

Living Faith & Living by Faith

Does a difference exist between having *living faith*, and *living by faith*? Jesus asked, after relating the parable about the persistent widow, if “when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?” (Luke 18:8). The question is not rhetorical, but refers back to the persistent widow and unrighteous judge who neither feared God nor respected man. Jesus’ juxtaposition of the judge and God the Father places the widow and Israel, the woman of Revelation chapter 12, in a descriptive parallel. And Israel as the holy nation of God is as a widow. Her inheritance is the kingdom of heaven, not a physical promised land. And she has been long in receiving her inheritance. Her prayers, a legal term, have been for that kingdom to come speedily. But for nearly two millennia, her prayers have been unanswered. Time has gone on as it has. Nothing seems to happen—except an increasing percentage of the world’s population becomes *Christian*, just as an increasing percentage of the Egyptian population became Hebrew after the seventy went south to escape famine. So Jesus’ question about when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith or belief [the words are interchangeable in translation from Greek] is a valid question that addresses Israel’s endurance in prayer and belief. Will this holy nation continue to hear the words of Jesus and believe the One who sent Him (John 5:24), or will this nation quit on God? Will this holy nation begin to worship demons and the works of human hands in an attempt to obtain a physical inheritance for itself? The answer is in Christ’s revelation, given to the Apostle John (Rev 9:20).

All of humanity will become the holy nation of Israel when the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ (Rev 11:15). The Holy Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh (Joel 2:28). Satan, now the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2) and the spiritual king of Babylon (Isa 14:4–21), will be cast from heaven (Rev 12:9). Babylon will fall, and all of humanity has been called out of this failed city (Rev 18:4), for all people will then belong to the Father and the Son. Satan will no longer be able to deceive humanity by reigning over human beings’ mental topography. Humanity will become the single great nation promised to Abraham (Gen 12:2), the father of the faithful, or of those human beings who will live by faith or by belief.

But the answer to whether Israel will live by belief [Gr: *pistis*] is dated to the weeks and months immediately preceding the kingdom of the world becoming the kingdom of the Father and Son. And the answer is no! Israel as a cultural and economic widow in spiritual Babylon has lost faith. She has rebelled against the righteous judge (2 Thess 2:3), and has given her cause to the lawless one, the man of perdition, into whose hands Israel was physically given (Dan 7:25) after being mentally liberated at the second Passover.

Herein is a mystery of God: the three men crucified on Calvary represented all of humanity. One man was the firstborn Son of God, who was without sin but became sin for the remainder of humanity. The other two lawbreakers represented the division of humanity that will exist during judgment. The first lawbreaker asked Jesus to physically save Himself and the thief. This lawbreaker sought physical salvation, and died without receiving anything but a rebuke from the other lawbreaker, who acknowledged the justice of his death on the cross and asked only to be remembered when Jesus came into His spiritual kingdom. This second lawbreaker was justified, and received the promise of entering paradise.

Jesus said that the person who seeks to save his or her physical life will lose it, and will lose the person’s spiritual life (Matt 10:39). This person lacks faith and cannot please God. But the person who is willing to lose his or her physical life for Christ’s sake—what it means to be baptized—will be like the

second lawbreaker that spoke at Calvary. This person will be justified because of the person's belief or faith.

Jesus' question about whether He would find faith when He returned is a question about whether Israel, following the second Passover slaughter of firstborns not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God, will also hate Him for His name's sake. The answer is in endtime prophecies and parables. Israel will experience a great falling away or rebellion (2 Thess 2:3). This holy nation will, just before Babylon falls, as a long neglected widow open her house and her habits to the world. As a jilted woman left behind in a rapture that didn't happen, she will accept the blandishments of a new suitor, the man of perdition, who will woo her with the same words and the same voice she believed prior to her spiritual liberation.

Israel today still pleads for justice, but she pleads without faith, without belief. She pleads by rote, no longer asking to receive her inheritance, but to be raptured away from the hard labor pains of spiritual childbirth.

The faith of the widow has become doubt, or outright disbelief.

The saints of the church in Philadelphia deliver a message about patient endurance to the world as a witness to all nations (Matt 24:14) before the end of the age comes. This message is simple: all who endure to the end shall be saved (v. 13), for all of humanity will become the holy nation of Israel halfway through seven years of tribulation. But this message would not need to be delivered if enduring in belief, or persistence in faith were not in doubt.

