

February 2, 2024

Yeshua on the Execution Stake

Upon Yeshua's placement on the Roman execution-stake, He would be the substitution for a convicted criminal in Bar-Abba. Yeshua would be anything but silent on the execution-stake. His spoken words prior to His death are still discussed, studied and even debated as to their meaning, to this very day. They are recounted in three of the four Gospels – Mattityahu (Matthew), Luke and Yochanan (John) and provide us with further insights and understanding. As Yeshua's time on the day the Passover lamb is to be slaughtered is drawing to an end His words will impact those who hear them, both in the moment they would occur and into the distant future, meaning today.

Before we look at His words, I want to start with something Yeshua said just prior to being placed on the execution-stake:

“Large numbers of people followed, including women crying and wailing over him. Yeshua turned to them and said, “Daughters of Yerushalayim, don't cry for me; cry for yourselves and your children! For the time is coming when people will say, ‘The childless women are the lucky ones — those whose wombs have never borne a child, whose breasts have never nursed a baby! Then They will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’ For if they do these things when the wood is green, what is going to happen when it's dry?””
Luke 23:27 – 31 (CJB)

What is this but a warning of what will ultimately befall Yerushalayim (Jerusalem), Y'udah (Judea) and would impact the Jewish people for centuries, that being the destruction of a nation, its capital and its Temple, the very center of its existence. Referring to the childless woman who had never bore a child and therefore would not grieve the loss of her child as a result of the destruction of Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) and the nation at the hands of Rome. What Yeshua is prophesying here is of such grave angst and despair that the pain felt would not be easily resolved. The Jewish people would experience many and great calamities at the hands of Rome...murder, famine, pestilence, violent seizure of property, not to mention all the terrors of war. Yeshua would convey similar warnings earlier (Luke 21:23 – 24; Mattityahu (Matthew 24:19 and Mark 13:17 – 19), yet this would be His last opportunity to do so, just prior to His death.

When Yeshua spoke of Yerushalayim's future fate, even He would be impacted by what would happen...

"Yerushalayim! Yerushalayim! You kill the prophets! You stone those who are sent to you! How often I wanted to gather your children, just as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you refused!" Mattityahu (Matthew) 23:37 (CJB)

Even as He is being prepared for execution, His people are still not willing to listen to His warning, thus further acknowledging their rejection of their King.

The Gospels record a total of seven times Yeshua spoke from the execution-stake. Why did He speak? What was the purpose for His words?

The first words spoken by Yeshua as He is being mounted to the execution-stake with two criminals who will be included as part of this monumental and memorialized time of history shortly, refers back to a not too distant moment of the past.

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ng." *They divided up his clothes by throwing dice. Luke 23:34 (CJB)*

You may recall earlier when I shared with you the interaction between Pilate and the people of Yerushalayim (Jerusalem), whereby Pilate had offered to release Yeshua as part of a Passover tradition. To Pilate's surprise, the people desired

the release of a convicted criminal, Bar-Abba. It was the people who would in essence take on the responsibility of their decision...

"All the people answered, "His blood is on us and on our children!" Mattityahu (Matthew) 27:25 (CJB)

I can envision Yeshua, mounted on the execution-stake, beaten, bruised and bloody, looking out at the people who are gathered. The leadership of Y'hudah (Judea) who had plotted to have Him executed. The Jewish people rejected Him. The Roman soldiers who were instrumental in His beating. All were there in front of Him. All who had a hand in bringing Him to this moment. All who had no understanding regarding the "bigger picture", the plan of Adonai for His people and His creation. All who accepted the blood of Yeshua's death and said "His blood is on our hands" taking responsibility didn't understand what they were saying, let alone comprehend who Yeshua truly was. It is here where Yeshua forgives His people and His creation for this great transgression. All that had to happen in order to come to this place in time, was by no means unexpected. Yeshua knew. Adonai has constantly been interceding on behalf of His people. At times He would regret even creating us, yet His love for us was beyond measure and is reflected in Yeshua

