

Vayikra – And He Called by Jennifer Ross

Abraham left home and family when G-d *called* him. The Israelites left Egypt and all that was familiar when Moses *called* them out. Elisha took the yoke off his oxen and kissed his parents goodbye when *called* upon by G-d's prophet, Elijah. Simon (Peter) and Andrew dropped their nets when Yeshua *called* for them to follow. And so on and so on...

If we take a moment and allow for introspection...does our spiritual walk reflect the same willingness to follow? Friends, we have been blessed to be witnesses to amazing times foretold in the scriptures! The same stirrings of humility and awe, excitement and gratefulness, preoccupation and steadfastness that gripped the first believers and the writers of the New Covenant Scriptures should have its hold on us! And yet, why do so many of us allow these *writings* of the New to replace the Old? The Tanakh (Old Testament) was the scriptural source for all hope, all promises and all that was to come for those who received G-d's promised New Covenant, Yeshua. All the keys necessary to unlock a **true interpretation** of the New Covenant writings... are in the Old.

Paul, in Romans 1:20, says of those who refuse to accept G-d's **call** to belief in Messiah:

"For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

If someone only reads the New Covenant scriptures they most likely read this verse...and then just keep on reading... for it seems awfully abstract. But if you read this with an understanding of what it is founded on, you see something wonderful, something truly enriching! Paul is addressing the Jewish people of Rome. These Jewish people knew the Hebrew scriptures so it was not necessary for Paul to go into

details on what he meant. Paul was not a prophet and he wasn't 'writing' the New Testament. He was living his life for G-d, serving Him in the way that he was called to do. The fact that any of the writings of the New Testament became a "book" was through G-d's grace as the Bible was 'officially' put together by Rome years later. Through G-d's grace we are blessed to have the opportunity to witness what Paul did and said.

So how does one go about understanding this verse? Go to the source!!! The source is the Word. Where do we look in the Holy Scriptures? Well...what did Paul say?

"The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen..."

Where do we find in the Holy Bible the creation of the world? The Book of Genesis, Bereshit, In the beginning.... so let's look there!

Bereshit 1:1 *"In the beginning G-d created the heavens and the earth."*

These are the very first words given to us by G-d in the Torah (first five books of the Tanakh) and in this very first verse we are introduced to our Messiah, Yeshua, the "**Him**" of Paul's statement. Unfortunately, if you don't look at or know the Hebrew, all of this is missed. In the Hebrew text Genesis 1:1 reads:

"Bereshit barah elohim et hashamayim ve'et ha'aretz

[In the beginning] [created] [G-d] [] [the heavens] [and][] [the land]

There are two Hebrew letters, aleph and tav, that together spell no word. They are pronounced together as "et" and were understood by the Hebrew sages to be the *Sign of G-d's Divine Presence* or the *Infinite Sign*. They were (are) considered in Judaism to be the "silent cipher" that embraces all of creation.

The aleph is the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Aleph is a silent letter in a language that was originally all consonants. Because of this, it is mysterious, as G-d is mysterious and beyond our

understanding. The aleph represents strength and the very essence of being, the very essence of G-d.

The tav is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It means 'sign' or 'mark' and, interestingly enough, the picture (or pictograph) associated with it, in Hebrew, is a cross.

The aleph/tav, or 'et', the Sign of G-d's Divine Presence, appears over 5,000 times in the Tanakh. It appears FIRST in the Hebrew text in the very first line of Genesis, next to "G-d" as the heavens and the earth are created.

What did Yeshua say of Himself? "I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA THE BEGINNING AND THE END". Yes, in the Greek alphabet, this is very true, but when Yeshua actually SPOKE these words, He said:

I AM THE ALEPH AND THE TAV!

He was stating that HE is the Sign of G-d's Divine Presence and that HE is that which embraces ALL OF CREATION!

If we continue to look at Genesis 1:1, we also see that the word translated as "G-d" is the Hebrew word *Elohim*. Elohim is a plural form of G-d, *El* being the singular such as in *El-Shaddai*— the G-d who is sufficient. Not only are we introduced to our Messiah in the first line of the Tanakh, we are introduced to the entire G-dhead!

So let's look again at what Paul says to the Jewish people in Rome in Romans 1:20. But this time, let us look through the eyes of the Tanakh.

