
CHRIST THE DOOR, THE GOOD SHEPHERD, HIRELINGS AND OUR CALLING

Shabbat Shalom! The Karaite Korner report tells us that they sighted the crescent new moon July 10 in Jerusalem, Israel on Wednesday evening. So Thursday, July 11 was the new moon day and the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. *Mo'adim Le-Simchah!* Happy “Appointed Times” of YHVH! I also mention the date of the Jewish calendar AV 6 which goes by an estimated mathematical fixed calculation and is three days ahead of the actual crescent new moon. God says that the crescent new moon begins the new month (*codesh*)—the **new moon** begins the new month. When Rome took the Jews captive (“diaspora”) and no longer allowed the Sanhedrin to function, the Jews adopted the mathematical and astronomical calendar designed by Rabbi Hillel II and no longer go by *visually sighting* the crescent new moon.

A letter received this week from a prisoner took me to task for repeatedly talking about the calendar (Jewish vs. observed new moon, etc.). “All we need to know is Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” “Christ is our Savior and the end of the Law, we do not need to know about the calendar and the Law which are done away with.”

What does it take for people to learn to submit (surrender) to the word of God and obey his word? What does it take to humble a man to where he is willing to do what God says without man-made excuses, exceptions, and rationalizations? Why can't we just do what God says? It would make life so much easier, less complicated and more joyful, if we had faith in God's word and studied it daily. Christ said in **Matthew 4:4 (N.T.)**—“It is written, MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”

Deuteronomy 8:1-20 (O.T.)—“All the commandments which I command you this day shall you observe to do, that you may live...remember all the way the Lord your God **led you** forty years in the wilderness,

- to humble you
- to test (prove) you – to know what was in your heart –whether you would keep His commandments, or not.

“He **humbled you** — allowed you to hunger and fed you manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might *make you know* that MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE: but MAN LIVES BY EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS FROM THE MOUTH OF THE LORD. Gave you water to drink from the rock. Your clothes did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell during these forty years. You should also **know** in your heart, as a man chastens (disciplines) his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you.” “He did this so you would never think that it was your own strength and power that made you wealthy and to fulfill the covenant He swore to your forefathers, as it is today. **Be careful that you do not forget** the LORD YOUR GOD by not keeping His commandments (warnings against forgetting the Lord), His judgments and His statutes.”

“After you have plenty of everything, **remember** it is God who gives you the ability (power) to produce wealth. If you forget and walk after other gods, worship and bow down to them, I assure (testify against) you today that like the nations the Lord destroyed before you, you shall perish, because you would not be obedient to the Lord your God.” The world has totally forgotten and ignored this. It seems to me that the

churches have also forgotten and that a very select few people want to study the word of God and daily search the scriptures. **Luke 12:32**—Christ said, “*Fear not, little flock*: for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” The Greek translation for little here is “micro”—very small. Most of us are familiar with the word microscope which is an optical device for magnifying objects that cannot be seen with the naked eye—i.e., viruses and bacteria. God’s people are a “*microcosm*”, a very small (little) representation of a much larger system (as microscopic). The Apostle Paul is writing to the church in Corinth. **1 Corinthians 1:26**—“You see your calling brethren, how not many wise men according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble *are called*: but God has chose the weak things of the world to put to shame (confound) the wise. God has chosen deliberately the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty and base things of the world, things which are despised—things the world considers unimportant and counts as nothing at all — and used them to bring to nothing the things that are.” Why does God do this? “It is *so that no one may ever boast (glory) in His presence.*” It is because of God that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—that is our righteousness, holiness and redemption. As it is written, “Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord God.”

Isaiah 40:21-24—“Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you *not understood* from the foundations of the earth? He (God) sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and *the inhabitants are like grasshoppers*. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. He brings the princes (rulers) to nothing. He makes the judges of the earth useless. They hardly get started, barely taking root, then He blows upon them and they wither and the whirlwind sweeps them away like stubble (chaff).” **Verse 28**—“Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.” Of ourselves we are nothing, but God has called a remnant to be part of his first fruits—a part of His end-time church (body) to do his work and serve him, preach the gospel and bring forth good fruit.

