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remains of the synagogue at Capernaum

the In His Image series
the Father's Will

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a citizen of the Commonwealth (Ephesians 2:19)

Yeshua answered, "I am the bread which is LIFE! Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever trusts in me will never be thirsty. **I told you that you have seen but still do not trust.** Everyone the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will certainly not turn away. For I have come out of heaven to do not my own will but the will of the One who sent me. **And this is the will of the One who sent me:** that I should not lose any of those he has given me but should raise them up on the Last Day. Yes, **this is the will of My Father:** that all who see the Son and trust in him should have eternal life, and that I should raise them up on the Last Day." John 6:35-40

"No one can come to Me unless the Father, the One who sent Me, draws him. And I will raise him up on the Last Day. It is written in the Prophets, 'They will all be taught by Elohim'. **Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from Him comes to Me.** Not that anyone has seen the Father except The One who is from Elohim, He has seen the Father. Yes, indeed! I tell you, whoever trusts **HAS** eternal life. **I am the bread which is LIFE!** Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and they died, but the bread that comes out of heaven is such that a person may eat it and not die. I am the living bread that has come out of heaven; if anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is **My flesh.**" John 6:44-51

"Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood lives in Me, and I live in him. Just as the living Father sent Me, and I live through the Father, so also whoever feeds on Me will live through Me. So this is the bread that has come out of heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever! ...It is the Spirit who gives LIFE, the flesh is no help. **The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and LIFE.**" John 6:56-63

To walk among the quiet solitude of these ancient stones in what is left of the synagogue at Capernaum in Israel, it is hard not to reflect on Yeshua's words spoken in this very place that caused many of His disciples to "walk with Him no more" (**John 6:60-66** - **click on highlighted words to view content**). He had said words similar to these many times earlier in attempting to bring an understanding of the Kingdom to them. What was it about **these** words that were so different to create such a defining response in these who followed Him? What did He mean to "eat of His flesh and drink of His blood" - what did He **really** mean? Are these just "spiritualized" phrasings that have no basis in the real world? Or, perhaps, they were given as a literal explanation of what has to occur within someone in order to embrace His Life? Yeshua said if we fail to do these two things, we have **NO LIFE** in us - He went further to say we have no **ETERNAL LIFE** in us. Hum-m-m - that sure puts a kink into a lot of those religious pajamas many want to wiggle up into. These words were spoken **before** the Last Supper, so maybe there is more to eating His flesh and drinking His Blood than a ritual that has come to be known as **communion** - or a formulaic utterance we think guarantees our right of entry into an afterlife. Maybe there was something tangible in what He was saying that caused many of those who had been following Him for some time to suddenly realize the content of their meaning, enough for them to withdraw and want to not have anything to do with Him anymore - **to not believe**. Could that happen to any of us today? "Oh, No! Not **ME**" you might say but, yet, scripture says many did - so many in fact, He asked the twelve if they, too, would leave. At this point, they had been with Him for some time, had seen Him for Who He said He was - so, just what was it that He was asking them to believe?

Words mean things and, because there is so much going on in this entire chapter of **John 6** with much of it so extraordinarily rich in its depth of meaning to simply look at the surface value of what has been traditionally accepted about these words could cause one to miss what Yeshua is attempting to convey - possibly affecting our walk with Him today (**Mark 7:13**). The first step in correctly understanding what these words mean is to remember that all the words of the Book were written by Hebrew authors from a Hebraic mindset influenced by a Hebraic culture out of a Hebraic perspective that was primarily directed to other Hebrews who understood the nuances of the Hebrew language. At the time these words were written, there were no "Christians" around. History reveals the foundation for the religion Christianity would not begin its evolution into being for at least another 250+ years. Viewing these words through the lens of the Hebraic perspective they were written from is also to elevate them above the argument of which language the *brit chadashah* (Hebrew for NT) was actually written in. In reality, the original language is unknown because there are no original manuscripts that have survived. While the texts were written in the first century, all we have available to us today are fragments of copies of the originals that can only be traced back no earlier than the second century after the Resurrection. Consequently, every translation in existence today is a copy of a copy and they are all the work of men - and, as with all works of men, they are all flawed in some manner. An excellent in-depth examination of this reality can be found in Tim Hegg's article, **What English Translation of the Apostolic Scriptures Should I Use?**

