

# BEYOND TODAY

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## Wrong thinking compromises character

*What we think in our minds and hearts will dictate the kind of person we become. It is imperative that we carefully vet what we allow into our thoughts.*

There is a saying, “We are what we eat.” However, it is also true that what we think about can affect who we become. The nineteenth century American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson put it this way, “A man is what he thinks about all day long.” Jesus Christ declared, “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things” (Matthew 12:35).

On another occasion He explained, “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man” (Matthew 15:18-20).

### Out of the heart

The classic example of a being who allowed the thoughts of his heart to lead him astray was Lucifer, who became Satan the devil. Lucifer was a masterpiece of design. He was the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. He was the anointed cherub who originally covered God’s throne, but was later assigned authority over the angelic host on earth (Ezekiel 28:11-15; Luke 4:5-6).

We can know what was in Lucifer’s heart, however. Ezekiel continues by describing that he “became filled with violence within” and that his “heart was lifted up” because of his beauty (Ezekiel 28:16-17). The prophet

Isaiah expands on this. Here God says of Lucifer, “For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High’” (Isaiah 14:12-14).

What was in Lucifer’s heart and in his thoughts? It was a pride in his own beauty that led him to want to take over the very throne of God. This corrupted the wisdom he had possessed until he convinced himself he could unseat God as ruler of the universe.

*“Those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man.”*

He was coveting power, the power and position that belong to God. The throne he had here on earth, was not enough for him – he wanted more. He wanted to ascend to God’s throne in heaven. He wanted to be above all the angels. In short, he wanted to be God. Instead, he became the great adversary. His thoughts led him to fall from righteousness into sin.

### A change of heart needed

Satan is a negative example, but the opposite is also true. Having the right thoughts in our hearts works for

our good and for our salvation. As we study God's word and think deeply about how to apply it whilst praying for God's guidance, we develop godly character. Over time, His thinking replaces our thinking – His thoughts become our thoughts and so we grow in His spiritual likeness.

But we have a challenge. In many cases, the way we think has been pre-programmed by this world before God began to work with us. We were educated with false values and wrong ideas, conforming to the way of this world. That thinking holds us back; it's a stumbling block, hindering us from growing in the likeness of God.

### **Minds that are transformed**

It is important, therefore, that we consider the kind of thoughts we allow into our minds and especially those we dwell on. What we regard as entertainment can be a major factor. If we are constantly watching, reading or acting out material that portrays murder, violence or the occult or that uses as themes ungodly relationships, then that is what will be in our minds. If we listen to music with sexually explicit or profane lyrics, then these will be the thoughts that are in our heads.

Many will have experienced reliving or dwelling on something we have seen or heard. Annoying snatches of songs can go around in our heads. Once seen, or heard, our brains store everything somewhere in our memories. Eventually, as Jesus said, these submerged thoughts may come to the surface in words or deeds.

Before we can be transformed from physical beings to spiritual at the return of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:50-54), we must have our minds transformed. The apostle Paul

had much to say on this subject. In his epistle to the saints in Rome he wrote, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2).

God gave us a human body without our help. Assuming we fulfil His conditions, He will give us a Spirit body without our help. However, He cannot fashion us into His character or into His spiritual likeness, without our free choice to bring every one of our thoughts into line with His thinking (2 Corinthians 10:5).

God gives His Holy Spirit to help us change our thinking. We can assist by avoiding polluting our minds with profane and ungodly thoughts and by taking the advice of the apostle Paul to the Philippian church: "Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8). Look for the beauty of the creation, listen to uplifting music, consider the blessings we all have and thank God for them. With practice, even intrusive, wrong thoughts or annoying snatches of ungodly lyrics can be replaced with psalms or songs based on Scripture (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).

As Satan thinks in his heart, so is he. As God thinks in His heart, so is He. What about us? To study this subject further please request or download our booklet *Transforming Your Life: The Process of Conversion*.

*Andrew Burns*

## **Why God allows the perils of freedom of choice**

In the first chapter of Genesis, the great plan and purpose of God was revealed when God declared, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Genesis 1:26).

The Almighty created man from the dust of the ground – a physical being, yet in His own form and likeness. What He could not reproduce in man by creation was His own perfect character. The reason for this is that godly character, by definition, is the result of beings with free will making the right choices – the same choices God Himself would make as exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ. If God made us choose the right way every time, then we would have no free will and would simply be flesh and blood robots. That is not what He intended. Having created humankind in His physical

likeness, God's plan was, and remains, to produce children in His spiritual likeness too.

Human beings have been given freedom of choice, and free choice can present a great danger. We have the freedom to choose what manner of life we lead, the way we think, and what we allow into our minds.

