

FTB 67 HOW ENGLISH AND CULTURE SLAUGHTERS BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF NAMES, REPENTANCE AND SALVATION.

In earlier notes I have discussed what true faith is. This time, however, I want to take a closer look at terms like “repentance” and “salvation.” I believe that our misuse of such words has helped to create a “cheap grace” understanding within the church. The Hebrew language has been preserved for centuries and often the meaning has been lost in translation and cultural misuse. Most of this will be a summary from a book called, *The Tanakh: The Dictionary of the New Testament*, by Bradford Scott. I highly recommend you read the book.

Let me give you one example of why I often use Hebrew Words. In English we have the name James, however, this is *Iakobos* in Greek or *Ya'aqov* in Hebrew. The same is true with the Name of our Lord Jesus, which is *Iesous* in Greek or *Yeshua* in Hebrew. Both Iesous and Jesus are attempts to transliterate His name. Now transliterating is taking one language and trying to form it into our own making new words out of old, but translating preserves the meaning of a word. Herein lies the problem with transliterating the names. If you think about it, there really is no need to transliterate a name. We could get used to calling Jesus, Yeshua. God gave Him this name for a reason, just as he gave many names of the Bible for good reasons. For example, Adam (man) is taken from the word *adamah* (ground) showing a relationship between Adam and the ground he was taken from. Because of Adam's sin he is going to “return to the ground” (Gen 3:19). This is also why the *adamah* (ground) has many of the same commandments as the Adam (man). Just as Adam was commanded to tithe of the fruit of the ground, we were to give the ground a Sabbath rest. We also see that the curse that came upon man came upon the ground and that this ground is also waiting for deliverance (Rom 8:20-22). Man is a new creation in Christ (1 Cor 5:17) and the ground will be a new creation in Revelation. Understanding these Hebrew words gives insight into the depth of the Scriptures, however, when we transliterate words, the meaning is lost. I believe Satan purposely tries to redefine words so that we don't see the meaning. He wants to water down the message because he knows that slightly changing the letters of the alphabet can mean the difference between life and death. (You may also want to go and look at FTB which showed how the names of Genesis 5 tell the Gospel story.)

Let's begin by examining the name of Jesus, Yeshua. This word is first used in Genesis 49:18 where Isaac blesses his sons and says, “*Liyshuatekah quytiy YHWY*,” which translates as, “I wait for thy salvation O Yahweh.” In fact, Yeshua appears over 200 times throughout the Old Testament (Tanakh), yet many Christians believe that Jesus (The Lord Saves) is unique to the New Testament and, therefore, miss many prophecies pointing to the Messiah. Some other examples follow:

- Isaiah 12:2 “Behold God is my salvation (Yeshua).”
- Psalm 106:4 “Remember me, O LORD, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people; O **visit me** with thy Yeshua.” Yet in Luke we see Jesus said, “because thou knewst not the time of thy **visitation**.”

Even Simeon knew upon gazing at baby Yeshua that his eyes “have seen thy salvation (Yeshua).” (Luke 2:29-30). You see, Yeshua didn't just bring salvation, He is salvation. While Yeshua has meaning, *Iesous* and Jesus have no meaning at all. Why do we need to transliterate it then and lose its meaning. People say, it doesn't really matter, however, when the Dead Sea scrolls were found, it was a big deal to see how accurate the translation of the Bible has been

throughout centuries. In fact our copies today are 98.3% accurate and the small bit that isn't is because of spelling differences. For example, the KJV says "favour" but today we spell it "favor." This small difference doesn't change the meaning. In fact, none of the translation differences between the Bible of today and the Dead Sea Scrolls changed any meaning at all. We are proud of the fact that the Scriptures were so well preserved and no meaning was lost, yet when it comes to the Name of Yeshua we say it doesn't matter. Why? Could it be that because of antisemitic philosophies we don't want to sound Jewish or have the appearance of being Jewish, even though Yeshua Himself was a Jew?

On that note, let's look at the word "Jew." It comes from the word Yehudy or Judah, and it means praise as seen in Genesis 29:35. Therefore, the very concept or meaning of a Jew is to give praise to Yahweh. Understanding this truth give a deeper meaning to the following verses:

- Rom 2:29 "But he is a **Jew** who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not of the letter; whose **praise** is not of men but of God."
- 1 Peter 2:9 "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye **should show forth the praise** of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Therefore, a true Jew is one whose praise is of God. Are you a Jew? Before you answer you may want to look at Romans 11:17 where we are grafted into their tree or Ezekiel 47:22 where foreigners are considered to be native born Israelites. Ask yourself, is there any good reason to be offended when people use terms like Yeshua and Yahweh? Is this perhaps more your problem than their problem?

