

Empty Hands and Empty Hearts

Exodus 23:14~19 Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. Thou shalt keep the **Feast of Unleavened Bread**: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and **none shall appear before me empty**: And the **Feast of Harvest**, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the **Feast of Ingathering**, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD. Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning. The **first of the firstfruits** of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God.

Deuteronomy 16:16~17 Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the **Feast of unleavened bread**, and in the **Feast of weeks**, and in the **Feast of tabernacles**: and **they shall not appear before the LORD empty**: Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee.

Empty #07387 ray-kawm; *emptily, expressionlessly, indifferently, impassively, and uninterestedly; ineffectually, undeservedly: without cause, unfilled, in vain, void.*

*The word empty has more depth than just coming before Yah without a gift. If we read the instructions again, adding these definitions which elaborate the word **empty** we get a much deeper meaning.*

None shall appear before me **“in vain”**: they shall not appear before the LORD **“expressionlessly, without cause, indifferently.”**

Our offering has just taken on a different facet. Not only are we to appear before Our Lord three times a Year with a physical offering, but also even greater, with the spiritual offering from self. The commandment is speaking of more than showing up with your best of the first fruit according to the blessings from the Lord to feast before Him. It's telling us not to appear before Him spiritually, emotionally empty. For it's from our hearts do we come before Him to worship. So what's in your heart?

*Emptiness is both a physical and a spiritual state. God instructs us that we arrive before Him with full hands ...the outward expression of our love, the action of our obedience. And we are to appear with full hearts...the inner acknowledgment of a joyful heart praising His all-sufficiency. Not just showing up, but wanting to be in His presence; otherwise we arrive **“in vain”**.*

Psalms 127:1 A Song of degrees for Solomon. Except the LORD build the house, they labour **in vain** that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but **in vain**.

*Hebrew; **Vain** #07723 shawv; in the sense of desolating; evil (as destructive), literally to ruin or morally guile; figuratively idolatry as false, uselessness as deceptive, falsely, lie, lying, worthless vanity.*

Matthew 15:9 But **in vain** they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

*Greek; **Vain** #3155. mat'-ane; through the idea of tentative manipulation, a unsuccessful search; folly, to no purpose: in ineffective or unproductive.*

Romans 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became **vain** in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Greek; **Vain** #3154. *mataioo*; to render inactively, become foolish, morally wicked or idolatrous, become worthless.

In Hebrew, as well as the Greek, the meaning is the same; coming before Him with **empty hand's** or **empty heart** is uselessness as deceptive, in deceiving Him and ourselves, to no purpose, morally wicked, as in idolatrous... **vain**. We are taught the way to approach our lord and He was very specific specifying what we are to bring and how to pray. And so He is equally concerned how we approach Him with our hearts that they be full of joy with thanksgiving for the blessings given.

Psalms 16:11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: **in thy presence is fulness of joy**; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Psalms 95:2 Let us come **before his presence with thanksgiving**, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

Psalms 100:2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come **before his presence with singing**.

Psalms 140:13 Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: **the upright shall dwell in thy presence**.

Psalms 116:12~19 What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. **I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people... Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.** O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee **the sacrifice of thanksgiving**, and will call upon the name of the LORD. **I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people**, In the courts of the LORD'S house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem (*O' congregation*). Praise ye the LORD.

*Each year at and through the Feasts, Yah gives more of Himself by way of Yahshua to us. We see more, feel more, know more and in turn should love more as He has grown in us. There is more than just going through the motions. The life given to us was made to be lived to **His fullest**. We are to rejoice with the offering of our hands and the offerings of our hearts to the praise of Yah, physically and spiritually joined together to make the one new man in the likeness of our Creator.*

Rejoice; for the day is to give praise!

Physical example of Empty Handed:

Acts 5:1~11 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? **Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.** And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth,

buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

Lied #5574. pseudomai; to utter an untruth or attempt to deceive by falsehood:--falsely, lie.

*The Holy Spirit through Peter confronts Ananias. It is not a confrontation about the sale of the property, or about the right to use the assets of the sale of the property as desired. The confrontation is about what Ananias **claimed, declared, professed or asserted** about the sale. He held some back for himself which was his right, but he lied about it, claiming to have given **all**. It seemed like such a minor thing. After all, he gave most of the property to the church. He just kept a little back for himself which was his right to do. But this lie, **claiming to have given all** in the presence of man and Yah cost Ananias his life.*

*Have you ever wondered why the penalty was so severe? Why did death follow such a tiny lie? The answer is found in the action that Ananias took. Ananias brought the sale of his property to Peter and **“laid it at his feet.”** This was equivalent to the act of worship, bringing a sacrifice to Yah from your best. But Yah saw something else, Yah saw Ananias’ heart. Yah sees the inner you that wants the outward recognition by one’s peers while secretly insulting Yah. This act mocked God’s total sacrifice manifest in the life of the Messiah. Ananias pretended to give everything in giving the appearance as being pure in heart. But his heart was full of deceit. It was the lie that was the offense, not the offering.*

Offering a sacrifice for appearance deliberately insults Yah’s sovereignty for sacrifice is the act of worship that Yah desires, the act of love from a pure heart. Pretending that it is enough is the very act that started resentment found in the actions of Cain and Abel which brought about death and separation; giving of your best or giving from your excess.