Baptised Christians who have received God's Holy Spirit are being moulded into the spiritual likeness of God. The choices we make can enhance or damage that process. Our Heavenly Father works with His children as a potter works with clay – moulding, shaping and creating within us the very character of God.

For more information on our amazing potential, please request or download our booklet *Why Were You Born?*

# *Wine or grape juice?*

## Which did Christ use at His last Passover?

*There is an enduring argument regarding whether wine or grape juice should be used at the Passover service. Issues about biblical customs are often resolved by looking at what was practised and how things worked in their historical setting.*

Passover is the most solemn occasion of the year for Christ's followers. In remembrance of His death, they gather together to partake of the symbols He established, considering their true meaning. It is therefore important to ensure we are using the correct symbols.

In Israel, vineyards were considered of great value. The prophet Isaiah wrote concerning the care taken in planting a new vineyard (Isaiah 5:1-2). A watchtower was built so that when the grapes began to form, someone could be on guard to look out for thieves or wild animals that might steal the fruit. Mark 12:1 gives a similar description. Both mention that a winepress or vat was built there also so the grapes could be trodden out to obtain the juice.

Grapes were harvested from around the end of July to mid-September. Some would be dried as raisins, but most were trodden out for the juice. The "fermenting wine was stored in new goatskin bags or pottery containers" (*Lion Encyclopaedia of the Bible*, 1978, page 229). It took about forty days for the wine to finish fermenting so the first grapes would be turned into wine in time for the Feast of Tabernacles in late September or October.

### **Grape juice doesn't intoxicate**

While there is no biblical justification for drunkenness, the Bible is clear that people did get drunk, confirming that "wine," in both the Old and New Testaments, means wine and not grape juice. It would not have been possible to get drunk on unfermented grape juice.

Righteous Noah misjudged the strength of his own new wine and became drunk (Genesis 9:20-21).

The apostle Paul warned the Ephesian church not to become drunk (Ephesians 5:18). He even admonished the Church of God at Corinth for getting drunk at the Passover, although at that time they seemed to be having a full meal together rather than just partaking of the symbols (1 Corinthians 11:20-26).

Jesus Christ was falsely accused by the Pharisees of being a drunkard. This accusation could not have been made if He did not drink alcoholic wine. He said, "For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'"



(Luke 7:33-34). The clear impression conveyed here is that the "wine" Jesus drank was alcoholic.

In addition, the apostle John tells us that Jesus attended a wedding in Cana of Galilee and created wine of a superb quality out of water (John 2:1-10).

### **Blessing on the wine**

Regarding the last supper, Jesus gave His disciples the cup of wine to share among themselves. He said, "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:29). Some claim that

this wording, “this fruit of the vine,” implies that the cup contained unfermented grape juice, because Christ did not call it wine.

Jewish sources, however, explain that Jesus was merely using the wording from the traditional Jewish blessing on wine. This blessing is along the lines of, “Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine” ([www.myjewishlearning.com/article/blessings-for-food-drink](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/blessings-for-food-drink)). See also David H Stern’s *Jewish New Testament Bible Commentary* for a variant of this blessing). Having just given thanks for the wine with these or similar words, it would not be strange for Jesus to use the same wording a few moments later.

### **Fresh grape juice soon spoils**

If grape juice is left out overnight, it will develop a “fizz.” This is due to wild yeasts in the air, getting into the liquid and beginning the fermentation process. It is not recommended that anyone should drink any “wine” that might result.

Regardless, in time the grape juice will simply go bad. The shelf-life today is around 5-10 days, although it can be frozen, bottled or turned into concentrate to extend this. In New Testament times, such preservation methods were unknown. Therefore, from a practical viewpoint it is impossible that grape juice could have survived from the previous year’s harvest in the late summer to be consumed at Passover in the spring of the following year.

The Passover is a very serious occasion for Christians and it is important that we take it with the correct symbols, otherwise we are making a mockery of it. During Christ’s last Passover Supper, what was drunk had to be fermented grape juice, or by any other description, wine.

The Jewish grape harvest had already occurred half a year earlier and there was no way of preserving grape juice for that length of time, in the first century AD. When the Bible refers to “wine”, in either Testament, it can only be referring to an alcoholic drink.

*Brian Richardson*

# When you feel like saying “I’ve had enough, Lord”

*Servants of God occasionally felt despondent and at their wits end, yet somehow they kept going. What can we learn from their experiences?*

**E**ven the most zealous servant of God can become tired or despondent. After his encounter with the prophets of the pagan god Baal, Elijah “came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. ‘I have had enough, Lord,’ he said. ‘Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors’” (1 Kings 19:4, New International Version throughout).