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only and unique Son, so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but rather so that through him, the world might be saved." Yochanan (John) 3:16 – 17 (CJB)

2. Yeshua said to him, **"Yes! I**

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Luke 23:43 (CJB)

The Complete Jewish Bible translates the Greek word paradeisos, using the Hebrew in an English transliterated form - Gan-Eden for paradise. Other translations present this verse as "today you will be with me in paradise" Why paradise when many theological perspectives convey that we go to heaven after

we have died? Yeshua could have easily minimized any confusion by simply saying shamayim (Hebrew for heaven or referenced in the Greek as ouranos) but He didn't. This is a separate debate.

This place Yeshua identifies as Gan-Eden (Paradise) is a real place and is referenced throughout Scripture. We start there in Bereshit (Genesis) 2:8 and are ultimately expelled from there. It is a place that is referenced in one of Yeshua's parables found in Luke's Gospel. The parable identified as "El'azar and the Rich Man " where Yeshua conveys the fate of two men, a rich man and a beggar named El'azar. Both died. Yeshua reveals in the parable that they both do not end up in the same place after they die.

"In time the beggar died and was carried away by the angels to Avraham's side; the rich man also died and was buried. "In Sh'ol, where he was in torment, the rich man looked up and saw Avraham far away with El`azar at his side." Luke 16:22 – 23 (CJB)

Sh'ol, a very real place as well, is also found throughout Tanakh. This Hebrew word refers to "world of the dead". Many translations identify Sh'ol as Hell. This is the destination that befalls the unrepentant thief and the Rich man in Yeshua's parable for which He conveys as follows:

"He called out, 'Father Avraham, take pity on me, and send El`azar just to dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue, because I'm in agony in this fire!'" Luke 16:24 (CJB)

A very real place. A place of agony.

El`azar finds himself at the side of Avraham (Abraham). This concept of being by Avraham's side is not lost to Yeshua. Such a concept is found in 4 Maccabees 13:17:

"After this suffering of ours, Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov will receive us, and all our ancestors will praise us"

David Stern writes the following in his Jewish New Testament Commentary:
"Thus being at "Avraham's side" suggests both being in *Gan-Eden* (Paradise) and

being present at the Messianic banquet."

You will find out about what Stern identifies as the Messianic Banquet later. This all plays into Passover being the Master's Key.

Yeshua's words to the thieves who are being executed with Him were prompted by this exchange.

"One of the criminals hanging there hurled insults at him. "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other one spoke up and rebuked the first, saying, "Have you no fear of God? You're getting the same punishment as he is. Ours is only fair; we're getting what we deserve for what we did. But this man did nothing wrong." Then he said, "Yeshua, remember me when you come as King."" Luke 23:39 – 42 (CJB)

To those who were in "ear shot" and to us today who read Yeshua's words, this moment is one of preparation for us when our time on earth is completed. Words of reassurance, words of comfort. Unfortunately, something that is so straightforward has been transformed and thus compromised, leading to confusion. A question so often asked..."what happens when we die?" no longer has the simple answer Yeshua conveyed in His parable. It is not that complicated. Further elaboration will be expressed in subsequent chapters.

3. *"When Yeshua saw his mother and the talmid whom he loved standing there, he said to his mother, "**Mot** Then he said to the talmid, "**Th**
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er." And from that time on, the talmid took her into his own home."*
Yochanan (John) 19:26 -27 (CJB)

Yeshua's mother Miryam appears a few times throughout the Gospels. We first see her when an angel appears to her with the following message:

"In the sixth month, the angel Gavri'el was sent by God to a city in the Galil called Natzeret, to a virgin engaged to a man named Yosef, of the house of

David; the virgin's name was Miryam. Approaching her, the angel said, "Shalom, favored lady! Adonai is with you!" She was deeply troubled by his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Miryam, for you have found favor with God. Look! You will become pregnant, you will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Yeshua. He will be great, he will be called Son of Ha`Elyon. Adonai, God, will give him the throne of his forefather David; and he will rule the House of Ya`akov forever — there will be no end to his Kingdom."” Luke 1:26 – 33 (CJB)

A woman of the house of David, whom the angel of Adonai Gavri'el shared a message from Adonai, that she was favored, would become pregnant by the Ruach Ha Kodesh (The Holy Spirit), bear a son, whom would sit on the throne of David and there would be no end to His Kingdom. Miryam identifies herself as a servant of Adonai...