"I told you that you have seen but still do not believe (trust)." John 6:36
"For in union with the Messiah, you are all children of YaHoVeH through this trusting faithfulness because as many of you as were immersed into the Messiah have clothed yourselves with (put on) the Messiah..." Galatians 3:26-27

The first time the English word "believe" appears in scripture is in **Genesis 15:6** in which it says that Abraham "believed" and it was accounted to him as righteousness. It is the Hebrew word, '**aman**, which means "*to trust, support, confirm, be faithful to, uphold, to nourish*". How did Abraham exhibit his trust in YaHoVeH's words? Just as soon as YaHoVeH gave His instructions as to what was to be the sign of His covenant - Abraham DID IT that day (**Genesis 17:23**, see **One Covenant - Fulfillment**). Abraham put action to conviction and the Hebrew apostle *Sha'ul* (Paul) says that those who do the same, who choose to "clothe" themselves in the Life of the Messiah become One with Him (**John 17:20-23**). It is '**aman** that is at the root of **emunah**, the Hebrew word for "faithfulness" meaning "*firmness, fidelity, steadfastness, and steadiness*". The Greek word translated as "fidelity" in **Titus 2:10** is **pistis** which means "*the character of one which can be relied on, faithfulness*" and is translated as the English "faith" 239 times. For the Hebrew authors of the Messianic Writings, faith and faithfulness were inseparable - genuine faith is recognized by faithfulness and faithfulness is the fruit of genuine faith. From their Hebrew perspective, believing is an actionable verb (not a possessive noun) describing concrete actions - not verbal epitaphs, abstract concepts or cognitive processes. Biblically, belief or faith is about what you DO by supporting YaHoVeH's purpose of order in our choices within circumstance that confirm His Truth by how our life is lived. Being faithful to His instructions and upholding His statutes and Words provides nourishment not only to us but also to those within our immediate proximity through His Nature found in the exhibition of those Words - not what someone THINKS about Him.

So, when scripture speaks of Gentiles "coming to faith", it is a conversion to the faith of Israel - as evidenced in the evangelistic speech of the apostle *Sha'ul* to the Gentiles assembled at the Areopagus in Athens (**Acts 17:22-34**). *Sha'ul* met them on their own ground, opening his speech by quoting two poets: the Cretan Epimenides (600 BCE), that "*in him we live and move and have our being,*" and then the opening lines of the *Phaenomena* by Aratus (315-240 BCE), a Greek poet and Stoic of Cilicia, that "*we are his children.*" Although *Sha'ul* had mentioned Yeshua earlier in a discussion among other Hebrews in the synagogue, not once in his appeal to this crowd was Yeshua addressed by name as **the means of salvation**. To these Gentiles, *Sha'ul* spoke only of the Hebrew *Elohim* (a word unique only to the Hebrew language beginning with **Genesis 1:1**, see **Authority**), encouraging them to abandon their ways and to give themselves to YaHoVeH alone. Once we observe that the words of John 6 are not directed to Gentiles but toward other Hebrews (**John 6:41, 52, and 59**), only then can we appreciate that these words do not constitute an appeal for conversion to the faith of Israel. There is no conversion necessary for Hebrews because they already have faith in the **Savior** to the world - YaHoVeH. There is no indication in any of Yeshua's words that He was attempting to structure



ruins of the Areopagus, near the Athens Acropolis

another religion calling for them to believe in something other than what they already knew. What these Hebrews were called upon to believe is that the Hebrew Rabbi Yeshua was the promised Hebrew Messiah, **the Kinsman Redeemer sent from the Hebrew Elohim of Israel (John 6:25-30)**. How we read these words colors our perception of their meaning.