John 14: 1-3 --Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, Yeshua comforts his disciples. “Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe in me also. In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will return and receive you to myself that where I am, there you may be also. You know where I am going and the way to get there.” Thomas said, “Lord *we do not know* where you are going and **how can we know the way?**” Jesus answered, “**I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.** If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well; and from now on, you do know him and have seen him. The words I say to you, I do not speak on my own *authority*: but the Father who dwells in me does the works. Before long, the world will not see me but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works (evidence of the miracles) themselves.” The only way to eternal life and to have **salvation is through Jesus Christ**. Following Mohammed, a false prophet, is not the way of salvation and God’s kingdom.

The world today is trying to embrace and reconcile with Islam and incorporate it into the world fabric of universal religion. Many Muslims do not like the idea and are against it. **Matthew 19:17-22**—Christ himself said to the rich young ruler who asked, “What shall I do that I may have eternal life?” “There is none good but One, that is God; but if you will enter into life (eternal), **keep the commandments.**” “Which ones?” the man inquired. Jesus replied (summarized), “Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself.” The man said “All these I have kept. What do I still lack?” Jesus said, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

2 Colossians 2:8—“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and **deceptive philosophy**, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.” The Muslims are in error and are totally deceived in the belief (1) that they are “going to heaven”, (2) there will not be a reward of 72 virgins there to cater to their whim and desire and (3) only those who repent of their sins—stop transgressing God’s law will be in the kingdom of God. The Koran does not teach that Christ is only way to eternal life, nor the commandments of God or obedience to them.

Note: Luke 20:35—“The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. But in the age to come those accounted worthy of being raised from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor do they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons (children) of the resurrection.”

Around 1962 when I was a junior student working in the Letter Answering Department at Ambassador College, I was given a letter to answer that came from a man in Egypt. He wanted to know whether Muslims would be saved or go to Hell. I do not remember the exact wording of my letter in answer, but I basically told him the truth. **Acts 4:12** –Peter filled with the Holy Spirit said, “Let it be known to you, it is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, but whom God raised from the dead...Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved.” There is only one name under heaven whereby man may be saved, Jesus Christ the Son of God. Those who do not accept Christ as their Savior will be cast into hell. We did not get many letters from Egypt in those days, and it so happened that this letter was read by Garner Ted Armstrong in a Friday night Bible study. After reading it, he said “I wonder how we answered this letter. Dr. Zimmerman, I want you to send me a copy of the answer sent to this man.” So Dr. Zimmerman, department head of Letter Answering, sent him a copy of my answer with a memo attached stating that he had censored me regarding my answer.

We are *called to follow Christ, the way, the truth and the life*—no one else. There is only one way—through Christ himself. **John 15:5-6**—Christ says, “I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.” “I am the vine, you are the branches.” “He who abides in me and I in him, will bear much fruit” for God’s kingdom. Without the Spirit of Christ living in you and motivating you, you can do nothing. Sometimes we forget this and give our self the glory and honor. If anyone does not abide in Christ (reading, studying and meditating and adsorbing his word), he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers. Such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

Psalm 119:9-11—“How can a young man cleanse his way? Take heed to follow God’s word to create a clean heart and a right spirit within you. With my *whole heart* I have sought you. Oh, let me not wander from your commandments. **Your word have I hidden in my heart that I might not sin against you.**” How do I hide the word of God in my heart? We hide the word of God in our heart by reading, meditating on what we read, by praying over it and thereby adsorbing it in our mind and life. If we do this, we will bring forth much good fruit” for God’s kingdom. I’ve noticed that unless we water our garden regularly, it will not bring forth much good produce. We have to supply water, because without water to the roots, they wither and die. So we can’t produce good fruit for God unless we adsorb his word like water.

Ephesians 5:25—“Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy cleansing her by the washing with water through the word.”

It never entered my mind as a young man to pick God, or have a thought about God. In Alabama at my grandmother’s house I remember seeing two pictures of Christ in her living room that impressed me—one portrayed him in prayer and second one was of Him walking on the turbulent waters of the Sea of Galilee. My grandmother was a Christian. I remember going to a Lutheran church once because my dad had put my brother and me into a Boy Scout Troop that was sponsored by that church. I did not know the first

thing about God. However, we did not want to go unless my mother and dad agreed to go with us. They were not interested in attending so we did not go to Sunday school either. When I was ten and my brother nine, our mother died and we lived with our grandparents in Kinston, Alabama for a while.

The Piggy League baseball team in Strong, Arkansas, was sponsored by the two local protestant churches—either the Baptist or Methodist—which required weekly church attendance to be on the team. I loved playing baseball and was skilled in playing the position of pitcher. I wanted to be on one of the teams which wanted me on their team, so my brother and I attended Sunday school so we could play in the local team which played teams from other cities in the area. Sometimes, they prevailed upon us to go to regular church meetings as well. Pastor Gullich was a pleasant person and we enjoyed being with our team friends. One Sunday, my brother responded to an altar call by the pastor and walked down the church aisle to talk with the pastor. Curious as to what he was doing, I was told by one of the team, he was joining the church. Not to be outdone as the older brother, I also went down the church aisle to shake the pastor's hand and sign up to be a member. I was totally unprepared, shocked and embarrassed when he put his hands on my head and asked me if I would take Jesus Christ as my personal Savior and repent of my sins, and I mumbled "yes". I was then told "you need to be baptized. Come to church at 8 p.m. Saturday night and we will baptize you and your brother." We did and were baptized.

That changed my life. Why? I felt like I had been coerced into this decision against my will and had not been given a chance to understand what it was all about. So I vowed to myself that I was going to check into this Christianity bit and study to see if it really was for me. About this same we sailed to join our Dad in Formosa which is now called Taiwan, an island about ninety miles off the coast of China. He was a naval officer stationed in Kaohsiung seven miles from Tsoying naval base and was part of the U.S. Military Advisory Group. While living there, my brother Bob and I began to attend a Sunday Bible school class for children taught by a missionary lady in the area. When she found out that we had no Bible, she gave us a New Testament. After going home, I began to read about five chapters each Sunday to find out what it was about and what a Christian was.

Then I decided it was important to read a chapter each day. As I read, my interest heightened in amazement at the account of Jesus Christ, a man called the Son of God who was made flesh, born as a baby and lived and grew up among his people, and at the age of about thirty began to teach the people for three years about the gospel of the kingdom of God, while performing countless miracles. He cast out demons, healed the blind, the sick, the lepers, the lame, and even raising the dead. He taught the people the way of truth and life. When I read about Christ walking on the water of the Sea of Galilee, I remembered the two pictures my grandmother had hung on the wall in her living room depicting Christ's walking on the water and of him praying. The books of the New Testament were fascinating and amazing in their account of the Acts of the Apostles all the way through the book of Revelation with its imagery and prophetic symbolism. I was overwhelmed by it. By reading about the life of Christ in the Bible, I learned what it meant to be a Christian.

Evangelist Billy Graham movies also came out during this time preaching the message of repentance, feeling the emptiness in your heart and keeping the commandments – finding God in a lost world. I was very impressed with these movies. Also, during this time, a young Air Force Captain held a seminar for five to six weeks on the book of Daniel in the *Old Testament* for all who were interested. I took advantage of the opportunity to learn about the Old Testament part of the Bible and Daniel of which I knew very little about. How fascinating to learn about (1) Nebuchadnezzar, the golden image, (2) Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego who were cast into the burning fiery furnace for refusing to bow down to the King's idol, but firmly stood for the ONE true God and their lives were spared, (3) Daniel was thrown into a den of hungry lions but was unharmed because God shut the mouths of the lions. The Captain had a

good understanding of the *intriguing* prophecies of Daniel. By this time I had read and learned about what it meant to repent, be baptized, and conversion. In Formosa I acknowledged to God that I was a sinner and needed to be baptized. My first baptism was just a dunking in the water. I did not know what I was doing. But this time I now realized that Christ died for our sins and we are commanded to be baptized and was baptized along with three others in Kaohsiung.

