

Congregation of Yahshua
Growing in Yahshua – Part 1 - Foundations

Congregation of Yahshua

2100 Eccles St, Pittsburgh, PA 15210



Growing in Yahshua Part 1: Foundations

First steps in growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior
Yahshua Messiah

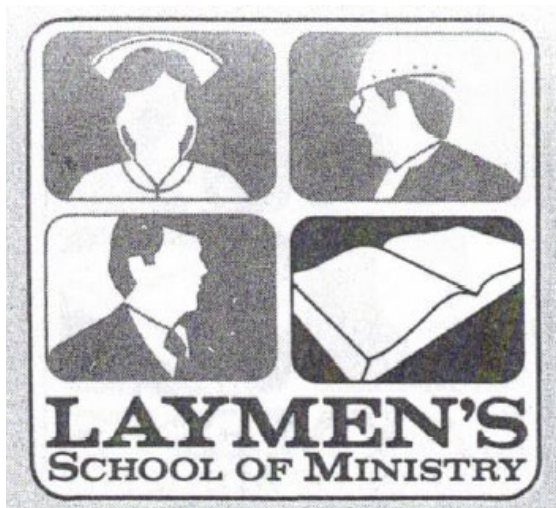
*2 Peter 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior
Yahshua Messiah. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.*

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By Laymen's School of Ministry
Modified by Congregation of Yahshua, Pittsburgh
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This study is adapted from Laymen's School of Ministry's Foundations for Christian Growth and has been modified in certain areas to align with the beliefs and doctrines of Congregation of Yahshua, Pittsburgh. We acknowledge and appreciate the time and effort it took to create the study and we pray that Yahweh continues to bless the people and work of Laymen's School of Ministry.



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Lesson 3:

Righteousness – The Gift of

Elohim

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I. INTRODUCTION

E. W. Kenyon defines righteousness as "the ability to stand in the presence of the Father Elohim without the sense of guilt or inferiority."¹ A righteous person is one who has *right-standing with Elohim*. Without righteousness, fellowship with Elohim is impossible. Adam was created with this kind of right-standing. After he disobeyed, he cowered in the presence of Elohim because of the sin that was then in him (Genesis 3:10). He was no longer in right-standing with Elohim, so fellowship was destroyed.

Before fellowship with Elohim could be reestablished, this sin had to be replaced with righteousness. That is what the story of Elohim's redemption is all about: **Elohim removed from man the sin which separated him from Elohim and replaced it with His very own righteousness.** How Elohim accomplished this and that He was just in doing so, is revealed in the "gospel" (good news) message of the New Testament.

For many years the gospel has been preached as a revelation of sin. Preachers have spent great amounts of time telling of the evil which is in mankind. However, in his letter to the Romans, Paul shows us that rather than the gospel being a revelation of sin, it is a *revelation of righteousness*. He explains how Elohim made **His righteousness** available to man through faith in Yahshua Messiah (Romans 1:16,17).

Believers need to deepen their understanding of this revelation. Elohim has imparted unto them His own righteousness, and they are therefore in right-standing with Him. Elohim's desire is that we know this so well that we can " ... *draw near with confidence to the throne of grace*" (Hebrews 4:16), the very presence of Elohim, free from the fear that Adam experienced after he sinned.

II. MAN'S GREAT NEED

When studying Elohim's redemption of man, it is vital that we understand what it is that we were redeemed from! Paul told the Ephesians that before they were saved, they were by nature the children of wrath (Ephesians 2:3); he said that they were without hope and without Elohim in the world (Ephesians 2:12). Man was under *the dominion of darkness* and needed to be delivered (Colossians 1:13). As we shall see, only Elohim could accomplish this deliverance.

A. MAN BEFORE THE FALL

When Elohim created Adam, He created him without sin and without flaw, in His own image (Genesis 1:27), and breathed into him His own Spirit (Genesis 2:7). Adam was a perfect creation (Genesis 1:31), able to stand in Elohim's presence without guilt or fear and enjoy fellowship with Him.

