**Parashah Behar / Bechukotai**

**פרשה בהר - בחקתי**

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32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d

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**Can you lose your salvation?**

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| **השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week’s Reading** |
| **תורה:****הפטרה:****הברית:****החדשה:** | Leviticus 25:1-27:34, Jeremiah 16:19-17:14, 32:6-32:27Luke 4:16-21, Matthew 21:33-46, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 |

Reading through the Torah portion for this week, I always had difficulty on how to properly understand the command for monetary value that is placed upon people, land, animals, etc. After praying about these scriptures I feel there are a couple of important points to be made regarding the valuation and ransom of something that had been consecrated to the Lord. In addition to this, *Vayikra / Leviticus 27:28-29* is especially significant. Verse *27:29* says that no man who has been set apart may be ransomed, that he shall surely be put to death. In Hebrew it says “mot yumat” meaning “to die the death.” Why do the Scriptures say that a man may not be ransomed and that he shall surely be put to death? Earlier on in the scriptures (see *Vayikra / Leviticus 27:1-9*) a value is placed upon a man’s vow at fifty shekels of silver, however, here in *27:29* if a man sets himself apart for the Lord he may not be ransomed.

**Vayikra / Leviticus 27:25-29**

27:25 'Every valuation of yours, moreover, shall be after the shekel of the sanctuary. The shekel shall be twenty gerahs. 27:26 'However, a firstborn among animals, which as a firstborn belongs to the Lord, no man may consecrate it; whether ox or sheep, it is the Lord's. 27:27 'But if it is among the unclean animals, then he shall redeem it according to your valuation and add to it one-fifth of it; and if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to your valuation. 27:28 'Nevertheless, anything which a man sets apart to the Lord out of all that he has, of man or animal or of the fields of his own property, shall not be sold or redeemed. Anything devoted to destruction is most holy to the Lord. 27:29 'No one who may have been set apart among men shall be ransomed; he shall surely be put to death. (NASB)

**27:25-29 ויקרא**



The difficulty in understanding these scriptures is a result of the absence of a Beit HaMikdash (Temple) and a system of korbanot (sacrifices). Today because there is no longer a korban system or a Beit HaMikdash for them to be offered in, many believers think that the “sacrificial system” has been done away with. However, what is overlooked is that Yeshua is now our “once and for all korban (sacrifice).” He is now in Heaven and sitting at the right hand of the Father, if we sin, confess, and call upon His name, then Yeshua becomes the appropriate korban for the sin we have committed. Essentially the korban system is still in operation as it had been in the second temple period, confession followed by repentance and then the offering of the korban. The offering of the korbanot was not optional during the Mishkhan (Tabernacle) and Beit HaMikdash (Temple) periods, so too today confession and repentance, with the incorporation of Yeshua the Messiah as our once and for all Korban, He is not optional either for salvation. Believers must live a life of confession and repentance and when we do sin (*Ecclesiastes 7:20*, *Romans 3:23*) we must bring an acceptable korban to the Lord and that is Yeshua the Messiah, His shed blood. It is through the blood we ask G-d for the forgiveness of our sins.

Now understanding that the korban system is still in operation today even in the absence of a Beit HaMikdash, it is still difficult to understand how the scripture portion for this week may apply to us. While reading through the parsha and reading *Vayikra / Leviticus 27:29* that states that *“… no one who has been set apart among men shall be ransomed, he shall surely be put to death”* is certainly a very difficult Scripture verse for us, however, something from the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) comes to mind from the book of *Hebrews* chapters *5* and *6*. Below I have quoted the verses from the New American Standard Bible (NASB).

***Ivrit / Hebrews 5:11-6:8***

*5:11 Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. 5:12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 5:13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. 5:14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. 6:1 Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 6:2 of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. 6:3 And this we will do, if God permits.* *6:4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 6:5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6:6 and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. 6:7 For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; 6:8 but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned. (NASB)*

 A search on the internet of these verses brings up an abundance of web pages discussing the topic of salvation. The majority of the internet deals with “eternal security” which means that “once one is saved he/she is always saved.” The idea behind this doctrine is that you or I cannot lose our salvation. The English definition of “lose” is to be deprived of or cease to have or retain something. The problem with this doctrine is that failing to keep possession of something is much different than making a conscious decision to walk away from something. The “eternal security” people suggest that believers who are born new (*John 3:3*) it is impossible to reject Yeshua as Messiah, Savior, and Lord of their lives. The “eternal security” teaching therefore suggests that once one is saved by faith in Yeshua and His shed blood then, the believer suddenly becomes incapable of denying G-d and turning from the faith. I have a problem with the eternal security doctrine because it suggests that we no longer have the ability to make important spiritual decisions once we have placed our faith in the Messiah. In addition to that, I believe that it is possible to at one point in one’s life to be saved in the blood of Yeshua, and then as a result of becoming intertwined with this world, becoming deceived; it is possible to turn and completely walk away from Yeshua and salvation. I have personally witnessed a number of friends (former friends now) who began on fire for the Lord, believing that Yeshua is the Son of G-d and the Messiah, to then turn around and state that He was not the Son of G-d and not the Messiah, just a man who taught good things.