God's hand was in my life and he was orchestrating these whole series of events. My Dad was transferred back to the U.S. and retired. Before I left, the missionary lady gave me a complete Bible. The three weeks it took to sail the Pacific Ocean back to San Francisco from Formosa I began to zealously read the Old Testament through book by book in order, beginning with the first book—Genesis—which I finished on my first day of reading. This voyage provided time for me to make real reading progress in the *Old Testament*. I also read a book by Billy Graham that I found in the ship's library called *World Aflame* but found some things in it I had to hold in abeyance.

After landing we travelled to North Seattle, Washington where my Dad had bought property where he began to build houses for sale and invest in real estate and I completed high school. I also worked with my Dad mixing concrete and whatever he was building. In the meantime in the evenings I listened to Christian programs on the radio such as the *Lutheran Hour*, *Bishop Sheen*, *Back to the Bible*, *Dr. De Haan*, getting a Christian education by radio and at the same time I heard *The World Tomorrow* by Herbert Armstrong. I wrote for literature from all of them to study. The literature from *The World Tomorrow* was very interesting. I began to realize that all these people were not saying the same thing. Billy Graham sort of summarized the majority of what most of them were saying, but Herbert Armstrong's message was very different. His booklets said Easter and Christmas were pagan, and other booklets showed very plainly that a lot of the things that the churches of the world teach and take for granted are pagan in origin. First of all I began to see conflicts and disagreements in different areas among these teachers.

For example: One minister would say that wine means grape juice. One does not get drunk on "grape juice". So I looked in the Bible, but the Greek word "*onois*" for wine used in the Bible cautions about getting drunk on "*onois*"—fermented alcohol /wine, not grape juice (*Strong's Concordance of the Bible*). Excess wine causes drunkenness—**Ephesians 5:18**. Armstrong was right about the word *onois* meaning wine not grape juice.

In another instance, Dr. De Haan taught that all Christians were going to be "raptured" to heaven (the SECRET RAPTURE) where Christians around the world are going to disappear into heaven at the sound of a *silent* trumpet which no one will hear except the saints. In other words, unless you have the blood of Christ covering your sins you will not hear that trumpet and will not rise up in the rapture. Armstrong said, "The rapture **will not be secret** and will not occur before the tribulation, but will occur when the dead are raised up from their graves. It will be at the voice of an arch angel thundering from heaven and a loud trumpet blowing from heaven." **Revelation 1:7**—"Behold, he (Christ) comes with clouds; and **EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM**, and they also which pierced him: and all nations of the earth shall wail because of him." **It was not the Bible that was lying, but** all these ministers who teach differently than the Bible and who are deceived (wrong) and therefore lying. I began to see that the word of God is the foundation that we have to live by.

John 15:8—"If you abide in me and I abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. "My true disciples produce much fruit which brings great glory to my Father." **Verse 16**—"You did not chose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This thing I command you that you love one another." If he abides in us

we will have desires according to his will, not for selfish reasons, but to please and serve God. We have to learn to submit to God's word and will and he will cause all things to work together for our good. It is for our growth and understanding and everlasting spiritual welfare. God is a loving parent who wants what is good for us. Sometimes it includes chastisement. **Hebrews 12:1**—"Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. You have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as children, **"My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loves he chastens and disciplines every son whom he receives."** God knows our human nature has to be throttled and that we have to learn to quit giving into human nature and obey God—to do what God says.

Matthew 4:4—the Bible foundation that I learned in Formosa (Taiwan) was **"that man shall not live by bread alone, but is to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."** **Luke 4:4**—says the same thing. **2 Timothy 3:15**—"ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God (Greek: "God breathed") 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." How do we get prepared for every good work? We prepare by reading, studying, applying, committing God's word to memory, and meditating on the word of God. **2 Timothy 2:15**--Under the inspiration of God Paul said, "Study to show your-self approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing (understanding) the word of truth." **2 Corinthians 11:13-15** --"I will keep on doing what I am doing in that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded equal with us in the things which they boast about. Such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder (not surprising), for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end (final outcome) will be according to their works."

