

Counting the Cost

The Messiah said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." Mathew 13:44, 45

This short, often over-looked parable was specifically given for those living at the very end of time. It illustrates the conflict that all will face. Each person in his or her own way is a merchantman looking for truth; each truth is a jewel. Much that is untrue must be cast aside; worthless counterfeits must be recognized for what they are. Sometimes it takes a lifetime of looking, but anyone truly devoted to finding the most precious, very costly Pearl of Truth will be led to it and understand it.

The problem is, it costs a very high price. The final test over observing the true Sabbath is the judgment of the living. Each person passes judgment upon himself. This is the necessary cleansing of the soul-sanctuary that must take place before the Saviour returns. Yahushua said the merchantman had to sell **all** that he had in order to obtain the pearl of great price. It will require all who would be saved of the final generation to surrender all in order to pass the [judgment of the living](#).

Consider what surrendering "all" might have entailed in Bible times. Suppose this merchantman quickly ran to his home and told his wife to give him her dowry money and all her jewelry, then take the children with only the clothes they were wearing and go to her father's house for awhile because he was going to sell their home and lands, their donkey and cow, their household furnishings and food, their clothes, *and* her dowry.

Do you think she said, "Of course, dear. Here you are, we'll see you when you come for us"? More likely she cried, shouted, pleaded, and then threatened: "If I have to go to my father's house with nothing, not even my dowry, don't bother coming for us. I never want to see you again!"

The merchantman was faced with the choice: lose the costly pearl forever or give up all that he had.

In a special way that costly pearl of great price is the truth about the ancient lunar Sabbath. Worship on a false day is false worship. Only those who are willing to give up their all in order to worship the Creator on His true Sabbath will receive His seal in their foreheads. Only those who surrender everything will be free from the mark of the Beast that is Satan worship. Only those who love their Redeemer enough to *lose* all will *gain* all, including eternal life. Only those who have already been looking at the many jewels of truth contained in the Bible, will be able to recognize the extremely high value of the pearl of true Sabbath worship.

Sanctification is a process that is done in the mind of a worshipper on the seventh-day Sabbath. "I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am . . . [Yahuwah] that sanctify them." (Ezekiel 20:12) Only the character (the thoughts and feelings, the beliefs and attitudes) is taken to heaven. The Pearl of Great Price, the true Sabbath, is the only opportunity for a sin-sick soul to be made holy. Are you willing to give up all that you have for sanctification?



Like a pearl of great price, following truth will cost a person everything.

In today's marketplace, the price of the pearl seems to have two areas of costliness: human relationships and the ability to buy and sell. The Bible warned us of both.

I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be those of his own household. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take up his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. (Matthew 10:34-38)

He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. (Revelation 13:16, 17)

These two categories of conflict usually overlap. The wife and mother who fears losing her marriage over the many

controversies surrounding her keeping of the true Sabbath, will also suffer economic hardship through a divorce. The man who gives up a well paying job in order to keep the Sabbath on a different calendar will certainly have to meet rejection, misunderstanding and criticism by relatives and former friends, perhaps even his wife and children.

To face those you love becoming your enemies, to face the loss of the ability to buy or sell, *this* is the cost of the cross. Each person must stand alone. That is the nature of the test. You must be prepared to lose your marriage, your job and income, and with it your house, car and self esteem, and maybe your spouse and children in a contentious divorce. But read on, there is great hope.

Both of these areas of testing refer back to the "curses" which Elohim, your Covenant Keepers, pronounced upon Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Eve seemed to be damaged the most by her consent to be deceived, so there was a two-fold curse that was given to her. Genesis 3:16 says:

To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow...; in pain shall you bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you.



Many have assumed that the pain here spoken of is the *physical* pain of giving birth. But much more is addressed: the continuing concern and care required of a woman who feels the pain that her child feels. When the child falls and is hurt, the mother suffers as well. Whatever brings pain and sorrow to the child touches her heart *all the years of her life*.

The curse is turned into a blessing because such pain is an opportunity for selfishness to be purified by love for another. The Redeemer provided this means for people to fathom the pain our sin-sickness brings the Father and the Son. They are touched with the feeling of our infirmities. (See [Hebrews 4:14-16](#).) They feel every pain we feel and experience with

"The great obstacle both to the acceptance and to the promulgation [spreading] of truth is the fact that it involves inconvenience and reproach. This is the only argument against the truth which its advocates have never been able to refute. But this does not deter the true followers of Christ. These do not wait for truth to become popular. Being convinced of their duty, they deliberately accept the cross, with the apostle Paul counting that 'our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory . . .' (2 Corinthians 4:17)."