Understanding this Hebraic perspective, therefore, allows us to see that all of scripture only acknowledges two categories of people - Hebrews and "others". The others are Gentiles - those comprising other nations of the world having no ancestral ties to the family of Israel and that worship gods other than the One True Holy One of *Israel*, YaHoVeH. To be **holy** simply means to be visibly set apart from the rest of the world by aligning our behavior to **His Words**. Although the term "Gentile believer" has gained wide acceptance, in reality it is an oxymoronic phrase because it contains two conflicting words that oppose one another - one cannot worship gods from another nation and, at the same time, be included in the family that worships only YaHoVeH (see **Defining Enemies**). To join oneself to the Holy One of Israel means to renounce (by abandonment of practice) any association with other gods (**Acts 15:28-29**, see **Legalism**). What are those other gods? Most have been taught to equate idolatry with physical carvings representing something found in creation as "other gods" (as *Sha'ul* found in Athens); but, remembering what was covered in a **previous article** that, from the Hebrew perspective, death is anything that separates us from the Source of Life, who is YaHoVeH. We find the Hebrew *Sha'ul* addressing precisely what other gods are in **Colossians 3:5-10**. **1Samuel 15:23** also tells us that presumption is the same as idolatry. When we presume His image to be something other than what His Words tell us, we are engaging in **idolatry**. The image of YaHoVeH is not something I have simply because I am *homo sapien*. The definition of **image** is the "likeness of any one that is seen". From the Hebraic perspective, to become human is to be found in the original image, the **resemblance** of the one Who created that image (**Genesis 1:26-27**). *Sha'ul* says that image is found in "putting away" the old ways and by "putting on" the image of the Creator, YaHoVeH, through the knowledge of His instructions - where confidence is also found for the Day of Judgment (**Colossians 3:12-14**). The Hebrew word for idolatry is **teraphiym**, which is also translated "image" and known to be domestic gods considered guardians and givers of comfortable life. We choose the image we display by what behavior we engage in. What we worship is what we serve and what we serve is what we give ourselves to - what we choose to do (**Matthew 4:10, Deuteronomy 11:16**). We are in YaHoVeH's image when He is represented in our behavior, in our actions. Thus, was Yesha saying to these Hebrews that the image of His Father could be seen in His displayed behavior. *Sha'ul* declares Yeshua to be the perfect example of how that image is expressed and Yeshua said He only expressed the will of His Father (**Colossians 1:15, John 6:38**). That example is expressed in Yeshua's actions which He said His disciples would emulate in **John 13:34-35** and by those observable actions, the world would know He is who He said He is. "Just as" means in like manner, in similar fashion - as the example He gave in thought, word and deed. Emulating Yeshua's actions produces the same image of the Father in us. If we act according to YaHoVeH's Words, YaHoVeH's image is produced in us "just as" it is produced in Yeshua (**John 20:19-21**).

***"Yeshua is the image of the invisible YaHoVeH - the firstborn of all creation, "
Colossians 1:15, Psalm 89:27, Exodus 4:22 Romans 8:29.***

Yeshua reinforces His firstborn status as the Messiah to these Hebrews in **John 6:27-29** when He says it is on Him that the Father of the Hebrew family of Israel has "set His Seal" and to "do the work" of His Father is to "believe the one whom the Father has sent" occupies that capacity. That these Hebrews understood the designation Yeshua was speaking to (**firstborn status**) is reflected in their next question - "OK, then, if you are who you claim to be - what sign do you give us to verify that claim?" Notice that this request of a sign came right after the feeding of the five thousand they had just been involved in - which is why they mentioned the manna. They were all familiar with supernatural bread as it was in their familial history (**Exodus 16:4, 2Kings 4:42-44**), so the "sign" they were looking for had nothing to do with another supernatural occurrence coming at the hand of another prophet. They were asking for a particular reinforcing sign to Yeshua's claim of being the Messiah, the firstborn of YaHoVeH, sent to deliver His Hebrew family from bondage. Although their interpretation of bondage was to be delivered from the physical occupation of Rome at the time instead of the bondage of separation from being **echad** (Hebrew for "one") with the Spirit of the Father. All of these Hebrews understood what Yeshua was claiming to be because they each lived with someone who occupied that firstborn status in their immediate family. Western culture has all but obliterated the purpose of family created by YaHoVeH and the purpose of the firstborn status contained within the family. Yeshua's response to their request for a sign of redemption other than manna was a direct reference to **Deuteronomy 8:3** - the words He was speaking were Life because they were not His will but the will of His Father, YaHoVeH. The will of YaHoVeH is expressly stated in Yeshua's words from John 6 above, "This is the will of My Father: that all who see the Son AND trust in Him should have eternal life, and that I should raise them up on the Last Day." It is not enough to simply "see" the Son in His role as **the Kinsman Redeemer** to the house of Israel, but also to "trust" that He will do what He says - to raise up those who have actionably given their lives to Him on the Last Day, the Day of YaHoVeH.