“Miryam said, "I am the servant of Adonai; may it happen to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.” Luke 1:38 (CJB)

As His servant, we see Miryam present and instrumental even before Yeshua's ministry begins. She found favor with Adonai, who chose her to bring the Son of God into the world. Therefore, as His servant, It would also be her responsibility to raise His Son as is conveyed within the Sh'ma (D'varim (Deuteronomy) 6:6 - 7 (CJB))

“These words, which I am ordering you today, are to be on your heart; and you are to teach them carefully to your children. You are to talk about them when you sit at home, when you are traveling on the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”

We further recall Miryam's response to a visit from some shepherds after the birth of Yeshua...

“No sooner had the angels left them and gone back into heaven than the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go over to Beit-Lechem and see this thing that has happened, that Adonai has told us about." Hurrying off, they came and found Miryam and Yosef, and the baby lying in the feeding trough. Upon seeing this, they made known what they had been told about this child; and all who

heard were amazed by what the shepherds said to them. Miryam treasured all these things and kept mulling them over in her heart.” Luke 2:15 – 19 (CJB)

We see her service to Adonai continue with this snapshot into their lives during a pilgrimage trip to Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) for Passover.

“Every year Yeshua's parents went to Yerushalayim for the festival of Pesach. When he was twelve years old, they went up for the festival, as custom required. But after the festival was over, when his parents returned, Yeshua remained in Yerushalayim. They didn't realize this; supposing that he was somewhere in the caravan, they spent a whole day on the road before they began searching for him among their relatives and friends. Failing to find him, they returned to Yerushalayim to look for him. On the third day they found him — he was sitting in the Temple court among the rabbis, not only listening to them but questioning what they said; and everyone who heard him was astonished at his insight and his responses. When his parents saw him, they were shocked; and his mother said to him, "Son! Why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been terribly worried looking for you!" He said to them, "Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I had to be concerning myself with my Father's affairs?" But they didn't understand what he meant.” Luke 2:41 – 50 (CJB)

Yeshua is twelve and they had traveled to Yerushalyim for Passover. Miryam and Yosef discovered upon their travels home that Yeshua was missing. They returned to Yerushalyaim (Jerusalem) to find Him in the Temple court with the P'rushim (Pharisees), the rabbis. Like any mother today who has experienced such a traumatic experience of not knowing where their child was, her heart likely dropped to where I wouldn't be surprised if Miryam had raised her voice towards Yeshua ``*Why have you done this to us?*” Miryam knew the responsibility given to her by Adonai, but did she truly comprehend the magnitude of it?

Once Miryam and Yosef found Yeshua, they expressed their concerns of worry as His parents when they couldn't find Him. Yeshua was in the midst of *“His Father's affairs”*. There is no record as to what was discussed, but they, the rabbis, were amazed at His wisdom for His age. Interestingly, this account coincides with the age when young boys and girls have their bar mitzvah (son of commandment) and bat mitzvah (daughter of commandment). A time when they have reached a level of understanding and therefore are now accountable for their actions as they pertain to Torah. One such aspect of this time today is

learning a portion of the Torah, known as a parshah. Associated with the Torah parshah is a section of Scripture from the Nevi'im (The Prophets) known as the Haftarah. They will share with the congregation what they have learned about their parsha. This experience usually includes being quizzed by the rabbi, revealing their understanding of their parsha to those who are in attendance. Although not a formal ceremony until many years later, Yeshua is in essence going through His Bar Mitzvah here, to where the rabbis were amazed by His responses to their questions.