E. G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 460

us every sorrow and sadness. But still, knowing ahead of time that that would be the case, they chose to go ahead with creating humankind because of the joy they would also experience when people would choose to follow the truth and be saved eternally.

The second part of Eve's curse is that she would yearn for her husband's love and care. That would seem like a good thing, but he would rule over her because she so desperately wants to make him happy in her devotion to him. All too often marriage is a disappointment and great heartache. The curse becomes a blessing when this emotional emptiness causes a woman to seek the love of her divine "Husband" (See [Isaiah 54:5](#)) as she would not have done in the security of a truly loving human husband.

The Pearl of Great Price, obedience to the true Sabbath, can cost her marriage and her children.

The curse pronounced over Adam and his descendants strikes to the center of a man's opinion of himself.

Cursed is the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: . . . In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground.

([Genesis 3:17-19](#))

Growing up with society's measure of wealth equaling value as a human being, many men pay more attention to their jobs than to their family or religion. They fully expect the family to love and honor them for the money they are able to bring home. When that ability to earn money is challenged, when they cannot buy and sell, the test is severe. The Pearl of Great Price can cost a man his job and his sense of self. A man in this situation is led to rely on His Maker, rather than on his own abilities. He is thus led into a much closer relationship with Yahuwah.



All of the "curses" were meant for our eternal good. It is the Father's intent to bring us back to the development of character that Adam and Eve had before they sinned. Rather than storm about unfairness, let all pray for spiritual discernment to see the value in trusting our Heavenly Father to provide for *all* of our needs. Selling all to purchase the Pearl of Great Price will be the best bargain anyone can ever make.

This article is written to show you the hope and the value of faith in your Heavenly Father, your Elohim. Many have trod the path before you and their testimonies will be included at the end to increase your faith in the Father to lead, guide and provide.



Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us, of which we know nothing. *The Desire of Ages*, p. 330.

There are also definite steps you can take to ensure a successful test outcome. Each person's circumstances are different. It is not possible to address each individual situation. We have attempted to share *principles* that can be broadly applied. As you read, ask for the Spirit of Yahushua to enlighten your mind and lead you in the path you should go.

Step One

A deliberate commitment must be made to enter into a covenant relationship with Elohim, your Mighty Covenant Keepers. This is the first name the Father chose to give Himself and His Son. It is a plural name like *couple* or *team*. It uses a singular verb to show that they work together. Moses wrote: In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth. ([See Genesis 1:1.](#))

At Creation, our Makers became our Mighty Covenant Keepers to ensure life and nurture to all they created. Like loving parents, They would be always devoted to the welfare of their children. They know each of us by name, and feel every emotion we feel, and experience our grief and joy.

Tragically, through sin Their children turned away from Them. Now, to return to that covenant relationship, Their children must deliberately, solemnly and knowingly enter into a covenant promise of commitment to obey.

“All His gifts are promised on condition of obedience.” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 145.)

The sacred words of the Creator’s covenant are provided in [Deuteronomy 28](#). This does not require the sacrifice of animals or any ceremonies. Rather, it requires each person to intelligently and solemnly commit themselves to obedience to all the revealed will of the Father and the Son.

This means that obedience to the revealed will in the Bible will lead you out from "among." The "among" group may contain your former church friends, your family or even your spouse and children.

When a person accepts truth by the impression of the Holy Spirit and the testimony of Scripture, their first impulse is to share their new understanding of truth with others. Every person has family and friends, even ministers that they believe are so sincere that they would joyfully accept more truth. Many observers of the Saturday Sabbath seem open to accepting truth as long as it comes from the Bible. Experience has proven that this final test on the Sabbath cuts asunder and few there are that will accept this truth.