What is a minister of righteousness? How can you tell if a man is really a minister of God or a false minister? The key word here is the word righteousness. **Psalms 119:172**—"All thy commandments are righteousness." The definition of righteousness is all the commandments of God. If we are righteous it means that we keep (live by) the commandments of God. As Christ said to the rich young ruler if you would have eternal life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS! A minister of righteousness is one who teaches and lives by the commandments of God. How many ministers teach others to live by the commandments of God and live by those commandments themselves? We have to look at their teaching and inspect and narrow down by proving if *it is written* in the Bible (the inspired word of God). The law of God was not abolished and nailed at the cross with Christ. Christ was nailed to the cross, not the commandments. He took our sins upon himself and shed his own blood in our stead, and in that sense our sins (debt) were "done away". Christ is the propitiation for our sins.

Matthew 5:17-19—Christ said, "*Think not that I have come to destroy the law (do away with) or the prophets, but to FULFILL*" (**Isaiah 22:4**—"magnify the law") – prove it honorable, worthy of respect and reverence. "For assuredly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one *jot* or one *tittle* will by any means pass from the law until all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." How does a person fulfill something? The person *does it*. Christ kept the Law and the commandments without deviating—He did them. **1 John 2:6**—"whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know we are in him (abide). He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked." **1 Peter 2:21**—"For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow in his steps: *Who did no sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth.* Who

when he was reviled (insults hurled at him), did not retaliate (revile) in return; when he suffered, he made no threats. He committed (entrusted) himself to Him who judges righteously (justly). He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by whose stripes (wounds) you have been healed. For you were sheep that were going astray (wandering), but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer (Guardian) of your souls.” If Christ kept the commandments of God, then we are to keep the commandments and are to follow his example. Every aspect of God’s Law is still in effect today.

1 Corinthians 11:1-2—Apostle Paul said, “follow me as I follow *Christ*.” Christ kept them as an **example for us to follow** (after him). He will still keep them in us through the Holy Spirit if we truly follow him. All of us have human nature that we have to overcome. **Jeremiah 17:9**—“*The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can understand it? I the Lord search the heart and try the reins (examine the mind/motives). Even to give every man according to his ways (conduct), according to the fruit of his doings (deeds deserve).*” **1 John 2:16**—“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. All that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life —is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.” These are all the temptations that we have to overcome—Satan’s tempting devices are all around us. How do we overcome all of these enticements and temptations? How do we overcome all this? We can overcome by the word of God and the power of God, and the Spirit of Christ in us.

God is eternal. **Malachi 3:6**—“I am the Lord, I do not change.” **Hebrews 13:8**—“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” The Law of God is the very essence of God—it is the Spirit of God himself carried out into action. All the commandments are from his mouth and divine in origin, so all are important. **Matthew 23:23**—“Woe to you, *teachers of the law and Pharisees*, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter without neglecting the former.” Our lives are to be characterized by loving kindness with the practice of justice, mercy and faithfulness. **Malachi 3:6-10**—“I am the Lord, I change not. Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob. Yet from the days of your fathers, you have gone away from my ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, says the Lord of hosts. But you ask, ‘How are we to return? ‘Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, ‘*In what way have we robbed you*’? **You have robbed me of the tithes and offerings due to me— the whole nation of you.**”

Hebrews 7: 2, 4-9 and **Genesis 14:20**—“For Melchizedek, King of Salem priest of the Most High God who met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him; to whom Abraham gave a tenth part of everything; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace; without father or mother, without genealogy (descent) , having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, remains a priest forever.” Melchizedek was not human he was divine—the Son of God, the one who became Jesus Christ—the one who was the Logos (Word) of God.

“Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. And indeed those who are the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law that is from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better. Here men that die (mortal men) receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives.

Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.”