1. Created in Elohim's Image

Adam was made in the *image of Elohim*, which set him apart, from all the other creatures Elohim had created. He was in Elohim's image in that he was created a *spiritual being* (Genesis 1:27). Elohim is a spirit and can only have fellowship with a creature of like kind. So, He made man "a little lower" than Himself, a spirit being with whom He could fellowship.

2. Elohim's under-ruler

Adam was a creature of *authority*, for Elohim gave him dominion over all the works of His hands (Genesis 1:26,28). We have little appreciated the extent of his dominion. David said:

Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than heavenly beings, And dost crown him with glory and majesty! Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet.

Psalms 8:5,6

Adam was Elohim's under-ruler on the earth, and it was his responsibility to take care of it.

3. Freedom of Choice

Adam was also given *freedom of choice*. It was his prerogative to choose to obey Elohim or to disobey Him. The forbidden tree was placed in the garden (Genesis 2:9) to insure that Adam had this freedom. Without it he would have been little more than a robot, obeying Elohim simply because he had no other option.

The New Testament reveals that before the foundations of the world, Elohim had wanted a family (Ephesians 1:4,5), which is why He called us into fellowship with Himself and His Son (1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 John 1:3). So He created a being like Himself (in His image), giving him

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dominion and freedom of choice. With such a creation, He could have fellowship.

B. MAN AFTER THE FALL

Elohim told Adam that if he disobeyed and ate of the forbidden tree, he would die the very day he did so (Genesis 2:17). Simple reading of the Bible text will show that Elohim was not referring to mere physical death, for Adam continued to live physically after his disobedience. **The immediate effect of this first sin was *inward*.** The outward manifestation of the inward effect did not occur until many years later. Adam was nine hundred and thirty years old when he physically died (Genesis 5:5).

1. Spiritual Death

The death to which Elohim referred was *spiritual death*. The entrance of sin into Adam's life brought separation from Elohim, the source of all life; "*for the wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23). The effect of this corruption of Adam's nature is immediately apparent; Adam tried to hide himself from the presence of Elohim (Genesis 3:8). The *unrighteousness* which came into Adam as a result of his disobedience made it impossible for him to come freely into Elohim's presence.

2. The Inheritance

The effects of Adam's disobedience go far beyond the life of Adam and Eve. We are told in the New Testament that because of Adam, we *all* died spiritually. For "*as in Adam **all die**, so also in Messiah all shall be made alive*" (1 Corinthians 15:22). Through one man's sin, death (i.e. spiritual death) entered the world and passed upon all men (Romans 5:12). All men have inherited spiritual death from Adam, because they are born with *Adam's likeness and image* (i.e. his fallen nature) as was Seth (Genesis 5:3).

Thus, the curse of sin passed onto the entire human race as a result of Adam's transgression. David was so aware of this curse that he stated in his prayer of repentance: "*Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me*" (Psalm 51:5).

C. MAN'S INABILITY TO HELP HIMSELF

Not only did spiritual death pass upon all men, but man was also left powerless to overcome this inward condition. The creature which Elohim had

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created to rule became a *slave to sin*, unable to break free and get back into fellowship with Elohim. No amount of good works could ever reestablish the right standing that Adam had with Elohim before the fall. Man was now by nature an unrighteous creature.

"For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of Elohim ... " (Romans 3:23). Paul says that there is none righteous, **not one** (Romans 3:10). Those who wish to establish their own righteousness by good works are destined to fail and might well cry out as did Paul before his conversion: *"Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?"* (Romans 7:24).

Please try to read all referenced verses.

III. ELOHIM'S ANSWER TO MAN'S NEED

Elohim didn't cease to love man when he fell and was lost in unrighteousness. If that were the case, no way of salvation would ever have been made by Elohim. Elohim's love for man was too great for Him to let man go to destruction without making a way of deliverance available.

*"For while we were still **helpless**, at the right time, Messiah died for the ungodly"* (Romans 5:6). Man was helpless to regain that position of right standing with Elohim that Adam had originally enjoyed. Elohim Himself would have to do it for man.