Later, we see the influence Miryam has upon her son Yeshua during a wedding for family friends.

"On Tuesday [Greek: the third day, equivalent to Hebrew yom shlishi] there was a wedding at Kanah in the Galil; and the mother of Yeshua was there. Yeshua too was invited to the wedding, along with his talmidim. The wine ran out, and Yeshua's mother said to him, "They have no more wine." Yeshua replied, "Mother, why should that concern me? — or you? My time hasn't come yet." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now six stone water-jars were standing there for the Jewish ceremonial washings, each with a capacity of twenty or thirty gallons. Yeshua told them, "Fill the jars with water," and they filled them to the brim. He said, "Now draw some out, and take it to the man in charge of the banquet"; and they took it. The man in charge tasted the water; it had now turned into wine! He did not know where it had come from, but the servants who had drawn the water knew. So he called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone else serves the good wine first and the poorer wine after people have drunk freely. But you have kept the good wine until now!" This, the first of Yeshua's miraculous signs, he did at Kanah in the Galil; he manifested his glory, and his talmidim came to trust in him. Yochanan (John) 2:1 – 11 (CJB)

We don't know what has transpired in the life of Miryam or Yeshua since the account in Luke 2:41 – 50 when He was twelve years of age. However, in witnessing Miryam's words to the servants - *"Do whatever He tells you to do."* Miryam is speaking as one with authority and understanding of Yeshua. What does she know now, that she didn't know 18 years ago? Ultimately, we do not know what had transpired, yet with the accumulation of experience over the life of Yeshua, she likely grew in her faith and understanding. This is evident through the experiences shared in the Gospels of Luke and Yochanan (John).

Miryam was a loving mother to her firstborn son from the moment He was promised to her. She knew He was special from the time of the promise. She was part of His life from the beginning at conception to His end at death. Miryam was there. Strikingly, Yosef was not there for the majority of Yeshua's life. We last read of Him when Yeshua was twelve. What happened to Yosef, Scripture remains silent. As the oldest, Yeshua was now the "man of the house". He was the one who was responsible for His widowed mother. Knowing His time was concluding, Yeshua spoke to Yochanan (John), conveying to him, *"this is your mother."* To Miryam He conveyed, *"this is your son."* Miryam's status as a widow is addressed throughout Torah and is affirmed in the New Covenant writings.

"You are not to abuse any widow or orphan. If you do abuse them in any way, and they cry to me, I will certainly heed their cry. My anger will burn, and I will kill you with the sword — your own wives will be widows and your own children fatherless." Sh'mot (Exodus) 22:21 – 23 (CJB)

(See also D'varim (Deuteronomy) 14:29, 16:11, 16:14, 24:19-21; 26:12-13)

Additionally, widows are to be provided for throughout the community, whether at the moadim (appointed times), during the harvest times and throughout the year. Yeshua is conveying this responsibility upon Yochanan (John). While on the execution-stake, Yeshua, faithful and obedient to Torah even during His fleeting breath considers His mother's needs as a widow and a soon to be grieving parent. This special consideration for the widow as provided by Torah takes into account their vulnerability in being without a husband. In the case of Miryam had Yeshua, her firstborn. In a matter of hours that will no longer be the case. As such, Yeshua brings an aspect of shalom (peace) to her mother.

The caring for widows is further substantiated in the New Covenant writings.

"Show respect to widows who are really in need. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, first let them learn to do their religious duty to their own family and thus repay some of the debt they owe their forebears, for this is what is acceptable in the sight of God. Now the widow who is really in need, the one who has been left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in petitions and prayers night and day." 1 Timothy 5:3 – 5 (CJB)

Interestingly, we know Yeshua had other siblings, including Ya'akov (James), yet He still gave Yochanan (John) not just the responsibility, but also the honor in caring for His mother Miryam, a widow and Adonai's servant.