The endtime widow, Israel, is to continue praying, continue in belief; the conclusion of the age is at hand, and will be speedily revealed. In one night, the world will lose interest in the NBA playoffs, soccer matches, auto races, video games, and movie releases. The news from Hollywood will be of who died as firstborns, physical and spiritual, not covered by the blood of Christ. Business leaders, heads of nations, most of China—all will be slain just as the firstborns of Egypt, man and beast, were slain when circumcised Israel was liberated from physical bondage to Pharaoh. And a third of the greater Christian Church will also be slain, for this widow has quit covering her sins by taking the Passover as Jesus gave the example.

The time of the end began when the prophecies of Daniel were unsealed. And with its arrival, Israel's prayers will be quickly answered. Although the age has continued in this generation as it has progressed for generations, it will conclude as rapidly as the Flood of Noah's day overtook his age. In one night, at a predetermined hour, death will reach into every house to claim all uncovered firstborns. And the world will be plunged into the Tribulation, the hard labor pains of spiritual childbirth.

For seven years, spiritual Israelites will live by faith, will live without sin, will not try to save their physical lives—or they will rebel against the Father and the Son, and lose both their physical and spiritual lives. Living by faith, by belief means the difference between everlasting life and the second death. Jesus' question about whether the Son of Man will find faith, then, is a query about whether Israel will choose life, or death when both choices are present as a condition of the eternal covenant, the shadow of which is the second covenant of Moses (Deu 30:15). Electing to save one's physical life can then be likened to an Israelite in Babylon bowing to Nebuchadnezzar's idol.

Philadelphia's message about patient endurance will be delivered to the world as a witness to all nations before the beginning of the seven years of tribulation. It will be delivered prior to Israel's liberation from spiritual bondage at the second Passover. It is a message for today, delivered today, and a warning that when this message has been sufficiently proclaimed to all the world, the end of the age will come quickly and without additional warning. The widow's prayers will be answered.

But 600,000 circumcised Israelites left Egypt as the visible physical shadow of spiritual Israel leaving mental bondage to the spiritual king of Babylon. However, only 40,000 uncircumcised Israelite

males crossed the Jordan into the promised land. And the writer of Hebrews says that those who left Egypt couldn't enter because of unbelief (Heb 3:19). They lacked faith, and their lack of faith was manifest as disobedience (Heb 4:2, 6).

Philadelphia's message about patient endurance is also a message about continuing in obedience to the Father and the Son.

Will the Son of Man find faith? Belief? Does Israel today hear Jesus' words and believe the Father? Jesus in His sermon on the mount, the spiritual reality of *YHWH* speaking to physical Israelites from atop Sinai, said not to think that He came to abolish the law or the prophets (Matt 5:17), euphemistic expressions for the Old Covenant and the history of Israel which the Apostle Paul writes exists as an example for spiritual Israel. Yet what percentage of Israel today believes that Jesus did abolish the law? Certainly, the vast majority of Christians do not believe that the law is binding upon them, for the law has been abolished (Eph 2:15). Paul said so. True, but the law Paul referenced is the one that separates Circumcised from unCircumcised, or the Sinai Covenant, by which the physical nation of Israel became the holy nation of God (Exod 19:5–6). That law is not the second covenant of Moses (Deu 29:1), made with uncircumcised Israelites (Josh 5:2–7), by which spiritual circumcision, or circumcision of the heart and mind/soul is promised upon obedience (Deu 30:6). It is not the laws of God that are written on the hearts and minds of disciples as a condition of receiving the Holy Spirit. It is the physical covenant by which a nation was separated from the remainder of humanity. But with the giving of the Holy Spirit, Israel became a spiritual nation (1 Pet 2:9). The eternal covenant replaced the Sinai covenant, and the second covenant of Moses was the visible, physical shadow or example of this eternal covenant. And this spiritual second covenant will have Israel keeping the laws of God, with hatred being the invisible spiritual reality of the visible act of murder. The laws of God are no longer outside of Israel, but inside each spiritual Israelite. Disciples are not under the law in that they are ruled from outside of themselves by the law, but they are ruled from within themselves by the laws of God that have been implanted in their consciences.

Disciples hear the words of Jesus and believe the One who raised Him from the dead when disciples are ruled by laws of God that have been written on their hearts and minds. Faith is belief. Without faith, without belief, a disciple cannot please God, for the disciple has left the eternal covenant. This disciple has rejected the terms by which he or she has been made righteous. This disciple has committed blasphemy against the Holy Spirit by rejecting the laws of God which were written on the disciple's heart and mind through receipt of the Breath of God. Literally, this disciple has rejected eternal life, received through the Breath of God just as human life is received from the breath given Adam.

Living faith means spiritual life. Living by faith is living by belief in God.