A. YAHSHUA, ELOHIM'S SOLUTION.

Elohim's redemption of man revolves around the person of His Son, Yahshua. Yahshua was Elohim's plan for our redemption from the very beginning. He is the promised redeemer who was to bruise (crush) the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15). On the day that man fell, Elohim had no other redeemer in mind but Yahshua. This is why Yahshua is called *"the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world"* (Revelation 13:8 **NIV**).

1. Did the Old Covenant Fail?

Some are of the mistaken impression that the Old Covenant is a plan of redemption which Elohim tried, but which didn't work. Yahshua is understood to be an alternate plan which Elohim enacted after the failure of the first.

But the Old Covenant was never intended to be the means by which Elohim would free man from the slavery of sin and un-righteousness. The scriptures are clear on this point. *"For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins"* (Hebrews 10:4). *"For the Law (i.e. the Old Covenant) can never by the same sacrifices which they offer continually,*

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make perfect those who draw near" (Hebrews 10:1). Elohim never intended the rituals and regulations of the Old Covenant to be the means of man's redemption.

Please try to read all referenced verses.

2. Atonement under the Old Covenant

Atonement in the Old Covenant was on the basis of Yahshua's sacrifice, since all the animal sacrifices of that covenant look forward to Yahshua's death. It was on this basis that Elohim overlooked the transgressions committed under the first covenant (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:15).

Please try to read all referenced verses.

B. OLD TESTAMENT FIGURES POINTING TO YAHSHUA

As we have already seen, the scriptures of the Old Testament point to Yahshua. Elohim instituted animal sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins in order to symbolize that Yahshua would come and sacrifice Himself for our sins; ". . . *without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness*" (Hebrews 9:22).

For the Israelites, the most significant day for the expiation of sin in the calendar was the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). This was the day on which the High Priest made sacrifice for the sins of the people.

Read Leviticus 16:1 – 28

The sin offering mentioned in this passage is symbolic of the Lord Yahshua. Notice that it involved not one, but *two* goats.

1. The blood

The first goat was to be killed and its blood sprinkled on the mercy seat for the expiation of sin (Leviticus 16:15). Shed blood meant that something had died (Leviticus 17:11). Elohim thus used this blood as a visual reminder to the Israelites that their sin had resulted in *death* (Leviticus 1:5,11; 3:2,8; 4:5-7; 5:9).

2. The scapegoat

The second goat was presented to Aaron alive. Laying his hands upon its head, Aaron confessed over it all the sins of the people. Thus, the second goat became the *sin-bearer* for the people. "And

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the goat (i.e. the scapegoat) shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land" (Leviticus 16:21,22).

C. NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT OF OLD TESTAMENT FIGURES

The rituals described in Leviticus 16 are of course symbolic of Christ's sacrifice. Just as there were two animals for the sin offering, so redemption through Messiah is two-fold.

1. The shedding of blood

Yahshua shed His blood for the forgiveness and cleansing of our sins. "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

2. The identification with sin

Yahshua was identified with our sins, bearing them and their penalty, so that we wouldn't have to. "*He (Elohim) made Him (Yahshua) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of Elohim in Him*" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

D. THE BLOOD OF YAHSHUA CLEANSED SIN

Even before His death, Yahshua made it plain that remission of sins would only be accomplished with the shedding of His own blood (Mark 14:24). His blood was the price that was paid to redeem us to Elohim (1 Peter 1:18,19).

Yahshua's blood did something which the blood of animals could never do. The blood of animal sacrifices had only temporary and external effects (Hebrews 9:9,10; Hebrews 10:1-3). But the blood of Yahshua has a permanent and inward effect (Hebrews 9:12,14). It is His blood that washed us clean from our sins (Revelation 1:5), making us holy and blameless before the Father.

Please try to read all referenced verses.

