



REAL YESHUA HANDBOOK

Elul: A Time of Repairing and Creating Shalom

By Jim Myers

One of the most important teachings of Yeshua isn't taught in most churches, but you will find it in most Twelve-Step programs. Pay close attention to the words of Yeshua (highlighting added to stress specific words):

Therefore if you bring your **QORBAN** to the **ALTAR**, and **THERE** you **REMEMBER** that your brother has something **AGAINST** you, leave your **QORBAN** there, before the altar, and **FIRST** be reconciled to your brother, and **THEN** come and offer your **QORBAN**. (Matthew 5:23-24)

Yeshua was clearly addressing people who understood what he was talking about because it was something they and everyone they knew did. The Temple's sacrificial rituals were part of Jewish life. **QORBAN** is usually translated as "**sacrifice**" or "**offering**." In 21st century America, both words are understood to be an act in which the one presenting the **QORBAN** **loses** or **gives up something**.

But, in Yeshua's world, the meaning of the root of **QORBAN** was understood -- **QRB** means "*to draw near*." Yeshua, and those listening to him that day, brought their **QORBAN** to the Temple to **draw near Yahweh**. The closest ritual that we have to that experience is **prayer** -- *it is an act that seems to bring us closer nearer to the presence of God*.

Put yourself in the shoes of the people listening to Yeshua that day. Picture what they must have thought when they heard his words. They knew all of the steps it took to just get to the altar ó *buying or taking a sacrifice to the Temple, having priests inspect it, going through the ritual immersion process before entering the Temple, waiting in line to approach the altar, and telling the priests at the altar what they wanted to do*.

But, it is important to consider something that is often overlooked by many Bible readers. The **Holy of Holies** was viewed as **the place where Yahweh's presence dwelled**. When one brought **QORBAN**, every step the person took brought them one *step closer to the presence of Yahweh*. The final step, the one Yeshua focused on in the above verse but did not explain to his audience, because they knew it very well, was *self-examination*. If, during that self-examination, one remembered that **his brother has something against him** because he had committed an offense against him, Yeshua said: "**STOP!** Leave your **QORBAN** right **THERE**. Go find that person. Be reconciled with him! **THEN** come back and present your **QORBAN** to Yahweh."

Why did Yeshua teach this? Everyone listening to him knew two things that most of us have never been taught:

QORBAN has **no expiating effect** unless the person making the offering **does TESHUVAH BEFORE** presenting the offering.ⁱ

God's forgiveness, however extensive, **only encompasses those sins which man commits directly against Him. Sins against one's fellow man are not forgiven until the injured party forgives the perpetrator.** The sinner must not only ask for forgiveness; he must also make the required restitution to repair the damage he caused.

God will not pardon a person unconditionally, but waits for him or her to do **TESHUVAH**. When Yeshua said, *Be reconciled with him*, he was telling the audience *Do TESHUVAH!* How does a person *do* **TESHUVAH**?

- (1) *cease doing the sin*
- (2) *experience genuine remorse for the wrong committed*
- (3) *make restitution to repair the damage done to others*
- (4) *do acts of **TOV** (protect life, preserve life, make life more functional and/or improve the quality of life)*ⁱⁱ

Yeshua wasn't revealing something new to them. He was simply reminding them of something they already knew. The new thing in his message was *why* they were told to do it -- *when they were ANGRY with someone!* There is little doubt that everyone recognized the link between Yeshua's message and the story of Cain and Abel. Yeshua simply repeated the instructions Yahweh gave Cain:

*And Yahweh said to Cain, "Why are you burning? And why has your face fallen? Surely, if you do **TOV**, you shall be upstanding; but if you do not do **TOV**, sin will be a wild animal crouching at your door. Its desire shall be for you, but you will be able to master it.*
(Genesis 4:6-7)

Cain was also bringing an offering to Yahweh when he became angry. The key point in this lesson, as well as in many other lessons he taught is about this -- *Which of the following do you believe God wants?*

- (1) *A nation of individuals who bring him slaughtered and burnt animals.*
- (2) *A nation of individuals who are the keepers and guardians of their brothers' lives.*

If you answered *#2* you are correct. Yeshua was surrounded by other teachers who focused on doing religious rituals correctly (by their standards). As with many religions, when the focus becomes *the religion* instead of the people, bad things usually happen.

Some people seem to think that after he was executed by the Romans, Yeshua created a brand new religion and reversed his position on many of the things he taught before *like the lesson above*. He didn't. People from other cultures and religions became leaders of new religious groups in which he was cast as the central character. Today, a growing number of people are discovering the importance

and richness of the teachings of the Real Yeshua and implementing them in their lives ó *and some in their churches.*

So, what does this teaching have to do with today, August 14, 2015? At sundown today the Jewish month of **Elul** begins. *The month of Elul is a time of repentance in preparation for the High Holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.* Elul is a **TIME OF SELF-EXAMINATION** in which one searches his or her heart before **DRAWING CLOSE TO GOD** during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Elul is a time to do TESHUVAH -- to repair the damage of the wrongs done to others and restore harmed or broken relationships.

The forty-day period that begins with the first day of Elul and ends with Yom Kippur is often compared to the forty-day periods Yeshua spent in the wilderness after his immersion (baptism) and the time Moses spent on Mt. Sinai.

The Real Yeshua 40-Day Challenge

The teachings of Yeshua, as you saw above, are linked to Core Principles revealed in the opening chapters of Genesis ó *universal principles for all people, not just Jewish people.* One of the foundational principles is usually translated -- ð*God created mankind (all people) in His image.* However, we believe there is another translation ó ð*God created mankind (all people) with His Spirit.* One of the ways to acknowledge the presence of His Spirit in our lives is by guarding and protecting what the Creator valued the most ó *human life.*

We would like to challenge followers of Yeshua to remember the importance of this during **the forty-day period that begins at sundown today and end at sundown Wednesday, September 23rd.** Make the next 40 days a time of repairing harmed or broken relationships ó *a period of creating SHALOM (completeness, totality and wholeness) in your world.*

As pointed out above, the principle taught by Yeshua is found in most Twelve-Step programs:

Step 8: *Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.*

Step 9: *Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*

It is very important to keep the lesson of Step 9 in mind at all times. The transformative power of doing the above steps has been witnessed many times by those who did them.

Praying for God to forgive us for harming others, but never accepting the responsibility for the act or repairing the damage done to the other person was not what Yeshua taught. Today, the message we hear all the time is -- ð*God loves ME!* But, that's not all of the story ó

ðGod loves THE PERSON YOU HARM TOO!ö

ðBeing savedö isn't a ð*Free Pass to Hurt Other People*ö card. Take **the Real Yeshua 40-Day Challenge.** *Reveal the image and spirit of the Creator through your actions in your part of the world.*

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Shalom,
Jim Myers

ⁱ <http://www.jewfaq.org/gorbanot.htm#Purposes>

ⁱⁱ Encyclopedia Judaica; Vol. 1 Col. 73