Hebrews 7:11-“If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the law was given to the people), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of “Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron. For when there is a change of priest hood, of necessity there is also a change of the law.” What law? The law of where the tithes go. They began to go to Melchizedek that became Christ, then the tithes were temporarily assigned to the Levites in the days of the Levitical priesthood and the Temple. Now these are gone and the tithes go back to the original tithes receiver, Melchizedek, who became Christ—*the Word* (Logos) of God. That is the change. The law of tithing is still in effect as in the beginning.

“He of whom these things are spoken of belongs to another tribe, from which no man had officiated at the altar. It is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies, ‘You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.’ On the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the Law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we now draw near to God. Inasmuch as He was not made priest without an oath (for those priests were made without an oath); but He with an oath when God said to him: the Lord has sworn and will not change his mind; ‘You are a priest forever.’ Because of this oath, Jesus had become the guarantee of a better covenant. There have been many of those priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; but because Jesus continues forever, he has an unchangeable priesthood.”

Malachi 3:10—God says, “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be food in my house.” The storehouse was literally a part of the Temple in ancient times where the people brought the tithe (which is a tenth). The tithe (a tenth) that used to go to the priest now goes to the ministry to perform the work and ministry of the gospel. **Hebrews 7** in many respects could be called the tithing chapter. Today the “storehouse” means the treasury of the church of God that is preaching the gospel. Those who believe and follow Christ (are his body) where ever he goes, comprise his spiritual “house”—doing his will and work and carrying on his ministry. “Try me now in this” says the Lord Al mighty, “and see if I will not throw open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.” God says put me to the test—take up my challenge. Do it now—prove it. Hear my words and take me at my promise. This is all positive promise.

King Agrippa was interested in what Apostle Paul had to say, however, he did not want to be convicted of what he was hearing and have to change a very comfortable lifestyle and essentially told Paul, “See me later. We can talk when I have a more convenient time”. People tend to put things off that they don’t like, don’t understand and find uncomfortable or inconvenient. **Galatians 6:7** –“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” **Jesus said, “My food is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”** “Open your eyes and look at the fields already ripe to harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, and harvests the crop for eternal life, so the sower and the reaper may be glad together.”

John 10:1— “Assuredly, I tell you the truth, that anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. The man (Christ himself) who enters by

the door (gate) is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him and the sheep hear his voice and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he brings them all out, he goes before them and the sheep follow him; they know his voice. The sheep will by no means follow a stranger (a false minister), but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” Those who were listening did not understand what Christ was telling them. So he explained. I am the gate (door) for the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. Those who come in through me will be saved, and shall go in and out and find green pastures.” Those who study the word of God and live by the word of God can recognize false teaching because they are so familiar with the true teachings of the Bible (live by every word of God) that they make a habit of regular (daily) study and meditate on it, and pray earnestly seeking God’s truth, understanding, knowledge and wisdom. This is because they seek, ask, and knock (on the door) and they receive his Spirit and truth. He that asks will receive. He that seeks will find. He that knocks will have the door opened.

Verse 10—“The thief and robbers come only to steal (rob), to kill and destroy.” These false teachers want personal service and tithes for selfish reasons. “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. A hireling (false minister hired for the pay, as many are today) is not the shepherd and not the one who owns the sheep and has no real concern for the sheep because he is just a hired hand, sees the wolf coming, leaves the sheep and flees. So the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. I am the good shepherd.” Christ is the Good Shepherd. “The good shepherd knows his sheep and lays down his life for his sheep. I have sheep not of this fold that I must bring and they shall hear and listen to my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. Therefore, my Father loves me because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from my Father.”

A good time to study and center your day in the word is early in the morning when your mind is fresh and alert before getting involved with all the activities of daily living. Start the day off with God and **seek first** the kingdom of God and his righteousness (read, study and pray) and you will be blessed. Your understanding will increase, and your knowledge will grow. **Hebrews 13:15**--Through Christ our help and our high priest let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise (the fruit of our lips) that confess His name. God has given us the opportunity and choice. Know that our salvation lies within the pages of the Bible. Let us rejoice in so great a calling and the love of Jesus Christ and be zealous to do his works wholeheartedly.