Some disciples want to play a linguistic game with *belief*, separating *belief in God* from *believing God*. Their contention is many people believe in God, or conceptually believe that some form of a deity exists. This is again seen when, after a third of humanity is killed, the rest of humanity wouldn't quit worshipping demons and idols, a situation unchanged from when circumcised Israel was a captive nation in Babylon. Of all Israel that was in Babylon, only a few Jews didn't worship Nebuchadnezzar's image.

But *believing in God* means not believing in demons, or in idols, or in some vague concept of deity. There is only one God and Father (John 20:17). To believe in the One who raised Jesus from the dead requires that the person hears Jesus' words, for only by Jesus' words can the Father be known or identified. The two—Father and Son—cannot be separated or compartmentalized. To believe the Father also requires the disciple to hear the words of the Son, for Jesus didn't speak His own words, but what the Father would have Him say. Therefore, *believing in the Father* is *believing the Father*. And while it seems to portray spiritual wisdom in separating *belief-in* from *believing*, in reality the two signifiers mean the same thing; i.e., have the same signified. A person cannot believe in the Father without

believing the Father; for it wasn't *YHWH* that greater Israel worshiped in Babylon, but Nebuchadnezzar's idol. Likewise, it isn't the Father that greater spiritual Israel worships today.

Living by faith or believing God, both phrases meaning the same thing, is difficult, for as human beings inside this bowl of time, disciples want to believe in what they can see or what they can do for themselves, especially so in the United States. They can see paychecks, houses, cars, filled refrigerators. They can even see an empty Cross, but they cannot see a resurrected Savior. They cannot see the One who said, "Therefore, whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 5:19).

Question, within the context of the law and the prophets, what are the least of the commandments? The spiritual law of God is love; so which commandments have the least to do with love toward first God, then humanity? Coveting? No, for Paul used coveting as his example of knowing what sin is (Rom 7:7-8) Murder? No, for hatred is specifically mentioned by Jesus and is the antithesis of love.

If each of the commandments is examined, a disciple will find that the Sabbath is the least of the commandments. Time is a created thing, its passage occurring at the decay rate for heavy mass particles. And the Sabbath is time that has been consecrated by God. It is a created entity that has been made holy although until the 20th Century, space-time was not recognized as a fluid, much like water. The Sabbath can be likened to stream markers that make the mouths of spawning creeks off-limits to commercial salmon fishermen.

Returning now to what percentage of Israel believes in God: the person who believes in the God and Father of Christ Jesus hears the words of the man Jesus about the least of the commandments, and will not want to relax even the least. But the person who doesn't believe in the God of Jesus will ignore Jesus' words, electing instead to misread Paul. This person will dismiss one or more of the commandments, depending upon what this person thinks Paul taught. This person neither believes God, nor believes in God. This person is without faith, for this person does not hear the words of Jesus. And this person will refuse to keep the Sabbaths of God even while acknowledging that Paul kept them.

What percentage of greater Christianity keeps the weekly Sabbath? Now, what percentage keeps the annual Sabbaths? One more step, what percentage keeps the new moons as Sabbaths? And we see with each step the percentage shrinking until that percentage is a statistical non-entity. Yet the Apostle Paul told saints at Colossae not to let anyone judge them concerning the keeping of festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths (2:16). These saints were being criticized for keeping all three sets of high days. Paul told them not to let their faith or belief be shaken because there were those who would disqualify them for the kingdom of heaven by insisting upon asceticism and worship of angels (v. 18). And that very disqualifier—the worship of angels, and one angel in particular—has destroyed the faith or belief of the greater Church.

Living faith requires a disciple to believe God through hearing the words of Jesus. Living by faith requires a disciple to choose to do what the disciple knows is right in every situation. The implementation of belief in God causes disciples to believe God.

Belief in God will have the believer keeping the Sabbaths of God.

A simple test using the least of the commandments—will you believe in the God and Father of Christ Jesus? Yes? Then will you exercise your faith in the Father and the Son through keeping the least of the commandments? Yes or No. The test is pass or fail. By faith, you will believe in the Father as He has been revealed through Jesus' words, or you will worship angels, created beings. You have no other choice regardless of what you presently believe. You are, this day, either worshipping Satan and his angels, or Christ and the Father. And if you are unwilling to keep the least of the commandments, it isn't my words that you reject, but Jesus'.

So, will you live by faith, displaying living faith, or will you worship demons, idols, and the works of your hands? Most everyone you know will choose the latter. You will be as out of synch with this world as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, faithful Israelites appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon (Dan 3:12), were out of synch with theirs. And you might well be martyred. But sudden martyrdom is actually a spiritual shortcut to the kingdom of heaven, one the Father and the Son won't let you take if you would benefit by following the long path of believing in God day after day.

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