

NOTE TO THOSE SEEING THIS STUDY ON THE WEB SITE

This is to be an ongoing study over a period of time the duration of which is not yet determined. Our aim is to regularly post a new lesson by the first of each month. So please check regularly each month, if you wish to follow this course of study. If no new lesson appears at the beginning of a particular month, it indicates that we were unable to get it ready in time. In such a case, please check for it after the first of the following month. YOUR QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ARE WELCOMED and will be responded to as much as possible.

(Series One)

PATHWAY OF LIGHT STUDY COURSE

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Study 2, Chapter 20

“But the path of the just is as a shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.” (Prov. 4:18)

“You shall call His name Yahshua for He shall save His people from their sins.”
(Matthew 1:21)

In the last lesson we considered the matter of holiness. It is of utmost importance that we keep before us the fact that without holiness no man will see Yahweh.

We are made holy by the blood of the Lamb. We are thoroughly washed from all sin and stain, and made clean and holy the moment we come to Yahshua and receive Him as our sin bearer and deliverer from sin. Matthew 1:21 says, “You shall call His name Yahshua for He shall save His people from their sins.” When a person hears the gospel that the Messiah came and died for our sins, was buried and rose again the third day, believes it from the heart so that he or she accepts His sacrifice as payment for sin, and, therefore, turns away from sin to become His follower, all past sin is washed away and he or she starts on this “Highway of Holiness”. The way Yahshua established for us to do this – accept His substitutionary sacrifice and become His follower - is by our being immersed in His name for the remission (or, “sending away”) of sins.

Once this is done, as has been pointed out, it is just a matter of continuing on the same pathway of faith and surrender. It is the pathway of walking in the light of Yahweh in pursuit of becoming changed into Yahshua’s likeness by the Holy Spirit through the word of truth. In Psalm 119:11 we read, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” Yahweh’s word is the cleansing element, which works as the sword of the Spirit to separate between that which is truly spiritual and that which is natural or soulish. As we read in Hebrews 4:12, “For the word of Yahweh is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the

heart.” Yahshua said to His earlier disciples, “Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.” (John 15:3) Yahshua’s purpose is to “sanctify and cleanse [us] with the washing of water by the word”. (Eph 5:26)

Although, both holiness and righteousness are primarily matters of the heart, and are closely related, holiness speaks of a condition of being separated unto Yahweh with a cleansed heart, which results in the pursuit of outward conduct that lines up properly with such separation. Righteousness is more often thought of as a matter of having right acts, attitudes, and overall conduct. Yahweh is holy in that He is totally separate from all impurity and uncleanness. He is righteous in that He does everything right.

In the 6th chapter of Romans the apostle Paul talks about our immediate transition from being slaves of sin unto becoming slaves of righteousness when we “obeyed from the heart that form of teaching delivered unto” us. (Rom 6:17-18) When we “obeyed the gospel” (a term found in Rom 10:16, 2 Thess 1:8, and 1 Pet 4:17), that is to say, when we accepted Yahshua in His death, burial and resurrection – we “became free from sin”. And we, then, became “slaves of righteousness”.

We read, “I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.” This passage indicates that holiness is the ultimate goal, and righteousness, which is closely related, is the pathway that leads to this ultimate degree of holiness. The final goal for Yahweh’s people is that they become perfected in holiness. We read in 2 Cor. 7:1, “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of Yahweh.” Paul, in speaking of the apostolic ministry, said, “...we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Messiah Yahshua”

As Paul points out the end (result) of sin and uncleanness is death. He said, “For the wages of sin is death”. (Romans 6:23a) He does not say, “was Death”, as though it no longer is so for the believer, but “is death”. Then, he goes on to say, “but the gift of Yahweh is eternal life, through Yahshua Messiah our Lord.” (Rom 6:23b) Eternal life is through Yahshua Messiah, for He “is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:” (1 Cor 1:30)

Some would like this to mean that although the wages of sin is death, Yahweh merely now overlooks our sins and just directly gives us eternal life. But we read, “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Yahshua Messiah our Lord.” (Rom 5:21) Indeed, Yahshua did say He gives His sheep eternal life, but He also said they follow Him. The one must go with the other. His exact words were, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.” (John 10:27,28) The way we know that we are His sheep – His elect to whom He gives eternal life – is by the fact that we hear His voice and follow Him.

Thus we have to prove our calling and election, prove we are His sheep, by walking as children of light. Peter says, "...add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Master Yahshua Messiah." (2 Pet 1:5-8) Then, he says, "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." (Verses 9-10)

We can have great assurance of salvation in that we believe Yahweh will keep us securely in His hand if we are His true sheep. The evidence that we are His sheep begins with our coming to Messiah in faith, believing the gospel and repenting of our sins as we receive Him. He said, "No man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me draws him: and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44) He said, "All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37)

It is very important that we keep these things ever before us and that we keep a true balance in the matter of the relationship between our being required to earnestly pursue after perfection in holiness and the assurance that Yahweh gives that we will attain it if thus we earnestly pursue it. Some consider salvation as just a matter of Yahshua merely taking the place of the animal sacrifices while we are required to go about earning eternal life. Others think when the Bible says, "the gift of Yahweh is eternal life, through Yahshua Messiah our Master" we only have to say, "Yes, I accept your gift of eternal life", in such a way as to think we can then completely bypass the necessity for personal holiness or righteousness.