"For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they [those who do not answer the call] are without excuse."

Based upon Paul's words, there is *no excuse* for not devoting ourselves to learning HIS WAYS. And one of the biggest mistakes we can make is to look to the New Covenant Scriptures for understanding if we don't understand the Old. We are so quick to open to the New Testament to

find verses that make us feel good, as if in some way the G-d of the Tanakh is a different and less loving G-d compared to the New! There is such a misunderstanding concerning the New Testament writings and what the OVERALL context is.

These were Jewish writers. Jewish writers, who, overcome by G-d's spirit, KNEW that they were witnesses to the fulfillment of the New Covenant promises revealed in the Tanakh! Their eyes and ears and hearts had been ripped open and filled up with the truths their people had been waiting on for centuries! Some, like Matthew and Luke, approached it with an historical sense of urgency. Some, like Paul, wrote with a mission to unite Jew and Gentile into the Kingdom. His writings were to seek the Jew first to tell them "Our Messiah has come!" and then to tackle the arduous task of explaining an entirely NEW concept of redemption to the nations swamped in paganism. And then some, like in the letters of Timothy and John, seized hold of an overall idea and expounded upon it to help new believers on their walk.

If we put ourselves into the sandals of the characters mentioned at the beginning who were called upon to serve, we are given a message that is loud and clear!

We are called to not be of this world. We are called to be born again. We are called to step out of the comfort zone and serve Him.

How can we NOT be comfortable with the Creator of the Universe on our side? Just as He did with the Israelites as they left Egypt, He leads us and follows us. He clears the path and watches our backs as we walk it. But how willing are we...really... when it comes to giving up what makes us comfortable?

Comfort does not necessarily mean physical conveniences. There are many traditions and beliefs and doctrines that we embrace on our walk that are deceptive, irreverent or purely against G-d. But they make us feel good. They make us feel good because, typically, they are the customs that we grew up with and are accepted by the majority of our peers. If you ever see that you are 'in the majority' in this

world *before* Yeshua's Kingdom is set up, it usually isn't a good thing at all.

'Born again' is a literal term. We are to be just as a newborn baby; seeing for the first time, hearing for the first time and doing for the first time. Ideally, a father's role is to prepare his children for life. A father teaches. A father provides. A father sets down rules and then punishes and rewards accordingly as he molds his children into the people they should be. And a father is always there to listen and to help and to comfort. How many times, when our children do not understand our intentions and ask 'why', do we say to them "Because I said so!"? In human standards, even the best parents fall short.

As Children of G-d, however, we have been born to a Perfect Father, a Father that is 100% faithful to His promises. He gave us His instructions in the Torah (which literally means teaching or instruction) and when all else fails He states to us the same thing: "BECAUSE I SAID SO!"

1 John 2:3-6 *We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His commands. The man who says "I know Him"*

but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth

is not in him. But if anyone obeys His word, G-d's word

is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are

in Him: Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Yeshua did.

Yeshua walked according to Torah, according to the first five books of the Tanakh that G-d HIMSELF gave to HIS CHILDREN. His requirement of us is the same requirement that He gave to Abram in Genesis 17: To walk before Him blameless. He gave us His Torah to instruct us on just how exactly we go about trying. We know that it is impossible to be perfect in this flesh. We know that we cannot walk according to Torah without sinning. Paul affirms this truth later in Romans emphasizing that we would not know what sin was WITHOUT Torah to tell us. Only

Yeshua was blameless and that is why He could be our sacrifice, for He was without blemish. When we fall short of G-d's requirements, and truly repent, Yeshua's sacrifice atones for it. Our faith in this is credited to us as righteousness! Disregarding Torah as old and antiquated and for "Jews only" certainly doesn't fit with what John says here. Replacing Torah with a new and improved, friendly and shorter set of rules created by man is certainly not how we draw closer to our Father. Replacing it with a much lengthier and more confusing set of rules, as the rabbi's have done, doesn't fit in either.

A wonderful secular saying comes to mind: *The only thing that separates us from the animals is our ability to rationalize.* Even after we enter into a relationship with our Father and our Savior, leaning on our teacher, the Spirit, we tend to hold on to man-made doctrines and lean on our ability to rationalize... to find justification. From Lot's wife turning to watch Sodom burn... to the sons of Aaron offering unauthorized fire... to Jonah refusing to accept G-d's forgiveness to Nineva, the Tanakh makes it clear that G-d does not support our desire to decide what is and what is not right. King Solomon, whose only request from G-d was for wisdom, says in Proverbs 3: TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND LEAN NOT ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING!

