some other methods do. The heart pumps for a few last impulsive beats which helps drain the entire body of blood. This is especially useful because by opening the neck arteries, you allow quick drainage of the blood. All this works in the favor of leaving the least amount of blood in the body. In the end result, those parts which burn on the alter will contain no great amount of blood. So, too, animals slaughtered for meat will benefit greatly by not leaving blood to putrefy and contaminate the meat.

All this is because of what God says right here in verse 4 of Genesis chapter 9. Blood is the life of all those physical forms which utilize it. We see this further represented in sacrifice when we look at what happens to the blood. The blood which is not collected into a bowl, spills out on the ground. That which is captured in a bowl is for the purpose of sprinkling. What is left in the bowl is often instructed to be poured out at the base of the alter. (Lev. 4) On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest enters the Holy of Holies and sprinkles blood before the Ark of the Covenant, and the elements of the temple are purified by sprinkling blood. (Lev. 16, Heb. 9:19-28) I have talked extensively in this study about the fact this life must come to an end, for us to receive the life we need to be directly and eternally in the presence of God! (John 12:20-26) Sacrifice is a visual illustration of that simple truth. As things burn, they put off smoke. Smoke is composed of tiny broken down elements of what is being burned. Some of the smoke from the alter would be from the wood maintaining the fire, but far more smoke is created when the sacrifice is placed on it. Inside the Holy place of the temple, there is an Alter of Incense. (Ex. 40:1-5) The job of this alter was to continually create smoke before the veil which covered the Holy of Holies. In Revelation, we are told the smoke coming from the incense alter is mingled with the prayers of the saints going up before God. (Rev. 8:1-4) Paul also tells us in I

Corinthians 15 that all those, part of the first resurrection, shall be changed. This corruption shall take on incorruption. The sacrifice at the temple teaches this. Certain portions of the animal carcass are literally transformed on the altar from flesh into smoke and ash. The smoke tends to rise in illustration of our going up to meet The Lord. However, the blood is the life force of our temporal bodies. This is not burned on the altar. By the time the flesh reaches the altar for burning, the blood is, for the most part, gone. Death has truly taken possession of the flesh. Blood represents the life we must be willing to leave behind in order to receive the new life God has prepared. Thus, it is poured out and left at the feet of the altar to soak into the ground, be dried by the sun, and return to the dust from which we are made.

Elements of the temple are purified by blood because all these artifacts will pass away just as all the world will pass away. They are already, not much more than dust. The only thing which makes them more than just natural elements of the world is that man has fashioned them into a specific item to serve a human purpose. These artifacts do not have a life to give; thus, they are sprinkled with the blood of those things which can give their life in representation. However, the blood is, again, not meant to denote life as much as it is death. These items are to be holy unto God, which means they are set apart for God's purposes. The blood sets them apart from other human artifacts which are meant to be used for whatever man needs or wants. One day, a man makes a bowl for the purpose of setting out fruit to his guests. In later days, it's faded and chipped, so it gets used for dirty dishes or to set water out to the family pet. The elements used in the temple are not to have a second life - so to speak. They serve in the purpose of the temple, and when not fit for that service, they are destroyed. They do not have a "life" of their own. They exist for the sole purpose of serving the things of God. As I have stated before, you have to get representation right or there is no use - if not actual harm done - in doing it.

Scientists argue all the time about what life really is and where it comes from. No matter how much they duplicate the physical structure of living organisms, they still need a life force from somewhere, or the thing they build does not live. The only place they know to get the life force they need is to start or, at least, include in the structure, elements already alive. In no way do they understand how to bring life from non-life. Only God can do that. It's the foundational flaw of evolution and the reason science will never prove the theory. God says, here in this verse, that blood is the life of the beast. This is proven to be true as man dives deeper and deeper into how to cure failures of the body. All the modern excitement over stem cells has a lot to do with blood. One of the very best sources of stem cells is the umbilical cord blood from child-birth. What is upsetting is, many scientists would rather get their stem cells by dismantling actual humans. In the very earliest stages of human life, all of us start out with a physical form which grows out of these powerful cells. They divide and produce identical copies of themselves, not for the pur-

pose of being what they are, but for the availability to be encoded as various parts of our newly forming body. As our physical form becomes more complex, blood vessels are formed in order to continue feeding and placing cells in the necessary areas; but even once a baby is ready for birth, its umbilical cord, which is not shared blood with the mother, is still teeming with these most basic cells. They are just bursting with the energy of life, waiting to be given instructions as to what to become! This is why medical science finds them so useful. They are what humans are built out of. It should affect people's attitude toward abortion to point out that after day 22, abortion stops a beating heart! However, even that tiny beginning speck - evil hearted people want to insist is only an embryo - is shedding blood if one dismantles or discards it!

After our bodies are more fully formed, most of the growth and cell replacement we experience is due to the dividing of those cells already programmed to be certain things, but the blood is continually made up of a vast mixture, ready to help with any deficiency. This is simply why we bleed when we get cut. When we consider eating the cells of an animal, which have been assigned a function, we can judge if the cells are muscle, lung, eye, liver, etc. However, the cells which make up blood are a mixture of cells carrying both good things and bad things. Blood cells are always doing, or on their way to doing, various jobs. Some of the blood is on its way to be purified by certain organs. You wouldn't eat an animal's dung would you? Well, the blood contains a significant amount of material on its way to being expelled from the body just as all waste is expelled. The blood also is carrying those things a body is trying to fight off. If there is infection in a body, it will reside greatly in the blood. While some people have benefited from receiving blood transfusions from others which contains antibodies the recipient doesn't have, you can more easily receive infection your body is not prepared or is unable to fight off. Yes, there are those who, because of blood loss or the body's failure to perform a certain task, will benefit from a blood transfusion. However, these are emergency techniques which no one can survive an indefinite need for. There are serious risks involved, and the blood needs to be thoroughly tested in order to insure it's clean and useful. Blood straight out of a body, comes with the good and the bad. When you directly ingest blood, you are not giving your body something to break down and/or use to build you up from. Instead, you are giving your body something it will absorb more directly and have to deal with. While some may believe this is some sort of energy boost, it's, again, much like putting a burnt out light bulb in your bodies various sockets. The healthiest thing your body can do is produce and clean its own blood. The healthiest thing you can do for your body is not to inhibit this process. Blood is the life of each individual whether animal or man. If you don't have to, you do not want blood coming from others, whether human or non-human; because more appropriately than saying you are what you eat, you are what blood makes you!

Until next time, Shalom!