This leads us to the question, "What is the church?" In westernized society we often have separated God's chosen Jew from the chosen church, making two separate groups. In fact, many understand that when the Lord returns we will follow the festivals of God as clearly shown in Zechariah 14, however this is simply because God is going to restore Israel. In other words, they say that these rules are for Israel, but not for us. They think that God began this world with rules and then Christ came to get rid of those rules for 2000 years, but will revert to those rules again later, but for now the church is free from rules. Can you see how ridiculous this is?

Today we use terms like, "I'm going to church," "I have to do some work at church," or "church ran late." Many even think that the church began in Acts 2, yet do the Scriptures really say that? Others say that Peter's confession is the church since Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." However, the Greek or Hebrew isn't the word "church." Where did this word come from? Well, it has a long history going back to the English and Germanic *kirke* or the Babylonian goddess *Circe* (seer-say). It is from this word that we get terms like circle, circumference, circumvent etc., all of which hint at its meaning. The goddess *Circe* was connected to the sun which went around in a circle, which is also why Anglo-Saxon cults stand in circles. However, the Greek word for church was *eklesia* from *ek*, meaning *out of*, and *kaleo*, meaning *to call*. Therefore, we get the meaning to be, "to call out." With that said, you must understand that *eklesia* didn't mean church because this word was around long before Yeshua came, being used to describe the assembly of worshippers for even the false gods of the Greeks.

In the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament) we see *eklesia* is used over 100 times, yet in the Old Testament, that same word is not translated as church as it is in the Greek New Testament. Why? To answer that let's see how this word is first used.

The Hebrew word for “church” is *qahal* and is translated most often as “assembly.” It is first used in Deuteronomy 4:10 where Moses says, “When Yahweh said unto me, *assemble (qahal)* the people together.” Stephen refers to this day in Acts 7:37-38 where we read “This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, *A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up* unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.”³⁸ This is he, that was in the *church* in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and *with* our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:³⁹ *To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him* from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt” From this passage we can see a number of things. First God is going to raise up a prophet like Moses, who is known for the Law. Second, this prophet was with them in the church. Third, they they didn’t listen to Moses, they will listen to the Prophet God will raise up. This is important to realize because we need to see that *ekklesia* or the assembly gathered is the same meaning as the church in Acts. Any search for assembly in the Old Testament will reveal how often the “church” or *ekklesia* appears. We also see this assembly of people are often holy (Deut 7:6, 18:15-19, Josh 8:35), however, *ekklesia* is not necessarily always true believers.

What is the point of this? We must see that there is not two assemblies, but only one group of people gathered by faith. There isn’t a group called the church and another group called Jews. Rather, the one seed of faith produces a single group of people in Yahweh. Also interesting to note, in Acts 2 where the “church” is mentioned, they are gathered to observe the feast of Shavuot or Pentecost, not to start the church. They were gathered to keep the traditions of Yahweh because of faith in His Son Yeshua.

Now to the real meat of this letter. Why does it seem that so many within the “church” answer altar calls but then return to their vomit. I believe the answer is in the fact that there is a huge difference between sorrow for sins and true repentance. Today we think of repentance as turning away from sin. While there is truth in this, it still falls short of its full meaning as seen in the Hebrew. When John told the Pharisees to repent for the kingdom of God was at hand, what did he mean by that word repent. This word is used 23,214 times in the Old Testament. I would say we should be able to glean some good context from these verses.

The Greek word for “repent” is *metanoeo*, which is generally defined as changing of one’s mind or sorrow. In some cases, it is said to be a change in heart and mind away from self and sin. Again, this is true, however, it falls short of the complete definition as seen within the Old Testament dictionary. The Hebrew word is *teshuvah*, meaning to return or to go back. It comes from the root word *shoov* as seen in Genesis 1 and 2. In Genesis we see that man was created perfect and sinless having God’s Word in his heart and no knowledge of evil. God commanded Adam not to eat of any other tree outside of the tree of life (pure Word of Yahweh). Because Adam disobeyed, he was removed from the Garden and put back in the place from which he had been taken (the ground). Had Adam remained in the Garden, he would have eaten from the tree of life and lived eternally in a fallen state. This would not be good. Access to the tree of life (Word) was taken away. It is noteworthy that the Tree of Life is mentioned in Revelation as being part of our new paradise, however, after the Fall, we never hear of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil ever again. Why? Because you are what you eat. This tree became a part of Adam in his fallen state and it is now in each one of us.

In Genesis 3:18-19 we read that, “In the seat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return (shoov) unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return (shoov).” This word “return” is the first occurrence of “repent.” Here we see that repentance is returning to where you came from. Remember the root of repentance is to go back

to something. What are we to go back to? Yah's way, His Word, Yeshua! Today, however, Christianity has made a philosophy that says repentance means simply turning away from sin but we must also turn to God and His ways. Yahweh grafted us into a holy and righteous tree of Life in Yeshua. Christianity isn't another tree with different rules and regulations. We are to return to where we came from. Likewise the Jew, or the natural branches, will be grafted in again as well.