Elijah wasn’t the only one to feel despondent. In the middle of the worst trial of his life, Job asked, “Why did I not perish at birth, and die as I came from the womb?” (Job 3:11). He bemoaned the fact that he was still alive, “Why is light given to those in misery, and life to the bitter of soul, to those who long for death that does not come, who search for it more than for hidden treasure . . . I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil” (Job 3:20-21, 26).

The prophet Jeremiah expressed the same sentiment after he was beaten and put in the stocks by Pashhur the Priest, “Cursed be the day I was born . . . Why did I ever come out of the womb to see trouble and sorrow and to end my days in shame?” (Jeremiah 20:14, 18).

In times of deep distress we can feel as the prophets did. We can even wish we were dead or say to ourselves, “I can’t understand why God is keeping me alive. What use am I?”

When troubled, King David prayed and prayed. Constant prayer helps us to focus on God as our deliverer and the Psalms can comfort and encourage us. They contain heartfelt prayers that can sustain us when we are troubled.

What can we do while waiting for God’s intervention? David gives us an answer: “Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise His holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul and forget not all His benefits” (Psalm 103:1-2). David listed God’s blessings and praised Him for them. We can have faith that miracles happen even though Satan would have us believe otherwise.

Trusting God is essential for our deliverance from suffering. However, it is not the only condition. For more information, please request or download our free Bible study aids *Why Am I Suffering?* and *You Can Have Living Faith*.

*Diane Topping*



# A divine gift beyond full comprehension

*It is generally accepted that Christ died for our sins. What exactly does this mean? Is anything required of us?*

Throughout much of the Old Testament the Ark of the Covenant resided in the most holy part of the Tabernacle and later, of the Temple in Jerusalem. Inside the Ark were the Ten Commandments written on two tablets of stone. This indicated that all people were intended to live by these standards.

For humans, even with God's indwelling Spirit, living by those laws perfectly isn't possible and requires divine mercy, since "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). God had allowed for this in His plan of salvation as the Ark had a solid gold lid called the Mercy Seat. This highlighted the fact that the God the Israelites worshipped was full of compassion for His human creation and their frailties.

But how would this mercy be revealed and what process would be used to absolve man of his sinful deeds?

## A Saviour to atone for sin

The prophet Isaiah wrote: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given." This Child would appear in the Holy Land many centuries after Isaiah wrote this prophecy. The prophet continued, "and His name will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). He would appear as the Son of Man and Son of God – human through His physical lineage of David, but also divine. The second member of the Godhead emptied Himself of His glory and was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit of Almighty God (John 1:1-3, 14; Philippians 2:5-11). This Son would reflect God's character perfectly (Hebrews 1:3). He would atone for the sins of all who humbly acknowledge Him as their personal Saviour, repent of breaking God's law and seek to follow and obey God. [To study further into who Jesus Christ was before His human birth, please request or download our booklet *Jesus Christ: The Real Story*.]

In mercy God made it possible to wipe away our sins through the atoning sacrifice of His Son. The New Testament states that "Christ our *Passover* is sacrificed" (1 Corinthians 5:7). Christ's atoning death for us was perfectly foreshadowed thousands of years earlier in the original Passover. The very first Passover was instituted at the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. Unblemished lambs were killed and their blood smeared onto the door posts

and lintels of the houses of the Israelites, so God would pass over them (Exodus 12:1-14). The blood of the lambs foreshadowed the shed blood of Christ and was even then referred to as "the LORD's Passover" (Exodus 12:7, 11). In the New Testament the focus of the Passover is on Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice for sin to save repentant sinners from eternal death, not on coming out of Egypt, except as an analogy.

## Why the need to be reconciled?

However good a person may be, the apostle Paul was inspired to write, "All have sinned" (Romans 3:23). The Bible defines sin as the breaking of God's immutable laws. The apostle John stated that "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4, King James Version).

In Galatians 3:13 the apostle Paul tells us that "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us." It doesn't say that Christ redeemed us from keeping God's law. Instead, He redeemed us from the judicial curse of the law that we incur when we break

## What else was nailed to Christ's cross?

Some claim Colossians 2:14 means that, as well as Christ being nailed to the cross, His Father's law was too. However this would contradict other statements He made that the law would remain in force (e.g., Matthew 5:17-18).

For repentant sinners, Christ's death removed the "handwriting of ordinances" – the "certificate of debt" or the charge sheet against us for breaking God's laws. Whenever we repent of sin, it is as if these charges against us are also nailed to Christ's cross. This reflects the Roman custom (see Matthew 27:37). Thus Christ bears our penalty. It cannot mean the law itself, or we could not be found guilty of sin in the first place. There would be no charge sheet.