A person cannot really persuade or convince another person. It is only by the Spirit of Yahushua that minds are converted. Do not be discouraged if those you love and respect refuse this further truth. This has happened in the past. The experience of the Advent people following the disappointment in 1844 is a parallel experience. Ellen White, in writing of their experience of studying the truth of the seventh-day Sabbath stated:

Those who received the light concerning the sanctuary and the immutability of the law of . . . [Yahuwah], were filled with joy and wonder, as they saw the beauty and harmony of the system of truth that opened to their understanding. They desired that the light which appeared to them so precious might be imparted to all Christians and they could not but believe that it would be joyfully accepted. But truths that would place them at variance with the world were not welcome to many who claimed to be followers of . . . [Yahushua]. Obedience to the fourth commandment required a sacrifice from which the majority drew back.

. . . [They said:] The keeping of this new Sabbath would throw us out of harmony with the world, and we would have no influence over them.

. . . popular ministers perverted the Word of . . . [Yahuwah], placing such interpretations upon its testimony as would best quiet inquiring minds. And those who did not search the Scriptures for themselves were content to accept conclusions that were in accordance with their desires.

(*The Great Controversy*, pp. 454-455)

Be sure to read both the covenant blessings and curses in Deuteronomy 28 for these are the warning of consequences that will befall any who enter into the promise to obey and then go back on their word.

It is fascinating that Satan has copied the covenant pattern of promises and curses in his evil secret societies that have been a big part of the corruption in the world today. To join the Free Masons, Skull and Bones, or many other occult groups, an initiate is required to swear loyalty to the organization and accept a gruesome death as a curse for disloyalty.

The curses listed in Exodus are the simple cause and effect of being without the protection of Elohim. The curses are what Satan will do if given the chance. The blessings of the Covenant are the miracles that will be poured out on those who establish a sacred relationship with Elohim. The Father and the Son will use blessings to show Their love so that faith in Their power to protect and nurture will be so firmly established that no power in earth or hell can destroy it.

The enemy never can take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises. *The SDA Bible Commentary*, p. 959.

We should now acquaint ourselves with . . . [Yahuwah] by proving His promises. *The Great Controversy*, p. 622.

Read the Covenant promises over and over. Think of what it could mean in your life to be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out! Can you imagine the work of your hands and the fruit of your labors being blessed beyond what you would normally expect? Can you feel what it would be like to have miracles, even small ones, done in your behalf?

Being under the umbrella of Elohim's Covenant removes much of the uncertainty of surrendering all to purchase the Pearl of Great Price. Trials will continue and become more severe, but the believing child of Elohim does not face the problems alone. With each problem there will be a way of escape. Each blessing will increase love; every miracle will increase faith in the Covenant Keepers, your Elohim.

For every gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to . . . [Yahuwah] that we have received. *Education*, p. 258

Many persons may have the temptation to hold back from making a full, unreserved commitment. They think, "If I can get a job that will let me still make as much money as I do now, *then* I will keep the lunar Sabbath." Or they may think, "If my husband will accept this truth, *then* I will keep the true Sabbath." But this kind of limited commitment will *not* bring you the Covenant blessings. Only a complete, *nothing*-held-back-promise will bring you under the covenant protection.

If you have reservations, pray that the Father will give you spiritual strength and the gift of faith to remove those reservations. He will always answer that prayer. Then you can in prayer, place your hand on Deuteronomy 28 and commit your way unto Elohim, your Covenant Keepers. In the days ahead, remind yourself every day, maybe every hour until it becomes a part of your beliefs, that you are under the Covenant of Elohim, the Almighty Covenant Keepers.

Step Two

The next step to ensuring success is deliberate investigation to determine Yahuwah's solutions to the problems that arise from obedience. The followers of truth are told to "Come out from among her my people and be ye separate." This means that obedience to the revealed will in the Bible will lead you out from "among." The "among" group may contain your former church friends, your family or even your spouse and children.

Many people refuse to take a step forward, praying instead for a miraculous sign or deliverance. Others wait to hear Yahuwah's voice telling them exactly what to do. While the Father certainly has been known to reveal His will in these ways, typically a person needs to walk forward in faithful obedience. As one steps forward in faith, the way is opened before him, but often only one step at a time so that the entire way requires faith. Some of heaven's greatest blessings come disguised as small opportunities, or just small steps of obedience.

There are four steps to know Yahuwah's will and leading in one's individual life:

- A. Gather all possible information.
- B. Make a decision based on that information and present it to Yahuwah.
- C. Walk forward in faith in the direction of your decision.
- D. Watch for the opening and closing doors of Providence.