Therefore, when we read, "Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand," it doesn't just mean to stop what you are doing, but to go back to God. Other examples of this return (shoov) can be found in Genesis 31:3, Joshua 4:18, Pslam 51:12-13, 23:3, 119:79. Though the Greek philosophies rooted in Christianity have made us think that the Tanakh (Old Test.) is for the Jews and that their laws are not our laws, their food is not our food and their repentance is not our repentance, yet the fact is it is all one and the same and we all must return to Yah's way as we turn away from sin. Bradford Scott says, "Although there are some exceptions, for the most part, the word to the covenant people was **repent**. The word for the Gentiles was **believe**. Then, in the letter of Sha'ul, as he visited the local Gentile communities, he pleaded with many **believing** Gentiles, who had already walked away, to **repent**." There is a big difference between believing in God and repenting. Paul said, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor 7:10). Often time our view of repentance is that of the world and simply worldly sorrow from our wrongdoings. However, the whole idea of Godly sorrow is to restore or bring us back to our original created state. The opposite of restoration is corruption by this world.

It seems that there are 3 types of people: 1) Those who don't obey Yahweh because they don't know and trust Him. 2) Those who don't obey Yahweh because they don't think we have to. 3) Those who obey Yahweh because they love, believe and trust Him. From God's point of view, you are either with Him or against Him, gathering for Him or scattering. Therefore, one cannot say what is heard all too often, "Well, I may not be obeying God's commandments, but I am not doing evil either." No, "The Law of Yahweh is perfect, **restoring** the soul" (Ps 19:7).

Naturally, repentance leads to salvation, so what does salvation mean to the church today? We often ask, "Are you saved?," or "Do you want to be saved?" Let me ask you this, what did Yeshua mean when He said, "Salvation is of the Jews," or "all Israel will be saved?"

The word Yeshua (Lord saves) is really only 3 consonants, *yod*, *shin*, *ayin*. Each of these letters has a primitive form that had meaning in the Hebrew alphabet. The *yod* looked like a hand and was given the meaning of a deed or action. The *shin* was seen as teeth and meant to consume or destroy while the *ayin* was an eye that meant to cast your eyes upon. In other words, the very word itself defines its meaning. To be saved begins with an action or deed followed by the destruction of something and ending with a casting our eyes upon something. Keep this in mind as we look at some key verses dealing with salvation. The first time the word is used is when Moses flees Egypt and helps Jethro's daughters water the flock when other shepherds drive their flocks away. It says, "Moses stood up and **helped** them." Bradford Scott states, "Here is the first example of someone being saved. The daughters of the priest of Midian had come to water their flock, but the shepherds came not only to take their water, but to drive them away. Mosheh takes action. He rises up against the shepherds and drives them away. This is implied from the use of the word *vayyaqam*, which means to rise up, as in to rise up against. Mosheh then gives the women what the thieves came to take. The result is that one of them is given to Mosheh in marriage. Imagine, a Hebrew man goes into the territory of the nations, drives off thieves (see John 10:10), gives his future bride water from the well, and takes her as his own! He then has the chutzpha to go back to his own people with her, to a life contrary to her nature. Then he takes her

out on a date to a Passover Seder. Hmmm.” Can you see the parallels to what Christ did for us. He took action and rose up against satan who wants to drive us away from God and the Tree of Life. Instead, Yeshua gives us what satan doesn’t want us to have and we are given in marriage to Him along with the living water. We as Gentiles are even taken back to join Israel as we are wild olive branches that, contrary to nature, are being grafted into the natural olive tree.

Other examples of salvation being action, destruction and response are seen throughout the Old Testament as in Exodus 14:13-14, 27-31, 2 Sam 22:1-4, 15, 20-24, 1 Chron 16:23-24,34-35, Ps 42:11, Is 52:10-11 among others. Suffice it to say though, that salvation is not an instantaneous, one time event. It begins with a rescue of Yeshua, destruction of the enemy Satan, and ends with the dedication and gazing upon our hero and deliverer. Modern christian thinking is simply content with being rescued and being satisfied that the enemy was destroyed without any thought to the dedication to that Savior in response to that deliverance. Yet Luke outlines this process of salvation:

“Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,⁶⁹ And hath ***raised up an horn of salvation*** for us in the house of his servant David;⁷⁰ As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:⁷¹ That we should be ***saved from our enemies***, and from the hand of all that hate us;⁷² To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;⁷³ . . . that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies ***might serve him without fear***,⁷⁵ In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.⁷⁶ And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord ***to prepare his ways***;⁷⁷ To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,⁷⁸ Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,⁷⁹ To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace” (Luke 1:68-79).

My prayer is that you are seeing that the truth of Yah’s way is to follow Him. Too many in the church are satisfied being delivered and are doing nothing to respond to that deliverance. Repentance isn’t just being sorry, it is turning towards God and living in and for Him. “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?²⁵ Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Rom 7:24).