

FAR, FAR ABOVE PIGEONS AND DOVES!

Yahshua began His ministry at the prescribed age of thirty. He had grown up under a centuries-old, tradition-heavy temple animal sacrificial system. As a divinely purposed, meticulous teacher of His Father's word, "a disconnect" readily became apparent as Yahshua's message of salvation profoundly challenged entrenched but ineffectual Jewish traditions. It is a rare event in scripture when Yahshua is shown exhibiting violent physical behavior. In this selected instance, he overturned money changer tables in the temple. He was justifiably outraged seeing doves/pigeons being actively marketed, sold as profitable sacrificial offerings by vendors, He labeled as a "den of thieves" in His Father's house of prayer.

Perhaps Yahshua felt the irony of this sacrificial temple situation in relation to His own life's destiny. Here He was witnessing all manner of people purchasing various priced animal sacrifices while knowing He would divinely, forever supplant this animal sacrifice process. He in fact would become the ultimate, sacrifice for the collective sin of humanity!

From Yahshua extoling The Good News down to our own secular age, the most contentious issue throughout His active ministry then and now remains that He, Yahshua alone offers the exclusive pathway to salvation, having paid the collective debt of all sin through His ultimate act of love, His life blood shed for humanity. With our own country existing less than three hundred years, one can empathize with a synagogue member's consternation and perplexity upon hearing Yahshua, a hometown local "boy" from Nazareth, from a well-known family, stand up and powerfully speak doctrines that did not center on animal sacrificial practices for sin forgiveness, rituals stretching back well over two thousand years that continued unchanged in Judaism 40 years beyond Yahshua's ministry on earth. As Yahshua read from the scroll of Isaiah, the words amazingly seemed to pertain to Him as truly divinely purposed.

Luke 4: 18, 19, 21: 18 The Spirit of Adonai (*the Lord*) is upon me; because He has anointed Me to announce Good News to the poor; he has sent me to proclaim freedom for the imprisoned and renewed sight for the blind, to release those who have been crushed, 19 to proclaim a year of the favor of Adonai (the Lord). 21 Yahshua started to speak to them: "Today, as you heard it read, this passage of the law was fulfilled!

During this prolonged time of temple animal sacrifices, God remained distant, remote from these Israelites. The law remained the tutor defining sin but synagogue members were never allowed to venture, to encounter God beyond the veil into the Holy of Holies. Only priests on a revolving schedule were allowed entrance into this holiest of areas once a year during Atonement. Thus the priest became the intercessor to God on behalf of the believers but never the believers themselves.

Heb 10: 11-14, 2-4: 11 Now every priest stands in the temple doing his service every day, offering over and over the same sacrifices which can never take away sins. 12 But this one (*priest, Yahshua,*) after He had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from then on to await until all enemies be made a footstool for His feet. 14 For by a single offering he has brought to the goal for all time those who are being set apart for God and made holy. Up until this single sacrifice the law, His predecessor, can never by means

of the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year bring to the goal those who approach the Holy of Holies to offer them. 2 Otherwise wouldn't the need/purpose for these offerings of these sacrifices have ceased? For if the people performing the service had been cleansed once and for all, they would no longer have sins on their conscience. 3 No, it is quite contrary — in these sacrifices is a reminder of sins year after year. 4 For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. *Why? Because Yahshua's sacrifice as God forever paid the sin debt; no purpose served for any duplicative animal sacrificial effort that always yielded zero redemptive effect.*

Before proceeding further, I wish to highlight the fact that biblical history presents notable exceptions to the pervasive practice where "rank and file" Israelites were limited to temple animal sacrificing. On numerous occasions throughout the ancient era, God did hand pick dozens of Israelites who directly received Godly intervention and or His Holy Spirit to accomplish specified events that were highly significant. In these instances, God's actions seemed like those of a general and or movie director as He used mostly men to benefit the moral course, including correction, of the Israelites through accomplishing these renowned historical miracles. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the Burning Bush, "I AM WHO I AM," the parting of the Red sea, Ruth, Rahab averting Jewish annihilation, Job spoken to by God out of a spectacular storm, His small, still voice heard out of the maelstrom are some of the many events and individuals chronicled through the Bible. Yet despite these God to man, to woman interactions, these pin pointed initiatives were rare. This spiritual remoteness essentially remained intact, the chasm between God and humankind would only be redefined and activated by Yahshua's entrance into our lives according God's Plan of Salvation authored before the foundation of the universe.

