

DAY SIX

“SPEAKING OF SALVATION”

PSALM 119:41-48

This morning our Scriptural selections for meditation while Counting the Omer have been wonderful to consume. The blessed opportunity that each one of us as followers of the Messiah of Israel has to witness—the glorious reality of the One who we love and worship—has once again been brought to my attention. Before sharing some additional thoughts about the Hope of our salvation, let today’s verses speak to your hearts:

PSALM 67:1-7

For the choir director; with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song. God be gracious to us and bless us, *and* cause His face to shine upon us—Selah. That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You will judge the peoples with uprightness and guide the nations on the earth. Selah. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, blesses us. God blesses us, that all the ends of the earth may fear Him.

PSALM 119:41-48

May Your lovingkindnesses also come to me, O LORD, Your salvation according to Your word; so I will have an answer for him who reproaches me, for I trust in Your word. And do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for I wait for Your ordinances. So I will keep Your law continually, forever and ever. And I will walk at liberty, for I seek Your precepts. I will also speak of Your testimonies before kings and shall not be ashamed. I shall delight in Your commandments, which I love. And I shall lift up my hands to Your commandments, which I love; and I will meditate on Your statutes.

While soaking in the glory of these verses this morning, two related thoughts came to my mind. As I considered the opening Psalm and then read from Psalm 119, the word “salvation” and the opportunity to make it known among the nations just leapt into my heart. As I read the following three verses, the privilege that we as Believers have, to literally speak the message of the salvation provided by Yeshua (Jesus), to even the kings and leaders of the world, overwhelmed my thoughts:

COUNTING THE OMER

- “That Your way may be known on the earth, Your **salvation** among all nations” (Psalm 67:2).
- “May Your lovingkindnesses also come to me, O LORD, Your **salvation** according to Your word” (Psalm 119:41).
- “I will also speak of Your testimonies before kings and shall not be ashamed” (Psalm 119:46).

I immediately thought about the word “salvation,” and was reminded of a teaching I received years ago that the Hebrew term translated “salvation” or “deliverance” in the Tanakh is often *yeshuah* (יְשׁוּעָה), an improper noun form of our Messiah’s name *Yeshua* (יֵשׁוּעַ).¹ I recalled how this term, appearing in both the Holy Scriptures and much traditional Hebrew liturgy, has over the centuries provoked many Jewish people to the point where they have decided to refer to Yeshua or Jesus by the derogatory acronym *Yeshu* (יֵשׁוּ), meaning “may his name and memory be blotted out.”²

This morning as I considered the English appearance of “salvation” in these two verses, I had to be reminded that the words are related in Hebrew, but are not exactly identical. In Psalm 67:2, the Hebrew noun *yeshuah* (יְשׁוּעָה) or “salvation” appears.³ Naturally, I considered how the Jewish non-Believer might be challenged by these (indirect) references to the “name” of the Savior and the work that He performs.

Having reflected upon these linguistic nuances, I was reminded of a fairly long testimony that Yeshua Himself declared to His Disciples regarding the cost of discipleship. Being prompted from Psalm 119:46 about speaking testimonies before kings, led me to this passage in the Gospel of Matthew. Because reading it blessed me, I am going to reproduce it here for your edification:

“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves. But beware of men, for they will hand you over to *the* courts and scourge you in their synagogues; and you will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. For it is not you who speak, but *it* is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved. But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish *going through* the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes. A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more *will they malign* the members of his household! Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be

¹ The Greek name *Iēsous* (Ἰησοῦς), from which the English name “Jesus” is derived, is a legitimate transliteration of the Hebrew *Yeshua* (יֵשׁוּעַ), and was employed in the Septuagint for the title of the Book of Joshua. The claim that the name *Iēsous* really means “son of Zeus” is without any linguistic evidence.

² Heb. *yimach sh'mo u'zikro* (יִמַח שְׁמוֹ וְזִכְרוֹ); George Howard, *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1995), 207.

The so-called Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, which is a rather popular resource in some parts of today’s Messianic community, largely employs the derogatory *Yeshu*.

³ An extended meaning of the improper noun *yeshuah* includes: “welfare, prosperity,” “deliverance,” “salvation by God, primarily from external evils, but often with added spiritual idea,” and “victory” (BDB, 447).

revealed, or hidden that will not be known. What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear *whispered* in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows. Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven. Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW; and A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD [Micah 7:6; Deuteronomy 33:9]. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it. He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward" (Matthew 10:16-42).

When you read this passage of Scripture, you are reminded of some of the more difficult words of Yeshua for the natural mind to comprehend. Concepts such as: *sheep among wolves, the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you, family members putting others to death, being hated on account of Me, fearing the One who can kill body and soul, not bringing peace, taking up one's cross, etc.*, are often hard to digest in our human minds. And yet, these are the very words of the One whom we call upon for salvation and deliverance. We are to proclaim the salvation of Yeshua **and** we are not to be ashamed:

"I will speak to kings about your laws, and I will not be ashamed" (Psalm 119:46, NLT).

Consider the price that Yeshua had to pay, when He was lifted up on the execution-stake at Golgotha, exposed to the elements, taking our shame and guilt upon Himself for our trespasses and sins. How serious is the salvation that we have in Him?

When we do have the opportunity to witness about who Yeshua is in our lives, we should not be ashamed, but rather be blessed to know that we have been considered worthy to testify of this reality. To unreservedly speak of His salvation to *all* who will listen—as the Spirit directs—is quite a privilege **and something that counts well beyond an omer of fine flour**. But interestingly, without today's Omer Count, I am not sure I would have had these thoughts piqued in my spirit, we all look ahead to *Shavuot* and consider the Lord's ongoing salvation history.