However, the truth is that salvation is the work of Yahweh from start to finish. It includes His having paid for our sins so that there is forgiveness of all past sins and provision for any future sins, so that we made holy by the blood of the Lamb. Without this we could never hope to be saved. But it also includes His giving us His Holy Spirit (as Messiah in us) to lead us on and change us into His perfect likeness. Indeed, it is His salvation. Our part is to work out the salvation He is working in us, by responding to the leading of the Holy Spirit who attempts to bring the truth of the word to our understanding so that it can be incorporated into our lives. It is such an important matter that we are told to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, which means with a real sense of the seriousness of doing so.

Just as it was Yahweh who worked in Egypt to deliver His people from Egyptian bondage, so it is He that delivers us from bondage to sin in the kingdom of darkness. Yet as they had to take the action to actually leave Egypt, so we have to take the action to leave the kingdom of darkness through accepting Yahshua and His salvation. And it was Yahweh who led them into the land of promise and promised victory over the enemy

there, but they had to fight the battle. So it is that we must believe He has given us the victory over sin, and, therefore, fight the battle against it with confidence of winning.

If we are to become that perfect, victorious people He wants us to be, we must not be like the children of Israel who fell in the wilderness, because of unbelief. Nor, can we be like those who, though they entered the promised land, due to lack of faith, did not conquer it entirely. We must in full assurance of faith press on to full victory over sin and those forces of darkness that seek to hinder our progress on this way of holiness. We must be so sold on the truth both of the reality of the unseen spiritual forces we battle against, and of the victory that Yahshua already accomplished over them on Calvary that with joyous confidence, and yet fear and trembling at the thought of ever doing otherwise, work out that glorious salvation the Captain of our Salvation, Yahshua the Messiah, is all the time working in us.

Yet if we know we are thus striving to follow His word by the leading and directing of the Holy Spirit, we can also have great confidence that we have eternal life. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of Yahweh, they are the sons of Yahweh." (Rom 8:14)

John says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of Yahweh; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of Yahweh." (1 John 5:13) How can we know? By checking that we have in our lives the things John wrote about as evidence of us being of Yahweh. This is what John meant by His statement. Again, it is not a matter of working to earn our salvation. We could never do that. It is a matter of proving that we have it, that we are His true sheep, the elect, the sons of Yahweh. But it is clear that we can "know that" we "have eternal life". We do not have to wonder and fear that we will not make it, provided we just keep pressing toward that goal of being perfected in His image and likeness.

Yahshua said very plainly, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6) So the big question is, "Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness?" If you do it is because Yahweh has drawn you that way. And if you do, you will be filled. There is no doubt about it according to Yahshua's own word.

Consider again some of the many verses that give us confidence that we have eternal life awaiting us who are thus drawn of Yahweh unto this "Highway of Holiness". First, we read, again, 1 John 1:7: "If we are walking in the light [the light of the gospel and, thus, in 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh in the face of Yahshua the Messiah'] as He is in the light, we have joint partnership with one another, and the blood of Yahshua Messiah His Son is [i.e. 'keeps on'] cleansing us from all sin." The blood shed once for all has, in this sense, "perfected forever those who are sanctified". We are "accepted in the Beloved). (Eph 1:6)

Next, we read in Hebrews 7:25, “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come [Greek “are coming”] unto Yahweh by him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them.” Then, there is Philippians 1:6: “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Yahshua Messiah.” Paul said, “For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” (2 Tim 1:12b) And finally in Jude 24,25 we read: “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise Elohim our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.”

Thus this way – this “Highway of Holiness” – is so plain and simple that “the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.” It is merely the way of true faith. “Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.” (Hab 2:4) You believe the gospel, which tells you that sin is so wrong that Yahweh had to give His only begotten Son (His Eternal Life made flesh) in order to pardon it. Therefore, you repent of sin (i.e. turn in your heart and mind from it) and accept Yahweh’s forgiveness and cleansing from sin. Then, you just continue in the same pathway throughout life seeking by the gift of the Holy Spirit (the living Messiah in you) to abstain from sin and become perfected in holiness even as He accepts you as a “holy one” through the blood that keeps cleansing you while you continue on this “new and living way”.

As Paul puts it in 2 Cor. 3:18, “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Yahweh, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Yahweh.” We don’t see perfectly yet, but are “beholding as in a glass the glory of Yahweh”. As by the Spirit we continue to come to see or know Him more, we become more like Him. This process continues until the day when all mists have rolled away and we “shall see face to face” and come to “know even as we are known”. Then we shall become fully like Him. We shall come into the fullness of Yahweh’s glory – His splendor and moral excellency. If this moral perfection is our goal, we will indeed be pressing toward it even while we are waiting for the completion of our salvation from sin.

This is what John is saying in 1 John 3:1-3 when he writes, “See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of Yahweh; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of Yahweh, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. But we know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”