

April 19, 2019

Warm hellos dear brethren, and spiritual family here on the Gulf Coast, and scattered children of God.

My wife and I pray and hope this finds you all doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

Let's Look in the Mirror

Last evening the members of the *Ekklesia* of God observed the Lord's Passover. It is a sobering evening, but also very encouraging!

Might I suggest we all go back and re read **John 16:33**, "*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world*" as well as **John 17 :13** "*And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*"

This evening, we will be observing the Night to Be Much Observed, as we begin the First Day of Unleavened Bread. There is so much symbolism and encouragement as we enter this Feast Season.

One of the aspects of the Days of Unleavened Bread, is that we need to continue the examination process of searching for sin and where we need to repent of the sin and then seek God actively living IN us. One of the best ways to continue with our spiritual checkup is to look in the "spiritual mirror", or God's Word.

I remember as a small child this familiar children's rhyme. "Mirror, mirror, on the wall...". In the rhyme, the mirror supposedly would talk back.

Over the years, I've noticed how many superstitions there are regarding mirrors. In some cultures, people will not allow a one year old or younger child to view him or herself in a mirror. I've heard it's because the child's growth will be limited because their reflection will be frozen in the mirror. Sounds crazy, but some people sincerely believe it!

The most commonly known superstition is that breaking a mirror brings seven years of bad luck. This belief is widely spread even yet today. This came in part from the ancient Romans. They believed life was renewed every 7 years, and since a mirror contained a person's likeness, when the mirror was broken, the person who gazed into it would have bad luck until the next seven-year-cycle. Again, no basis of truth, but many still hold on to its belief.

In spite of some of these things I mention here, mirrors can indeed be useful tools for us. They reveal things about us that otherwise we would not see or know.

When we gaze into a mirror, we can see how we look to others. Is that tie on correctly? Is that shirt collar buttoned? Does the outfit look color coordinated? Is there a piece of meat between my teeth?

What about facial expression? Look in the mirror and smile. Then frown. Then just relax and be normal. How do people you come in contact with see you? Does your "normal" expression tend to be a frown, or a happier outlook?

I'm not saying to put on a false face, but what about improving your genuine expression?

Aha! So we can see how useful a mirror can be. We all think we could spot ourselves easily in a crowd, but seriously, what would we do without mirrors?

It would be more difficult to find out what needs changed in our personal appearance if we did not have a mirror. For those ladies who wear makeup, how difficult would it be to do so, without a mirror?

In Bible studies I've at times covered the book of James. The law of God, revealed in the Bible is like a mirror. Yes, it really is. When we look at it properly, we are able to see our own human nature just like it is. We can see the flaws that need to be and must be removed.

The Ten Commandments for instance are another mirror. If we take things that do not belong to us, and belong to others, we might know it is wrong in God's eyes, but when we look into God's mirror we see that this is the commandment against stealing, for us.

A person who does not honor his parents, does not clearly know how God views this action, unless he or she looks into God's law and sees the commandment to honor one's parents. That is why studying God's Laws are so important. By doing so, we see what needs to be removed from our character. And, what needs to be added through Christ living in us. Once we see the sin, or flaw though, is only the first step.

The second step, is to remove it! **James 1:22-25** says our normal reaction, is when we look in the mirror and see the flaw, is to look the other way and ignore it.

It's like when I look in the mirror, see a piece of food in my teeth, and don't like what I see. So I throw the mirror away, right? That's illogical, at least for me.

How do you look to God? Take time to examine yourself closely in His mirror...His laws contained within the pages of the Bible. **Phil 2:5**, permitting Christ to live in us, His mind, takes repentance, work and change, and eating of that True Bread which comes from Heaven.

Let's be sure our character is clean, and well groomed. Some day we will see God face to face...that will be much more revelatory than any mirror we have today.

As we enter the Sabbath...reflect on this with me will you?

Again, may God continue to richly bless you. Our prayers and thoughts are with you daily! Please do pray for us as well.

-Scott (and Gayle) Hoefker (The Living God Ministries Gulf Coast)

The schedule for this week's **Sabbath** are:

April 19/Friday NTBMO and beginning of the First Day of Unleavened Bread at sundown. Meal starting at **7:00 p.m.** in Spanish Fort / 6:30 p.m. in Montgomery.

April 20th / Saturday: First Day of Unleavened Bread [Abib 15] with local worship services held in Spanish Fort at 10:15 a.m. (All are welcome, or also encouraged to connect live via our normal phone conference from Montgomery also at 10:15 a.m.). Messengers: Scott Hoefker (Spanish Fort), Stephen Glover (Montgomery).

April 20 12:30 Family Lunch Meal in both Spanish Fort and Montgomery

April 20 - Almond Branch Evangelism (Bible Study) **2:00 pm** from Montgomery (connect live all others via telephone conference).

April 20 Family style potluck meal @ Hoefker's @ **5:30 pm.** and in Montgomery.

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