

3-23-24 Message to Roeh Israel Abilene – VaYkira (“and [Adonai] called”)
Torah Portion: Leviticus 1:1 – 6:7 (5:26 in Tanach)
Haftarah: Isa 43:21 – 44:23 Special reading for Purim: Esther
Suggested Acheron K’tuvim: Rom 5:1-11

Under the Law – Part 3 – Salvation, and Eternal Security

Central question of this message: When are we really “saved?”

Today we are in parasha *VaYikra* (“and [Adonai] called”). The name of the parasha is also the name of the book of Tanach. The English call this book “Leviticus.” The Hebrew name comes from the first Hebrew word in the passage, and the third word in the English translation.

Lev 1:1-4

1 Then the Lord called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying, 2 "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When any man of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering of animals from the herd or the flock. 3 'If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer it, a male without defect; he shall offer it

at the doorway of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the Lord.

1:1

וַיִּקְרָא	אֶל־	מֹשֶׁה	וַיְדַבֵּר	יְהוָה	אֵלָיו
And called	unto	Moses,	and spake	the Lord	unto him
7121	413	4872	1696	3068	413

מֵאֵת־	מוֹעֵד	לֵאמֹר:
out of the tabernacle of	the congregation,	saying,
168	4150	559

2

דַּבֵּר	אֶל־	בְּנֵי	יִשְׂרָאֵל	וְאָמַרְתָּ	אֲלֵהֶם	אִם־
Speak	unto	the children of	Israel,	and say	unto them,	If
1696	413	1121	3478	559	413	3588

וְקָרִיב	מִכֶּם	קָרְבָּן	לַיהוָה	מִן־	הַבְּהֵמָה
bring	of you	an offering	unto the Lord,	of	even the cattle,
7126	4480	7133	3068	4480	929

הַבָּקָר	וּמִן־	הַצֹּאן	תִּקְרִיבוּ	אֶת־	קַרְבְּנֵיכֶם:
the herd,	and of	the flock.	ye shall bring		your offering
1241	4480	6629	7126	853	7133

3

אִם־	עֹלָה	קַרְבְּנוֹ	מִן־	הַבָּקָר	זָכָר
If	a burnt sacrifice	his offering	of	the herd,	a male
518	5930	7133	4480	1241	2145

תָּמִים	וְקָרִיבֵנוּ	אֶל־	פֶּתַח	אֵת־	הַיְּהוָה:
without blemish:	let offer	at	the door of	the tabernacle of	
8549	7126	413	6607	168	

מוֹעֵד	וְקָרִיב	אֹתוֹ	לְרֹצֶנּוּ	לִפְנֵי	יְהוָה:
the congregation	he shall offer	him it	of his own voluntary will	before	the Lord.
4150	7126	853	7522	6440	3068

In this parasha, we begin reading another book in the Tanach. Today it is called Leviticus, which is borrowed from the Latin word *Leviticus*,

which was derived from the Ancient Greek: Λευιτικόν (Leuitikon), referring to the priestly tribe of the Israelites.¹ But for hundreds of generations of Hebrews, the name has always been known as *VaYikra*.

There are more references to G-d forgiving sin in the book of *VaYikra* than any other book in the Bible. This alone should operate as a significant deterrent to Christian theologians insisting that there was no mechanism allowing forgiveness for sin before the Cross.

So, it is with that introduction that I will now continue with our series, Under the Law. I wish to today explore a few more verses which have either been ignored by the normative Church, or which have been giving that group of precious ones a bit of theological trouble for a while.

Salvation vs Redemption.

The common question in many circles regarding faith is, “Are you saved?” I admit I am a bit hesitant to answer that question as asked. I first need to discern the way that the questioner interprets that word, “saved.”

¹ Chisholm, Hugh, ed. (1911). "Leviticus" . Encyclopædia Britannica. Vol. 16 (11th ed.). Cambridge University Press. p. 515.

There are many examples in Scripture of a current physical salvation being brought to those whom G-d favors. But these are not a spiritual salvation regarding eternal life. Some examples are found in 2 Sam 22:3, Ps 20:6-9, Ps 31:14-17, along with many others I will not cite.