The portrayal Christianity makes of "eternal life" as a possession (*something an individual can claim as his own by simply making a verbal acknowledgement of "belief in Jesus" as the guarantor of their place in a romanticized*

"heaven" of idyllic bliss) can be traced to the Greek and Gnostic philosophies prevalent in the world that so quickly engulfed the early emerging **Church** of the second century. This theological embrace of Greek dualism has resulted in a tragic, perverted view of "faith" as an inward, mental exercise divorced from the outward expression of "faithfulness". This theology has also led to equating "eternal life" with an ethereal place called "heaven" that one possesses - a ticket to an afterlife. However, scripturally speaking, **the Kingdom of Heaven** is not a "place" but an elevated **state of being** the individual "puts on" **TO BECOME ETERNAL IN THIS LIFETIME**. Yeshua says in **John 6:54** that the one who eats of His flesh and drinks of His blood **HAS** eternal life (not "will have") - now, in this present life. The actual Greek word translated "eternal" is **aiōnios** which means "without beginning and without end" - this is the same definition given to YaHoVeH in **Isaiah 41:4**, and **Isaiah 44:6**. So, from this Hebrew perspective, what do these words from the Hebrew Yeshua reveal about the nature of eternal life? If heaven is not a place but an **elevated** state of being produced through manifesting the image of Spirit, then His statement of **down-stepping OUT of heaven** in verse 51 begins to make sense as a movement **OUT** of one state of being of Spirit into another of flesh - bringing the eternality of Spirit to the flesh by the keeping of the Will of **the Eternal One** revealed in His Words, thus, restoring the *echad* of Spirit to flesh by making them one and preserving that *echad* by remaining faithful to the Words of LIFE. Of the 49 times **emunah** appears in scripture, 18 times it is translated "faithfulness" but 13 times it is translated "truth". This is what Yeshua means when He says He was sent to "...bear witness to the Truth" (**John 18:37**). His manner of Life, His faithfulness to the Words of His Father manifested in His Life was what bore witness to the Nature of His Father (translated "truth" in **Deuteronomy 32:4**). Unless we partake of His flesh **just as**, in like fashion, in the same manner as Yeshua did of His Father and drink



of His **blood** by witnessing Him as the Messiah sent from YaHoVeH through the actions of our living - we have no **LIFE** in us and will not be among those raised into Spirit at the last day. There is no gate for Gentiles in the New Jerusalem described in **Revelation 21:9-14** - in fact, there is a list of those who will be **excluded** from entering this Kingdom in **Revelation 21:7-8**. When, in **John 6:40**, Yeshua says, "...*this is the will of my Father that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day*", He is not meaning that eternal life is reserved for the last day, the Day of YaHoVeH. He is speaking of those who are faithful to the Words of YaHoVeH and living in perpetuity with Spirit **now** (**verse 54**). When He says in verses **44-45**, "No one can come to me unless the Father who

sent me draws him...Everyone who has **heard and learned** from the Father comes to me...", He is speaking of the express will and Nature of His Father found in the only words of instructions available - the Torah (**John 8:28**, see **Torah or the Law?** for a broader explanation). These are the ones who will not die but will be raised into Spirit at the Day of YaHoVeH because they have fashioned their spirit into the Spirit of perpetuity now, in this lifetime (**John 3:19-21**).

*"Has the potter no right to make from a given lump of clay this pot for honorable use and that one for dishonorable? Now what if YaHoVeH, even though He was quite willing to demonstrate His wrath and make known His Power, patiently put up with people who deserved punishment and were ripe for destruction? What if He did this in order to make known the riches of His glory to those who are the objects of his mercy, **whom He prepared in advance for glory** - that is, to us, whom He called not only from among the Hebrews but also from among the Gentiles?" Romans 9:21-24*

the IN HIS IMAGE series

Part One: the Present Presence

Part Two: The Father's Will

Part three: In Perpetuity

a discussion of the Father's Will



???Questions???

Please feel free to email me at harold@hethathasaneer.com. While not claiming to have all the answers, it would be an honor to partake with you of what Spirit is uncovering.

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