Before Yahshua officially began His ministry, His teaching methods and message had already embraced the multitudes, esteeming all regardless of social standing or wealth. As already noted since Yahshua's outburst in the temple court, His love-directed universal message rapidly became increasingly at odds to the Sanhedrin status driven, aloof, self-centered, privileged plain of unquestioned authority. Yahshua's attitude, identical to the Father's, was pure, without hypocrisy, never tainted with the carnal ambitions that any human high priest could come to likely possess.

As His three and one half year ministry proceeded, Yahshua increasingly berated the Pharisees and Sadducees by focusing on their overt hypocrisy. The entirety of Matthew 23, the famous excoriating tirade of "woes," is directed at these high priests and the eternal consequences awaiting them for their blasphemous, abusive arrogance. A must read!

I appreciate Yahshua's short prayer thanking the Father for giving revelations to ordinary folks:

Mat 11:25 I thank you Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, that you concealed these things from the sophisticated and educated and revealed them to ordinary folks. Yes, Father, I thank you that it pleased you to do this. Critiquing them in Mat 15:14: Let them be. They are blind guides. When a blind guides another blind man, both fall into a pit. Mat 16:6: Take heed and beware of the leaven, (the doctrines) of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

All these verses highlight the need for a divine intercessor, the role that Yahshua had come to earth to fulfill, in a joint love for us, the created. This is why Yahshua says well in advance while speaking to His Father, Yah, about coming into the world knowing about the inevitable hypocrisy and corruption that a human priesthood would encounter buoyed by a supreme social status based on animal sacrifices:

Hebrews 10: 5B-7: 5B It has not been your will to have an animal sacrifice and a meal offering; rather, you have prepared for me a body. 6 No, you have not been pleased with burnt offerings and sin offerings. 7 Then I (Yahshua) said, “Look! In the scroll of the book it is written about me. (stated earlier in Luke 4) I have come to do your will. 8 In saying first, You neither willed nor were pleased with animal sacrifices, meal offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings, things which were offered in accordance with the law, 9 and then, Look I have come to do your will; he takes away the first system in order to set up the second. 10 It is in connection with this will that we have been separated for God and made holy, once and for all, through the offering of Yahshua the Messiah’s body.

Furthermore, the power of the Father, Ruach HaKodesh, the Holy Spirit, bears witness to this single sacrifice (of Yahshua) for sins.

Hebrews 10: 16-20: 16 This is the covenant which I will make with them after those end time days says Adonai: I will put my Torah (law) on their hearts, and write it on their minds..., 17 he then adds, And their sins and their wickednesses I will remember no more. 18 Now where there is forgiveness for these, an offering for sins is no longer needed, 19 So brothers, we have now confidence today to use the way into the Holy of Holies opened to us by the blood of Yahshua. 20 He inaugurated it for us as a new and living way through the veil by means of His flesh.

Thus unlike those centuries of temple animal sacrifices with believers relegated to a human intercessor, a priest, offering before a remote God, we now through Yahshua as our high priest have unparalleled intimacy with our prayer petitions to Yah elevated to that of the priest entering through the veil once per year at Atonement into the Holy of Holies, except that now we may symbolically enter through the veil into the presence of God in heaven boldly at any time of need without fear of death or reprisal. In fact, we are encouraged, welcomed “to knock” at any time! “Keep asking, and it will be given to you; keep seeking, and you will find; keep knocking and the door will be opened to you” Mt 7:7. “Therefore, let us confidently (boldly, King James version) approach the throne from which God gives grace, so that one may receive mercy and find grace in our time of need” Heb 4:16.

Our association with Yah is further refined in an unprecedented, radical manner in Ephesians. The shedding of the Messiah’s blood became the essential catalyst in effecting a union between the Gentiles, defined the Uncircumcised by the law with converted Jews, the Circumcised.

Eph 2: 11-16: 11 Therefore, remember your former state: you Gentiles by birth — called the uncircumcised by those who, merely because of an operation on their flesh, are called the Circumcised — 12 at that time had no Messiah. You were estranged from the national life of Israel. You were foreigners to the covenants embodying God’s promise. You were in this world without hope and without God. 14 But now, you who were once far off have been brought near

through the shedding of the Messiah's blood. 15 For he himself is our *shalom* — he has made us both one and has broken down the *m'chitzah* (the divide) which divided us 16 by destroying in his own body the enmity occasioned by the Torah, (the law) with its commands set forth in the form of ordinances. He did this in order to create in union with himself from the two groups a single new humanity and thus make *shalom*, and in order to reconcile to God both in a single body by being executed on a stake as a criminal and this in himself killing that enmity.