This is reinforced for early believers in 1 John 2: 15-17

Do not love the world or anything in the world.

If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For everything in the world-the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and boasting of what he has and does-comes not from the Father but from the world.

The world will pass away, but the man who does the will of G-d lives forever.

The "Will of G-d"..... a term SO HEAVY..... if you are not steadily seeking and steadily humbling yourself. We are assured that His burden is light, but is it light to those of us who find excuses for not listening? Is it light when G-d blesses us with an understanding of something that demands a choice? A choice that goes against what makes us comfortable? Is it light when we continue thinking as the Nations think and not according to the outline G-d has drawn for a priestly nation?

As believers, we are called to be a part of G-d's chosen priestly nation, Israel. For it is with the nations outside that we take what might be wrong and slap a coat of paint on it and *voila!* it's of G-d now. Or we replace Biblical thoughts with today's translations. Simple things like the word "fear." We are to "fear" the L ORD. But the Greek understanding of 'fear' doesn't fit neatly into our idea of a loving G-d, so we cast it aside. Fearing the L ORD is recognizing HIS authority and having TOTAL respect and submission for what He chooses. Fear of the L ORD is hating that which is evil. The Nations can't understand "hating" and "fearing"... unless you bring up terrorism...or "natural disasters". There is no such thing as a 'natural' disaster. In the wake of the world's events you see faith crumbling around those who only see G-d through the New Covenant writings, because they do not understand. Our faith should be edified in all that we witness because it is grounded in HIS WORD. If we are grounded in the Tanakh and are believers in the New Covenant through Yeshua's sacrifice, we understand that it is HE that brings about all things and we submit.

If you only read the New Covenant scriptures, and read them with a Greek mindset, a picture is created of love and turning the cheek; helping those in need and being forgiven no matter what; and praying for all that your little heart desires. Great and wonderful stuff, but void of foundation and knowledge. New-Covenant-only-readers look at the awesome and selfless act of Yeshua dying on the stake and sing a song that compares the creator of our universe to a trampled rose! He's not a trampled rose. He's our KING!!! He's our REDEEMER!!! He's our PERFECT SACRIFICE!!! He's I AM!!! And when our King returns, it will not be with a basket of goodies. He's coming back with a sword

and a mission to cleanse and to set up HIS KINGDOM of believers. His Kingdom. And He will sit on His throne in Yerushalayim. We are all invited to be a part of this. And that is where *our* choices become so critical.

Who among you that *are not* Jewish are a bit uncomfortable learning and doing “Jewish” things as if they are no longer relevant? They are not **Jewish** things, they are the LORD’S things. If G-d is showing you His truths which He brought to the world through the Jewish people, you are faced with a choice to follow or not to follow, to be obedient or not obedient, to shed ‘Christian’ doctrines and ordinances that are not of G-d or to hold on to them. He’s calling you.

Who among you that *are* Jewish are uncomfortable watching Gentiles participate in our festivals and traditions without a clear understanding of what they are doing? They are not **our** festivals and traditions. They are the LORD’S. We have been blessed to be the recipients and watchmen of G-d’s requirements throughout the ages... but we have to shed the false legalities created by men for what is truly scriptural and acknowledge our Father’s plan for all of humanity. He’s calling you, too.

Again, I stress to you that we are at the same point in history that the early believers in Yeshua as Messiah were as they grappled with how to unite Jew and Gentile into the priestly nation of Israel.

Isaiah 51:7 *“Hear me, you who know what is right,*

*you people who have my **law** in your hearts: **Torah***

Do not fear the reproach of men

or be terrified by their insults.

For the moth will eat them up like a garment;

the worm will devour them like wool.

But my righteousness will last forever,

*My **salvation** through all generations." **Yeshua***

The path we should be following is clearly marked. Are our eyes open? The answers to all our questions have been answered and are on our hearts waiting to be discovered. Are our hearts open? Our King will be here one day, announcing Himself with the shofar blast. Are our ears open? Are we ready to present ourselves before Him?

Blessings to you all!!!

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