Gather information

Gathering information does not commit you to a specific course of action. However, it is a vitally important step that must be deliberately perused. Too many people are paralyzed by fear of a possible outcome they do not want. Thus immobilized, they never learn Yahuwah's will because they hold back from taking the first step: gathering information from every available source.

As information is gathered, it prompts more accurate evaluation of one's real situation. In the process of fact finding, new solutions may appear that would otherwise remain hidden. With the information in hand, honest analysis will reveal what decision(s) should be made in order to walk forward by faith.

Make a decision

A decision may now be made based on the information gathered. Present this decision to Yahuwah in earnest prayer. Pray specifically, deliberately and frequently. Pray for wisdom; pray for guidance; pray for anything you need, but pray *very specifically*. Go treasure hunting through the Bible for promises that fit your individual situation. The promises of Scripture are available to all who have entered into a covenant relationship with Elohim.

Walk forward in faith

Walking forward in faith may entail writing up a résumé, printing business cards, filing for legal marital separation, applying for work you have never done before, and many more besides. Pray for wisdom and guidance and faith. Faith itself is a gift from the Father. If you feel immobilized by fear, *ask* for more faith!

Faith is defined as: "Belief; the assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another, resting on his authority and veracity [habitual truthfulness], without other evidence; the judgment that what another states or testifies is the truth." (Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828)

Your emotions are not a safe guide. You may feel fear, but still choose to believe that He who has promised is capable of keeping His promises!

Watch for the opening and closing doors of Providence

Many times the opening and closing doors of Providence may appear small and insignificant. It may be tempting to dismiss it as mere coincidence. But to the believer, there is no coincidence. "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love . . . [Yahuwah], to them who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)

Small opportunities, if followed by faith as coming from the Father's hand, have the potential to bring great blessings that reach into eternity. Too often Satan tempts a person to rationalize away the small openings. By waiting for large deliverances, many people miss the very pathway Yahuwah intends for them to walk. The problems facing them seem too large to be solved by a small answer. They brush aside the very means Heaven intended for their deliverance and thus miss out on seeing miracles and answered prayers.

"Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock Heaven's storehouse, where are stored the boundless resources of Omnipotence." (*Steps to Christ*, p. 94)

Here at the end of time when people cannot buy or sell and relationships fall apart, dependence upon the covenant promises will be increasingly crucial to one's very existence. Faith that has been too often neglected in the past, must now be exercised in total dependence upon your knowledge of the love of the heavenly Father.

The darkest trials are the opportunities for Yahuwah to demonstrate His love and power to save. He needs people who will remain faithful and trusting no matter what.

Types of Work

Everyone treasures job security. Here at the end of time, all who will be faithful to truth will face job *insecurity*. The following suggestions are only to stimulate thinking and provide areas in which information can be gathered. Adhering to a calendar that is different from the rest of the world will possibly mean that you must seek employment in an area you think is beneath your abilities. Be determined to adjust to do whatever it takes to have the freedom to observe the true Sabbath.

One's past employment, skills and experience must be critically analyzed. What are you good at? What *can* you do? What have you done in the past? If you cannot obtain work in your previous area of employment, what skills can be transferred to a different line of work?

- **Be self-employed if at all possible.** If you were a barber or a beautician, can you open up a shop in your own home? Is there a product you can manufacture from your own home? Sometimes taking a short course to expand one's skills can provide additional work opportunities. Specific courses, such as becoming a lock smith or an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) may not be similar to the previous employment, but should be considered as alternatives that require little additional schooling. Other work might be decorating cakes, small-engine repair, child care, care of the elderly or people with special needs. Men can find employment as handymen, gardeners, taxi drivers, etc. These jobs do not carry a lot of social recognition and people tend to think of them as beneath their abilities. However, under the covenant blessings, Yahuwah can bless your efforts so that you can have more work than you can handle and maybe even employ others.
- **Substitute services.** Any area in which you have worked in the past, has the potential to offer substitute employment. Nurses and teachers get sick; store employees, bank managers, etc., all need vacations. These are wonderful opportunities for employment. As a lunar-Sabbatarian, you can offer your services to multiple businesses to meet their temporary employment needs.
- **Services industries that are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.** Such employers are used to complex scheduling. If you have worked as a manager, print up a resume and business cards, and apply for employment in a variety of 24/7 industries. Your management skills learned in one industry, can cross over into retail sales, restaurants, hotels, etc. Your availability for weekend and holiday employment more than off-sets your need for

accommodation of changing Sabbaths and New Moons. Lunar Sabbatarians can take the unpopular late- and weekend-shifts that other employees do not like.