To learn more please read the sidebar on pages 110-111 of our free book *The New Covenant: Does It Abolish God's Law?*

it. Someone must pay the penalty. An atonement was essential for us so that we become reconciled to God again (Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:21-22). That reconciliation was brought about by “Christ our Passover.”

### **Passover truly acknowledges Christ’s sacrifice**

At Passover nearly 2000 years ago Jesus gave His life for all humanity (John 3:16). This was prophesied by Daniel centuries before the Christian era when he foretold of a time when Christ’s sacrifice would “make reconciliation for iniquity” (Daniel 9:24).

When John the Baptist saw Jesus he said, “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). That includes our sins too as long as we repent.

That most momentous event affecting our salvation occurred in Jerusalem on the afternoon of that Passover day. The preceding evening Jesus had instructed His disciples to observe Passover with the new symbols of unleavened bread and wine. “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer,” Christ told the disciples. “Do this in remembrance of Me” (Luke 22:15, 19).

God’s true Church honours the Son of God, the Saviour of all who have truly repented, and acknowledges Him by faithfully observing the Passover once a year with the symbolism He instituted.

Under divine inspiration, the prophet Isaiah told his people – and us – the circumstances of Christ’s suffering for our sakes: “He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid, as it were, our faces from Him. He was despised, and we did not esteem Him; Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one, to his own way, and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:3-6).

Isaiah blamed Christ’s death on all of us – with no exceptions. Christ died not just for His own people, or the Romans and Greeks, but also for you and me. As sinners we bear our guilt for the death of Jesus Christ.

At the crucifixion, God the Father could not come to His Son’s rescue, but instead turned away as Christ took upon Himself the atonement for the sins of all humanity (Matthew 27:45-46). It was an expression of divine love that is beyond full human comprehension.

To study further, please request our study guides *Repentance Is Possible* and *Easter: The Rest of the Story*.

*Gerhard Marx*

# **Giving grace to others**

*Acts of kindness, small or great, mirror God’s grace to us.*

**G**race is intimately connected to God’s mercy. God is exceptionally merciful. We give grace – unmerited favour or pardon – when we forgive someone a debt. Christ gave the example of the servant who was forgiven a large debt but refused to forgive a fellow servant a much smaller debt (Matthew 18: 23-35). God shows us that if we don’t show the grace of forgiveness to others we won’t receive it ourselves. He expects true Christians to show unlimited graciousness in the way we are prepared to extend forgiveness to others (Matthew 18: 21-23).

I had grace shown to me in a small way recently. I had been bringing shoes home on approval for my mother to try on. Owing to mobility problems it was difficult for her to visit the shop in person. It took several visits to the shop before a suitable pair was found. These cost £7 more than I had previously paid. I took £5 from my wallet and was searching for the £2. The assistant said that £5 was sufficient as I had gone to so much effort to get the shoes. I was very grateful for this small act of kindness.

Unfortunately, we live in an increasingly graceless

society in which the quality of mercy and forgiveness is becoming less and less prevalent (2 Timothy 3:1-5). As Christ’s followers we should make every effort to avoid these distressing trends.

### **Other aspects of showing grace**

One aspect of being gracious is in the way that we speak. We need to carefully consider the effect that our words will have on others and avoid causing offence or upset (Ephesians 4:29; Proverbs 15:23). Our brains need to be fully engaged before we open our mouths (Colossians 4:6). Similarly, we can show grace to others by paying careful attention to what they say and not jumping to hasty conclusions based on incomplete and faulty understanding (Proverbs 18:13). Allow the other person to fully express their thoughts before answering (James 1:19). We can even be gracious in our thoughts, regarding the way that we think of others (Philippians 2:3). If we are to truly emulate the God of grace, graciousness needs to permeate every aspect of our lives.

*Philip Perry*



**Q** I know the earth will be made better at Christ's return, but why didn't He make it good originally instead of allowing it to become as it is today?  
*Reader from Southampton*

**A** God's intention at Creation was for man to live in a beautiful physical setting. Indeed, He called His physical creation "very good" (Genesis 1:31). Man rejected the option of living a way of life that would have been pleasing to God. In doing so, man also rejected the idyllic setting in Eden and instead allowed himself to be drawn away from God by Satan, with the dire consequences we witness in the world today (Genesis 3:17-19).

Man is a free moral agent. God gave him free choice to either accept or reject his Creator. Many people accept some laws that God provided for man's benefit while rejecting other commandments. Millions of others have no time for God whatsoever and have no intention of observing anything He commands, showing a degree of enmity or antagonism towards God (Romans 8:7).