There is ample Scriptural support for the concept of salvation being applied to the time of the end of our lives, where we will be found worthy to enter into eternal life.

1 Tim 1:12-17

12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; 14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. 15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.** 16 **Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in**

Him for eternal life. 17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

I believe that the vast majority of Christians interpret being “saved” as being “saved from hell.” That includes being “saved” from standing guilty before the judgment Throne.

With that definition in mind, I can easily answer “Yes.” But I think the concept of “saved” as used by today’s normative church has become a bit fuzzy. It seems to have lost its future application and has become alloyed with a current application. It is as if it now also means, “saved from sin” in everyday life.

We are not, in this present age, “saved” from the ravages of sin. We are not “saved” from temptation, nor from falling. But we do have a way of avoiding the penalty for sinning.

1 John 1:5-10

5 And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no

darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 7 but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.** 8 **If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.** 9 **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** 10 **If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.**

We are not, in a general manner, “saved” from the sinful actions of those around us.² The sins of others impact us every day. Occasionally, He also puts a wall of protection around us. But if not, G-d recognizes what is happening to us and He blesses us because of our sufferings for Him.

Matt 5:11-12

11 "Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and **persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely,** on account of Me. 12 "Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward

² Although it is not uncommon for believers to be rescued from the sinful actions of others, in order to be put to greater use in the kingdom at a later time.

in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Rom 12:9-14

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; 11 not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, **persevering in tribulation**, devoted to prayer, 13 contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. 14 Bless **those who persecute you**; bless and curse not.

And it is clear from other Scriptures that our salvation, and the vindication of our faith – even unto death, comes at the end of the age.

Rev 16:4-7

4 And the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters; and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "Righteous are You, who are and who was, O Holy One, because You did judge these

things; 6 for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets,
and You have given them blood to drink. They deserve it." 7
And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, O Lord God, the
Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."

And it is marvelous that the sinful actions of others in this world directed
toward us (due to our faith and our witness), are actually being turned
into a benefit for us in our maturity.

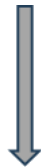
Rom 5:1-11

5 Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace
with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom
also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this
grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of
God. 3 And not only this, but we also exult in our
tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about
perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and
proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint,
because the love of God has been poured out within our
hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. 6 For
while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for
the ungodly. 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man;

though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. 10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

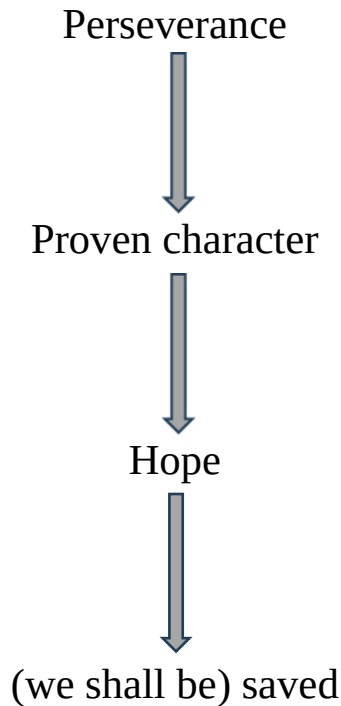
I want you to see the progression set out in this passage, and how clearly it sets out the pathway we all most likely will walk toward being finally “saved.”

Justified by faith in Yeshua’s sacrifice
(reconciled and redeemed)



Tribulations





Note the future timing of “saved” as understood by Paul in his letter. But is there some assurance to us that when we have accepted the sacrifice of Yeshua as payment for our sins, that we are in a different status with G-d?

In Israel, during the first century, there was a common theological understanding which characterized those who have come to be part of the faith of G-d as “sons of light” as opposed to the rest of mankind who reject G-d, called “sons of darkness.”

Paul builds upon that understanding in his letter to the congregation at Ephesus, and he makes it clear that with faith, we immediately move

from one kingdom to the other, and we are to live in the light, not in darkness.

Eph 5:6-9

6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 **Therefore do not be partakers with them;** 8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; **walk as children of light.**

The concept of “walking as children of light” now leads me to the matter of the “security of the believer” which has on occasion been a “hot topic” in the church.