Not only did Yah's Plan of Salvation unite Jews with the Court of the Gentiles, His Plan paid the debt of our collective sin with the body of the Messiah through our genuine repentance, with Him conveying upon us our unmerited pardon of grace. How much greater was God's personal investment in us, his unfathomable love for His created as exemplified in the gifted sacrifice of His only begotten son.

Col 2: 11-14: 11 Also it was in union with him that you were circumcised with a circumcision not done with human hands, but accomplished by stripping away the old nature's control over the body. In this circumcision done by the Messiah, 12 you were buried along with him by being immersed; and in union with him, you were also raised up along with him by God's faithfulness that worked when He raised Yahshua from the dead. 13 You were dead because of your sins, that is, because of your "foreskin," your old nature. But God made you alive along with the Messiah by forgiving you all your sins. 14 He wiped away the bill of charges against us; Because of the regulations (ordinances) it stood as a testimony against us, but he removed it by nailing it to the execution stake.

Hence the manner of sin forgiveness is no longer a physical act of animal sacrifice, but a physical/spiritual act of repentance with redemption through faith in Yahshua.

Late in the Book of John, Yahshua is agitated, highly focused, fully aware the time of His capture is upon Him. Yahshua feels the essential imperative to summarize the essence of his mission on earth to His disciples. In fervent prayer to the Father for the benefit of the disciples and to us, all future believers— He speaks His last words, the culmination of his 3 1/2 year ministry. Yahshua felt the pressure that any human would feel during this ordeal. Yahshua's exasperation surfaces over Philip's lack of perception despite having had extensively witnessed teachings, parables, and miracles only to now be rendered clueless, not seeming to understand Yahshua's profound spiritual purpose: His mission that would forever change the destiny of humankind.

Could there be any more of a contrast from the meeting described above to temple-animal sacrificing? For here is Yahshua with His "team" of disciples. All are faith-fused, united by Yahshua's enveloping aura of pure love for them, a love that transcends not only that generation, but through time, to all future generations who actively accept and are growing in spirit to genuinely love Him. In these following verses, Yahshua, while in continuous prayer to the Father, describes the transformative spiritual process of oneness: a flow emanating from God-Yahshua to believer, and simultaneously from believer to God-Yahshua in a miraculous, wondrous, worshipful union of completion.

John 17: 1B-3, 11B, 12, 14, 20-23, 24: 1B Father the time has come. Glorify your Son, so that the Son may glorify you — 2 just as you gave him authority over all mankind, so that he might

give eternal life to all those whom you have given him. 3 And eternal life is this: to know you, the one true God, and him whom you have sent, Yeshua the Messiah. 11B Holy Father, guard them* (people you gave me out of the world, from verse 6), the power of your name, which you have given to me, so that we may be one just as we are one. 12 When I was with them*, I guarded them by the power of your name, which you have given to me; yes, I kept watch over them*; and not one of them* was destroyed (except the one meant for destruction, so that the Tanakh might be fulfilled. 14 I have given them* your word, and the world hated them*, because they do not belong to the world — just as I myself do not belong to the world. 20 I (Yahshua) pray not only for these, but also for those who will trust in me because of their word, 21 that they may all be one. Just as you, Father, are united with me and I with you. I pray that they may be united with us, so that the world may believe that you sent me. 22 The glory which you have given to me, I have given to them*; so that they may be one, just as we are one — 23 I united with them* and you with me, so that they may be completely one, and the world thus realize that you sent me, and that you have loved them* just as you have loved me. 24 Father, I want those who you have given me to be with me where I am; so that they may see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

Thus Yahshua in physically laying down His life for humanity, His totally given gift of self, completed Yahshua's First Coming, an integral part of Yah's total Plan of Salvation. A plan that continues to demand that no part of scriptural prophecy be sidestepped, but met head on regardless of brutal consequences. God's legacy to us is guaranteed through each believer living a life of loving obedience to Him that promises a spiritual eligibility to join an eternal life: Having achieved a spiritual unity with Them in The Kingdom meaning on our newly transformed earth with Yahshua remaining King of Kings, High Priest forever, with the Father as His God with the law being placed within all loving, obedient hearts; the New Covenant finally in force: believers redeemed in moral excellence, having been eternally sealed by Yahshua's shed body and blood. Selah

Biblical verse to ponder:

1Corinthians2:9 . . .No eye has seen, no ear has heard and no one's heart has imagined all the things that God has prepared for those who love Him.

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