I believe the Scriptures warn us of the possibility of deception that can lead to one turning from salvation in Yeshua the Messiah. Many references and warnings to “be not deceived” found in the Scriptures, even Yeshua’s words suggest that deception is possible. If salvation is “eternally secure” why are there be so many warnings? Let’s have a look at some of these warnings.

***Matthew 24:3-4***

*24:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? 24:4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. (KJV)*

Yeshua begins with a sobering warning saying “do not allow yourself to be deceived.” Religious deception is very prevalent today. Though many of you know or are familiar with Yeshua’s words here, are you aware of the warning signs that Yeshua gave when confronted with them?

***Matthew 24:5***

*24:5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. (KJV)*

***Matthew 24:11***

*24:11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. (KJV)*

***Matthew 24:23-25***

*24:23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 24:25 Behold, I have told you before.*

Note also that Yeshua said “many will come and will deceive many” and that “many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.” The deception described here suggests that this deception is massive and on a wide scale across the world. These verses I have shown you, I recommend looking them up and study all of these scriptures in your Bible. The words of Yeshua and the Shelachim (apostles) warned of a great religious movement that would lead most of the world astray. If “eternal security” is true then these warnings would be unnecessary because a true believer is incapable of turning away from faith in the Messiah. Rav Shaul (Paul) wrote that deceivers will make themselves look like apostles of the Messiah.

***2 Corinthians 11:13***

*11:13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. (KJV)*

***2 Corinthians 11:14-15***

*11:14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 11:15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. (KJV)*

***2 Corinthians 11:3-4***

*11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 11:4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him. (KJV)*

***Galatians 1:6-7***

*1:6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 1:7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. (KJV)*

Shaul (Paul) said “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to another gospel.” Is this not also possible for us to do today? Yeshua predicted that some would take His name and claim to represent Him and that those same people would be deceivers. Even in Paul’s day this movement was well under way according to the book of Galatians.

This is a good point to define a copuple words “falling away” and “backsliding.” Backsliding is a term used within Christianity to describe a process by which an individual who has converted to Christianity reverts to pre-conversion habits and practices. Within churches which teach Arminianism, backsliding is a state in which any free willed being can adopt, which is a doctrine rejected by Calvinists. Historically backsliding was a trait of biblical Israel which would turn from the LORD to follow idols. When I use the word “backsliding” I am not referring to that of someone turning and worshiping another religion or an idol. I am referring to when one falls into sin out of habit or some other reason but never specifically rejects Yeshua or his/her own salvation. I believe that if we remain in Yeshua the Messiah, our salvation is “without a doubt” certain but if we walk away from him in deception salvation may be lost. This is the meaning of the words “falling away” and how we find its usage here in the book of *Hebrews* in chapter *6*. *Ivrit / Hebrews 6:6* says that *“6:6 and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.”* To “fall away” means to turn from salvation, from the fundamental truths concerning Yeshua, read the context (see *Ivrit / Hebrews 6:1-3*). Falling away from faith in Yeshua leads to the loosing of one’s salvation. Note that in *6:4-5,* the tasting of the truth is not enough to keep them from falling away from it. Rejecting Yeshua, and then turning around and wanting to receive Yeshua again is treating Him contemptuously. Those who sin against Yeshua in this manner have no hope of restoration or forgiveness because they reject Him with full knowledge and conscious experience. The point being made is that it would be impossible “if a believer falls away” to then be renewed again to salvation.

The question on “eternal security” depends upon whether you believe that a “true believer” is capable of rejecting Yeshua and thereby losing their salvation? The reading for this week, specifically *Vayikra / Leviticus 27:28-29* I believe provides some insight into these verses. Verse *27:29* says that no man who has been set apart may be ransomed, that he shall surely be put to death. When one places his/her faith in Yeshua and His shed blood, one is leaving the ways of the world and entering into a new life. Such a person (you and I) is essentially separating themselves from the world, setting apart your body and your spirit for the Lord. If you have separated (set apart / consecrated) yourself for the Lord, you may not be ransomed back. The only option is death.

The scriptures are clear that salvation is secure as long as we remain and persevere in our faith in Yeshua the Messiah (see John 10:27-29; Romans 8:35, 38-39; Philippians 1:6; and 1 Peter 1:4-5). But if you have set yourself apart (consecrated) to the Lord by faith in the Messiah Yeshua, is it possible to separate yourself from the Lord and then renew yourself to Him again? Not according to the Scriptures. So, can you lose your salvation? If you remain in Yeshua the Messiah, keep the faith, and persevere in confession, repentance, and faith in Him (the shed blood) until the end you the Scriptures say G-d will forgive you and salvation is yours. The real question is one of “losing” or “walking away from” salvation? The possibility of deception is very real; take every safeguard against falling into deception and falling away from faith in Yeshua, because your eternal spirit is at stake.

**Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!**

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**הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:**

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,

“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever