

Where the Gospel Came From, Part 2

The Gospel Spoken in Ur

Gen 12:1-3 — Abraham was called to leave everything behind and go to a land our Father would show him, and he obeyed. He left Ur and went to another place. He didn't stay in the same old place, doing the same old thing. He went to another place.

The Gospel Spoken in Babylon

Ezra 1:1-5, 2:64-65 — The Jewish people were in Babylon, and they lived there for 70 years on their discipline. Then the time came when they were to return, and less than 5% returned. What happened to the rest of them? They didn't come because they were secure in their nice, comfortable life in Babylon. But those who were stirred in their hearts returned to Jerusalem. They had a hard time getting there and they had a hard time in everything they had to do there. Finally, they rebuilt the Temple and the wall, establishing a nation again in Jerusalem.

Only those 5% were saved — those who left Babylon. The Jews who remained in Babylon were not saved. They loved the world; they didn't love our Father, and didn't obey Him.

The Gospel Spoken at Mount Sinai

Ex 32:7-8,25 — The Israelites were *going wild* it says. They were *unrestrained*; they were doing what they pleased. They weren't obeying Yahweh. Aharon's authority was weak since he allowed them to do what they pleased. So our Father told Moses, and Moses went and said, "*All who want to follow our Father, come across this line, come over to this side*" (Ex 32:26). Only the tribe of Levi came across.

So the Levites were ordained to be the priesthood. The rest of the nation wouldn't be priests, and though our Father had wanted *all* of them to be a *royal priesthood* (Ex 19:5-6), only one tribe crossed the line to be the priests. So they had to intercede for the

other tribes. But then there were people in the tribe of Levi who didn't cross the line. Our Father told Moses to tell the Levites to go back and deal with the people who would not come across with them.

You know what happened, of course. Only the Levites who came across were saved. The rest of them had to die. They had to execute them for not coming across — their own brothers, and sisters, and mothers and fathers. It says it very clearly in the Word:

Moses said to them, "Thus says the Sovereign God of Israel, 'Put every man his sword on his side, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, every man his companion, every man his neighbor.' " (Ex 32:27)

If you had been there, you would have had to take up the sword and slay your relatives, your neighbors, and your friends, your peer group that was pressuring you to compromise — anyone who would have held you back. Our Master said the same thing. He got it from Abraham, and He got it from the Jews who were leaving Babylon, and He got it from that story about the Levites. "I didn't come to bring peace, but a sword..." (Mt 10:34-39). He came to divide you from your own family, whoever will not come with you. They have to be cut off — spiritually cut off — as if they didn't even exist, if they're trying to hold you back from becoming a disciple.

That is the gospel, and whoever doesn't obey *that* gospel is not saved, because that is the only gospel that saves us. The gospel means *good news*, and only those who *obey* the good news are saved. It's not just saying, "*I believe*," but you have to obey, and the Holy Spirit has to come upon you to obey. Yes, we have to have grace, and yes, we have to have faith. Faith is the persuasion of the Holy Spirit to obey our Master's words.

So that is who we are. We want everyone to come across the line, to come over to be in the royal priesthood He is forming. Our Father wants a *royal priesthood*, not just a clergy-laity system. He hates that.

"Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, you shall be My treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall

be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel. (Ex 19:5-6)

The Same Gospel, Then and Now

We have to see where the gospel came from, its foundation, where our Master got it. You can go ahead and read all the hard sayings (Jn 6:60), but only those who *obey* at the expense of their independent life, family, and possessions *have* eternal life. In the Vine House days, so many had to leave their family, even at age eighteen. One disciple’s parents wanted to put her in college. Her father was a professor in college, but she wouldn’t go. She came to the Vine House. She came to the “University of Yahshua,” and that’s a greater university. We all gain a greater education here; we learn so much in the University of Yahshua. We’re not “Educated Fools.”

We’re learning, and we’re disciples, following our Master Yahshua. He has given us eternal life, and that is why we can love one another and be one, as the Father and Son are one. If we’re not one like the Father and Son, we’re just Christians. If we don’t love one another as He loved, we’re not saved. We can’t love if we don’t have the Holy Spirit. Only if you have the Holy Spirit can you love as our Master loved. We have the same Spirit He has, so we can obey our Father as He did. That is what salvation is. If it is anything less, then it is just a hoax.

The True Witness of the Truth

New divisions and sects have got to come to an end. This cannot be any longer among God’s people. There can be no denominations among us. If we’re going to be one as the Father and son are one, we have to be one in essence. They are one in essence. We have to love one another as He loved us.

We have to do as our Master Yahshua said, “You cannot be My disciple [i.e., you cannot have eternal life] unless you give up everything” (Lk 14:33). You have to *forsake everything* — even your parents, your job, your money — *everything*. You’ve got to start

anew. What if you hold onto anything? Then you're *not* His disciple, and only His disciples have eternal life. If you want to be a disciple, you have to follow our Master as He says. You have to keep His commandments (Jn 14:15,21). Then He reveals Himself to us, which gives us true revelation.