Security of the Believer.

I am certain that you have also heard, as have I, the statement, “Once saved, always saved.” It has been the subject of considerable debate over the ages. I hope to bring a bit of clarity to it, and show how it closely relates it to “salvation.”

Some Christian theologians regularly cite a number of verses to stand for the proposition that once you are “saved” you cannot then ever become “unsaved.” These verses include:

Jude 24-25

24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,

John 10:27-30

27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. 29 "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 "I and the Father are one."

Eph 4:30-31

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption³.

But how would these verses – if interpreted in accordance with the “once saved always saved” theology – be reconciled with the clear language of many contrary verses we find in the book of Revelation?

Rev 2:8-11

8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: 9 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. **Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.** 11 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.'**

³ Better translation is “salvation.”

It is clear that the crown of life (salvation) comes only after we are “faithful to death” because we have “overcome.” What is it that we must “overcome?” I think it varies in every generation, but in all generations I think there is a thread of commonality in the theme of what we must overcome. That is the temptation to turn from G-d in order to give-into the demand that we leave the kingdom of light and then conform to the kingdom of darkness.

We see an aspect of this “overcoming” in the letter to Pergamum.

Rev 2:12-17

12 "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

The One who has the sharp two-edged sword⁴ says this: 13 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and **you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith**, even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. 14 'But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things

⁴ The “two-edged sword” is the Word of G-d being spoken by Yeshua.

sacrificed to idols, and to commit acts of immorality. 15
'Thus you also have some who in the same way hold the
teaching of the Nicolaitans. **16 'Repent therefore; or else I
am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against
them with the sword of My mouth.** 17 'He who has an ear,
let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To him
who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden
manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name
written on the stone which no one knows but he who
receives it.'**

The ones who overcome the temptation to turn to sin will get to have intimate contact with G-d. Where was the “hidden manna?” It was in the Ark of the Covenant. Nobody opened that lid in this world once it was emplaced by Moses. But in the end, clearly Yeshua will lift that lid and give His saints a type of communion which was not ever seen before.

Clearly, turning from wicked ways will avoid being slain by Yeshua’s spoken word. So, it is clear that some will not repent, and clearly they will not be “saved.”

Rev 2:18-29

18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this: 19 **'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first.**

20 'But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray, so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

21 'And I gave her time to repent; and she does not want to repent of her immorality. 22 'Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. 23 'And I will kill her children with pestilence; and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. 24 'But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them — I place no other burden on you. 25

'Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. 26

'And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until

the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; 27
and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the
potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority
from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star. 29
'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the
churches.'

Yeshua is urging those who are His to hold tightly to the love, faith, and
service which produce righteous deeds, continuing in these. For failing
to do so removes you from the ranks of those who “overcome.”

Rev 3:1-6

3 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write:

He who has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars,
says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you
are alive, but you are dead. 2 '**Wake up, and strengthen the
things that remain,** which were about to die; for I have not
found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. 3
'**Remember therefore what you have received and heard;
and keep it, and repent.** If therefore you will not wake up, I
will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I

will come upon you. **4 'But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white; for they are worthy. 5 'He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels. 6 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. '**

Although each message to each of the seven churches of Revelation has a warning message regarding “overcoming” and “persevering” this letter carries the most stern warning regarding failure. Make certain your garments are white, so you will be considered worthy.

What is the implication for those who are not found “clothed in white” at the return of Yeshua? Their names shall be erased from the Book of Life.” What are the implications of that action?

Rev 20:11-15

11 And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. **12 And I saw the dead, the great**

and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. 13

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. 14 And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. **15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.**

G-d does not deprive you of your free will, even after you are redeemed. Sin is still in this world, and Satan will assault us continually in hopes he can turn us from G-d. So, let's now reconcile all these verses.

Once you have been redeemed by faith, you are sealed by the Spirit and safe in G-d's hand, where nobody can snatch you away. Remain in His hand! Be faithful to the end. Overcome what Satan throws at you. Even if it means your life. Keep your garments white by living a lawful life, and repent of sin so as to wash your garments again.

And by all means, don't jump out of G-d's hand by rejecting Him!