The Bible demonstrates that it is God's desire that we follow His way of life. "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life, that both you

and your descendants may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19) is God's exhortation to us. God doesn't force anyone to obey His will. Man chooses not to do so and finds himself beset by more and more problems. As a result, God will need to intervene before man makes the world totally uninhabitable and annihilates himself (Matthew 24:22).

God couldn't create man with divine character, as this is developed over time. The evil we all witness and experience in this world serves to build that godly character, since swimming against the tide strengthens us. Likewise fighting against evil takes courage and faith in God that He will see us through.

Paul mentions in Romans 8:18, "For I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Creation is also suffering, as Paul continues: "For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:20-21).

We can be assured that God reveals sufficient of His plan of salvation to us in His Word. In that plan there is a promise of "new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13). That world will never decay as this one has.

**Q** Will God continue to forgive us if we fail to resist temptations?  
*Reader from Ireland*

**A** The Bible makes it plain that all sins, except the unpardonable sin, can be forgiven provided we genuinely repent and are striving to resist temptations.

Christ instructed His followers to forgive those who asked as many as "seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22). In other words, there is no limit to forgiving those who have trespassed against us. If we as fleshly human beings are asked to forgive those who ask us, how much more would God be willing to forgive us our sins if we ask Him. We cannot out-forgive God.

In Matthew 6:14-15 we are admonished to forgive others if we want God to forgive us. However, we are also admonished to "resist the devil" when being tempted (James 4:7) and to overcome our sinful natures and pulls of the world (Romans 12:21). Repentance must be genuine and neither half-hearted nor insincere. Our intent must be to follow God's ways, with His divine help.

The unpardonable sin occurs when someone knows the authority and power of God and refuses to accept either – in effect, is wilfully unrepentant (Matthew 12:31).

## Let the Bible Answer...

### What does the Bible say about music?

Music was primarily used to worship God, as in 2 Samuel 6:5; 1 Chronicles 6:32; 13:8; 15:16.

Many of the Psalms are songs to God, with instructions as to which instruments or tunes should accompany them. Some are sad, some are joyful.

Music also accompanied dancing, either in the worship of God (for example Exodus 15:20-21; Psalm 149:3; 150:3-5) or in family celebrations (Jeremiah 31:13; Matthew 11:17; Luke 15:25).





## Letters From Our Readers

### Learning more of God's word through the Bible Study Course

Thank you for the *Bible Study Course*. The knowledge I am acquiring is immense. It is a privilege to be able to do the course. It makes me appreciate the word of God more and helps me re-direct my spiritual past towards the road prescribed by the Lord Almighty. I cannot give enough thanks for this course.

*Student from Orpington*

I am doing this course while in prison. I thank God for your Church. May God continue to bless you.

*Name and address supplied*

I am becoming addicted to your lessons. At 80 years old, I am back at my desk reading through the lessons.

*Student from London*

Thank you for sending me the Bible Study lessons. They are really helping me so much and especially help me to read the Bible.

*Student from Aldershot*

Thank you for the first Bible Study lesson. When will the second lesson arrive?

*Student from Newry*

*Editor's comment: Lessons are sent one per month. However there can be an overlap or a slight lag depending on where in our mailing cycle the first lesson is sent. Please let us know if Lesson Two fails to arrive within about four weeks of Lesson One.*

### A valuable magazine

*Beyond Today* is extremely valuable because today's society refuses to believe in the existence of God, Jesus Christ and the Bible. It provides answers for atheists and agnostics.

*Reader from London*

Thank you so much for this wonderful magazine. It keeps me updated on world events in relation to prophecy. Whenever I get the chance I encourage people to subscribe to your magazine and literature.

*Reader from Dorset*

I thank you for the great work you are doing, giving insight into the knowledge of God's plan for this world and beyond.

*Reader from Manchester*

### Jewish customs

Thanks for a most interesting and informative magazine based on God's

word of truth. Not so sure about Christians needing to uphold Jewish customs.

*Reader from Ireland*

*Editor's comment: The "Feasts of the LORD" are listed in Leviticus 23. They include the weekly Sabbath and the annual Holy Days. While the Jews to this day mostly look back to aspects of the Exodus during these festivals (for example Exodus 12:17; Leviticus 23:43), the New Testament Church keeps them for different, though sometimes analogous, reasons related to God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ (as in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8). For more information please read the chapter entitled "How God's Festivals Teach Us About Jesus Christ" in our booklet God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind.*

*For the origins of contemporary "Christian" celebrations, please request Holy Days or Holidays: Does It Matter Which Days We Observe?*

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