Mt 16:15-18 — The gates of Hades shall not prevail against the church as long as we have that revelation. “Who do you say that I am?” The first church had that revelation, but they lost it. Only now can it be regained, at the time of the restoration of all things (Mk 9:12). It was our Master Yahshua who said that it will happen — in the very end of days (Dan 12:4,9,10).

The church, as it was in the beginning, will be restored when “all who believe live together *again*, and share all things in common” (Acts 2:43-45), and are one as the Father and the Son are one (Jn 17:22; Acts 4:32), as that is the only way *all who believe* actually live. Now, we all know what John 3:16 says, don't we?

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life (Jn 3:16).

It's the most famous verse in the whole world. I've known it since I was two years old, but no one lived together in my church. Yet in the first century, “all who believed [*as Jn 3:16*] lived together.” They loved one another. They were a community; they shared all things. They laid *everything* down at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed as anyone had need. Do you know what that does? It puts an end to selfishness. The wages of sin/selfishness is death (Rom 6:23). Sin is selfishness; selfishness is sin.

Our Father does away with selfishness. I don't have to think about going and getting “my” clothes, or “my” anything. It is gotten for us! Someone goes and gets it at the thrift store. We don't go around shopping for ourselves in *Saks Fifth Avenue*.¹ We just receive and are thankful for second-hand clothes.

¹ An expensive New York clothing store.

Mt 6:31-32 is how the nations live. They are concerned about clothes, food, shelter. But what do we do? “Seek first the kingdom and His righteousness” (Mt 6:33), and all the necessities the Gentiles seek after are added to us. We don’t even have to be thinking about it. We’re not consumed with the cares and worries of life as everyone else has to be. Everything we do is for one another. While someone is shopping, someone else is cooking, someone else is washing clothes, and we’re all doing what we are called to do. That is synergy.

Have you ever heard of *synergy*? That is all the members of the Body working together. Look at my fingers move. My head told them to do that. It’s synergy, every part working together — my muscles and ligaments in my arm, hand, and fingers — all for one goal. That is synergy. That is how the human body works, and that is just like the Body of Messiah, which is what we are baptized into. A body functions synergistically.

I was a Christian all my life, baptized 17 times. I went to see Billy Graham in 1954 when he was at Warner Park, and I went down to the altar call, for I wanted to be saved. They said, “Do you believe in Jesus?” and I said, “Well, of course I do.” Then they said, “Then you’re already saved. Go on your way.” And away I went, smoking my “Lucky Strikes.” But there came a time when I cried out, “How come I don’t *know* I’m saved?” and I got down on my face. That was when our Father spoke to me. Then I said, “All I want to do is love. That’s all.”

When God’s love enters your heart, that is all you want to do. If love never enters your heart, you’re not going to love one another. You’re going to complain, you’re going to be divided, you’re going to think of yourself, you’re going to be selfish, and you’re going to come against authority.

If the Holy Spirit dwells in our heart, then we’re one. It means we love one another and lay down our lives for one another. That’s what love is. If we love one another, *we know* we’ve passed out of death into life, because the Spirit confirms it within us (1 Jn 3:14,16,18-21,24).

Only those who have received the Holy Spirit can lay their life down. Our Master laid his life down. He went into death on our behalf; He *became* our sin. He became *my* sin, *my* selfishness — everything I've done — and He went into death for it, for three days and three nights after He died. He did this on our behalf (2 Cor 5:14-15), so what ought we to do?

Death, Where is Your Sting?

When did our Master Yahshua learn that He was going to have to die for our sins? Probably when He was very young. He read Isaiah 53, or it was read to Him. He grew up *knowing* the day would come when He would set His face like flint to go to the cross and die, and go into death on our behalf. And that day came, and He was baptized by John the Baptist. The Holy Spirit came upon Him like a dove, and He set His face like flint. The preparation was over and the task had begun. He lived three more years and He didn't turn back. He knew what He was going to suffer, and it was not just death on the cross. What He experienced on the cross was just "momentary affliction" compared to the agony of death. Yes, He suffered on the cross, and they did everything to Him they could, but it was in death where His *soul* became an offering for sin (Isa 53:10). That is the death we can't imagine, except that it is *torment* (Lk 16:28; Acts 2:24).

Are you glad to be saved from death? That is why we worship Him. If you don't know you've been delivered from death, you're not going to worship Him. Our life is just going to be a "torture chamber" for you. Nobody can live in community and lay down their lives and maintain their unity unless they have truly received the Holy Spirit.

Abraham ben Kharash — I am so thankful that when Yônêq asked our Father, "Why don't I know that I'm saved?" our Father saved Him. But I'm even more thankful that I don't have to ask the same question and wonder why I was born, because of Yônêq, and because of Yonah, Hakam, and others who have gone through the fire of testing. It is an honor to follow in their footsteps. This fills me with thanks, because it is an awesome thing that we can live in this context of love, and allow the revelation of that to seep into our heart, a little bit at a time.