1. The blood of Yahshua speaks for us

The blood of Yahshua speaks and avails for us today. In Hebrews 12:24, we are told that we have come to "...***the sprinkled blood*** (i.e., Yahshua's blood), *which speaks better things than the blood of Abel.*"

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When Abel was murdered by his brother Cain, Elohim told Cain that Abel's blood was crying out to Him from the ground (Genesis 4:10).

Yahshua's blood speaks as well. It speaks *forgiveness and redemption*. Yahshua's blood is speaking forgiveness for you at this very moment, telling Elohim that the price for your sin has been paid! Praise Yahweh!

2. The blood of Yahshua is our receipt

Yahshua's shed blood signifies that He poured out His life for us (Leviticus 17:11). The penalty for sin is death, and somebody had to pay that price, either we or somebody else on our behalf. Yahshua paid that price for us, and His blood is our receipt that that debt has been paid.

E. MESSIAH'S IDENTIFICATION WITH MAN

Yahshua was identified with the sin of mankind, becoming the *sin-bearer* for humanity. Although He was without sin, Elohim imputed all our sin to Him (i.e. charged it to His account), and Yahshua suffered the penalty for it (2 Corinthians 5:21). Just as the scapegoat bore the sin of the Israelites, and was driven into the wilderness, so Yahshua bore our sin (Mark 15:34; Acts 2:27; Romans 10:7) and the sin was taken away from us to a faraway place, as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12).

Yahshua didn't just bear the penalty for sin - **He bore the sin itself**. *"But Yahweh has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him"* (Isaiah 53:6,12). He died under the judgment of Elohim and went to the place of departed spirits, called Hades (Acts 2:27) or the abyss (Romans 10:7). According to Yahshua's teaching in Luke 16:19 - 31, Hades had two parts: the place of the righteous dead, and the place of the wicked dead. Yahshua was in the place of the righteous dead because though He bore our sin, He, Himself, was righteous and sinless.

1. Represented in His death

When Yahshua died on the cross, everything that had ever alienated us from Elohim died with Him. The sin which had lodged in our spirits and separated us from Elohim was dealt a death blow on the cross. " ... *Our old self (man) was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with*" (Romans 6:6).

The "old man" to which Paul refers was our old, spiritually dead nature. Paul was so acutely aware that he was **represented in Christ's death** that he could say, *"I have been crucified with Christ"*

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(Galatians 2:20), by which he meant, "the sinful nature (old man) that separated me from Elohim **died when Yahshua died!**"

2. Represented in His resurrection

Not only were we represented in Christ's death, but we were also represented in His resurrection. Elohim "**made us alive together** with Messiah (by grace you have been saved), and **raised us up** with Him, and **seated us with Him in heavenly places**, in Messiah Yahshua" (Ephesians 2:5,6).

The purpose in Christ's becoming sin for us was that we might be made the righteousness of Elohim. Yahshua was imputed with our sin, so that we could be imputed with **His righteousness**.

F. HOW ELOHIM COULD BE JUST IN JUSTIFYING

When Elohim redeemed man, He had to do so in such a way as was consistent with His character. For Elohim to have simply "let us off the hook" and overlooked our sin would have compromised His righteous nature, making Him a party to Adam's sin. Elohim is holy and just, and as such, He must inflict righteous punishment on all sin. Thus, the wrath of Elohim was justly directed toward man, because by nature man was a sinful creature (Romans 3:23).

But the Bible says that Elohim sent Yahshua to be the *propitiation* for our sins (Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10). Propitiation means *appeasement or satisfaction*. By the sacrifice of Yahshua, the just wrath of Elohim was appeased. The wrath that should rightly have fallen on us was focused on Messiah as He hung on the cross.

1. An acceptable sacrifice

To be an acceptable sacrifice, Yahshua had to be a man without sin. If He had sinned at any point during His life, His death would have been for His sins and not for ours. Before Yahshua could be deemed a spotless sacrifice, He had to be tempted in all points like us, and yet not sin. This is why Yahshua had to be human.

If Elohim had just appeared on the scene (an eternal spirit) and not become a man, He would not have been vulnerable to temptation; for "Elohim cannot be tempted by evil" (James 1:13). Only humans (and angels) can be tempted; so Yahshua became a man.