Delusionally do we think that Yah does not see us, knowing our lies, pretending we are doing all for Him, while we keep our offerings back and live for ourselves? We were called to give everything to Yah, as a servant before Him with open arms in sacrifice.

*Physical and Spiritual giving; is about who I really am. Without actions, I cut myself off from the purpose of Yah and that purpose is to be a light in this dark world. In other words, the reason behind salvation, being called; **is to be purposeful**. To be in Yah’s image is to be focused about Yah’s intentions for me. When I either do not know what those intentions are or I do not pursue those intentions even if I know what they are, then I make of myself something other than **“in His image.”***

*We are called to give our all as Yahshua our example and the saints before us have walked, a walk of faith. The biblical concept of faith; **the action of your beliefs**, being **“in His image”** is much like the concept of true education which states: I have not learned anything if I can only; repeat the facts, do the calculations, recite the text. I have only truly learned when; what I have absorbed ... **“changes the way I live”**. Until that moment of **change**, no true education has occurred no matter how many courses I have taken. It is the same as following the Spirit of truth. One can rehearse the information given in the scriptures over and over, doubting its direction, confused by its altered life style in conflict with one’s own walk. Yet until one acts on the instructions and see’s and feels the transformation they are held in bondage to doubt and confusion, the characteristics of Satan.*

Spiritual example of Empty Heart:

Isaiah 29: 9~16 Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of **deep sleep**, and hath **closed your eyes**: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read

this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with **their mouth**, and with **their lips** do honour me, **but have removed their heart far from me**, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?

Just going through the motions does not please Our Heavenly Father, for He sees the inner heart by the emptiness of our offerings. Once we acknowledge His presence with us always, we come to the conclusion; there is no place to hide, all is known by Him even our inner secrets, He sees it all.

Mark 7: 5~14 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, **This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me**. Howbeit **in vain do they worship me**, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may **keep your own tradition**. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect **through your tradition**, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Harken unto me every one of you, and understand: There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him (*from the heart*), those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

Matthew 15: 7~9 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with **their mouth**, and honoureth me with **their lips**; but **their heart is far from me**. But **in vain they do worship me**, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

*The remarks from Yahshua stating: “we draw near unto Him with **our mouth**, and honor Him with **our lips**” tells the whole story. For our **heart is far from Him, in vain do we worship Him**, as one going through the motions, as in going to church to get the credit for the day...I showed up, credit my account, I did only what I had to do. Where is the love in that?*

*No, love is an action word, as it is with faith, our actions. Until I act, faith is only a word in the bible. It is not a reality in my life nor are it's consequences a reality seen within the church or community and with Yah. To believe is not to gather mental or spiritual cargo. **To believe is to change direction...it's the action that is seen working in you.***

*We prepare for the day commemorates Yah given us a most precious gift, Himself in the form of His Holy Spirit living in us. That gift was and is to be used to its fullest. Most pleasing in His sight is seeing His gift being used and enjoying its blessings. The greatest form of flattery is imitation. We are to return from our walk to present ourselves before Him as a **profitable servant**. Exhibit our gifts of profit by the manifestation of His Holy Spirit effectively living, working in and through us.*

*The world of merchandising asks the question:
So what's in your wallet?*

*Our Creator who bestowed His Holy Spirit in us asks:
Where's the profit from MY blessings?
"Only the hands that give away the flowers of their plucking retain the fragrance thereof"*

So what's in your hands?

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Humorous example:

An Italian grandmother is giving directions to her grown grandson who is coming to visit with his wife.

The grandmother says:

You comma to the front door of the apartment. I'm inna apartment 301. Inna the front lobby there issa big panel at the front door. With you elbow, pusha button 301. I will buzza you in. Come inside, the elevator is onna your right. Get in, and with you elbow, pusha #3. When you get out, I'm onna the left. Witha your elbow, pusha my doorbell."

The grandson replies:

"Grandma that sounds easy, but why do I hit all these buttons with my elbow?"

The grandmother answers:

"Whata.....You comma... "Empty-Handed?"