In this, as in every other area of life, Yahuwah has provided many promises for His children to claim in their hour of need. In your prayers, ask for what you need and claim specific promises.

- For I Yahuwah your Mighty One will hold your right hand, saying unto you, "Fear not; I will help you." (See Isaiah 41:13.)
- "He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him: I will be with Him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation." (Psalm 91:15, 16)

Relationships

Obedience to the true Sabbath will have an effect on all of your relationships. It is inevitable and unpreventable. It is part of the cost for obtaining the pearl of great price. Yahuwah Himself asked, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3) No one enjoys standing alone. Coming out from "among" implies a togetherness that no longer exists. The closer the relationship, the greater the pain when that relationship ends.

A true follower of Yahuwah will do everything possible to maintain a kind and unselfish attitude. However, there are only two spirits in the world: the spirit of Yahuwah and the spirit of Satan. When one person chooses to follow truth, and another person rejects truth, there will be an increasing distance in the relationship. The spirit of Satan in the heart of one will be antagonistic toward the spirit of Yahuwah in the other.

As far back as Cain and Able, there has been strife and discord between believers and unbelievers, between the obedient and the disobedient. Now, at the end of the world, as each person is faced with the final test, break up of relationships is inevitable. Any relationship where one person chooses not to obey, will produce conflict, whether it is in a marriage, between a child and parent, between friends, or co-workers and church members.

Yahushua clearly foretold this conflict that would come to all who chose to follow Him:

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. (Matthew 10:34-36)

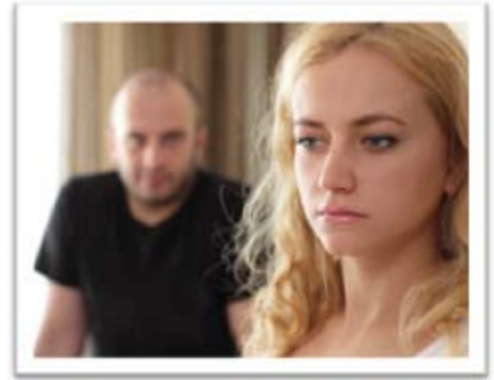
Truth is symbolized in scripture as a two-edged sword. A two-edged sword cuts off on both sides. This final test reveals what is in the *heart*. Typically, when one accepts the beautiful truth of the Creator's calendar, the first impulse is to share with loved ones. It is assumed that friends who are of "like minds" will also see the truth and embrace it with joy.

The final test, though, reveals the hidden things of the heart. Outward sincerity, conservative standards, position in the church or community are *not* proof of inward commitment to truth. Scripture reveals that when Messiah was on earth, the common people heard Him gladly, while the national and church leadership rejected Him. Similar rejection of advancing truth can be expected today.

Do not be shaken by the fierceness of the attack nor the extent of the conflict that may leave the believer totally alone. "If . . . [Yahuwah] be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31)

You may believe that divorce is wrong, but in the end you may be divorced. You may believe in honoring your mother and father, but may be forced into a position where you cannot conform to their wishes. Yahuwah does not require any individual to submit his or her will to another in matters of conscience. Each one must answer to Yahuwah for his or her own soul.

Scripture establishes the principle that Yahuwah's authority is above every earthly authority. When anyone, be it husband, parent or government, tries to force their will upon another in matters of religious practice, that person or entity is to be disregarded. Yahuwah is to be obeyed at all times. No man-made rule, law or decree has the right to make demands that would break Yahuwah's law. (See [Daniel 3:13-18](#); [Daniel 6:4-22](#); [Acts 4:18-20](#).)



If you find yourself alone, without friends or family, claim the precious promises.

- *For your Maker is your husband; Yahuwah of the faithfully serving celestial bodies is his name; and your Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the Mighty One of the whole earth shall He be called. (See Isaiah 54:5.)*
- *When my father and my mother forsake me, then Yahuwah will take me up. (See Psalm 27:10.)*
- *Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be dismayed: for Yahuwah thy Mighty One is with you wherever you go. (See Joshua 1:9.)*

For additional encouragement, read [precious promises](#) and [inspiring statements](#).

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