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The Bible affirms that Yahshua was tempted in every way, yet He never succumbed (Hebrews 4:15); He always obeyed Elohim. In fact, He lived His entire life in accordance with the precepts of Yahweh's Law. Thus, when He was led away to Calvary, He was indeed a "lamb unblemished and spotless" (1 Peter 1:19).

2. A Son of Adam obedient to death

Yahshua always referred to Himself as *"the Son of Man"* (Matthew 11:19; 16:13); He was not an ethereal spirit that floated around the earth for thirty-three years. He was a flesh-and-blood human being. *"What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we **beheld and our hands handled**, concerning the Word of Life"* (1 John 1:1).

Yahshua is called the "last Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:45; Romans 5:14), because He came to undo what the first Adam had done. The first Adam fell because he disobeyed Elohim. The Last Adam (Yahshua) obeyed Elohim in *every point*, becoming obedient to the point of death (Philippians 2:8). Yahshua's obedience to Elohim in the Garden of Gethsemane - to die for the sins of mankind - undid what Adam's disobedience had done – bringing sins to all mankind - in the Garden of Eden.

3. Divinity

However, in order for Yahshua to qualify to bear the sins of the whole world and for His sacrifice to be sufficient for all people's sins, He had to be *Elohim*. Only Elohim could bear on Himself the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2). Only Elohim's life was worth enough to buy back the entire human race.

And thus, we see Yahshua continually affirming His divinity. *"I and the Father are one"* (John 10:30). *"Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am"* (John 8:58). In this latter scripture, Yahshua used the same expression to describe Himself which Elohim spoke to Moses: *"I am that I am"* (Exodus 3:14).

4. Fully Elohim/fully man

To be a spotless representative of mankind (who lived without sin) and to be worthy enough to pay the price for all of man's sins, our Redeemer had to be man and Elohim at the same time. This is exactly what Yahshua was. He was fully man and fully Elohim in one being.

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How could a person be man and Elohim? Elohim accomplished this through the virgin birth. Yahshua was born when the Holy Spirit overshadowed a virgin by the name of Mary (or Miriam) and caused her to conceive (Luke 1:35). This was a supernatural occurrence. Yahshua was born of a woman (Galatians 4:4), but He was conceived by the Spirit of Almighty Elohim (Matthew 1:18-20)! Thus, simultaneously He was fully man and fully Elohim.

"And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: **Elohim was manifested in the flesh**, justified in the Spirit, *seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory*" (1 Timothy 3:16 **KJV**).

The wages of our sin was death, but Elohim deemed the death of His spotless Son Yahshua as sufficient to pay the sin-debt that we all owed. As we have seen, **Yahshua was a worthy substitute for us**, and so Elohim could be " *...just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Yahshua*" (Romans 3:26). Our sins weren't overlooked by Elohim. **He paid for them Himself at the price of His very own Son.**

IV. THE FREE GIFT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

As we have said, Elohim's motivation for making His own righteousness available was His great Love. Elohim was not obligated in any way to redeem man from the mess that he was in. Man was responsible for the Fall, not Elohim. Elohim would have been perfectly justified in letting mankind bear all the punishment for his iniquity.

That Elohim didn't let man go to destruction but made a way of salvation for him at the price of His own Son, is a testimony to His *Grace and Everlasting Mercy* (Ephesians 2:7). Elohim has not dealt with us according to our sins, but instead He dealt with His Son according to *our* sins, thereby making available to us the *free gift of righteousness*. Elohim saw that man was helpless to reestablish right-standing with Him, so He reestablished it for us.

A. NOT BY WORKS

Paul told Titus that we are saved by the mercy of Elohim, and not by our *works* of righteousness (Titus 3:5). For many, this is a hard fact to accept. **There is nothing any man can ever do that will make him worthy by his own merit to be in right-standing with Elohim.**

This is the very truth which the Jews could not comprehend. The Bible says the Jews did not achieve right-standing " *... because they did not*

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pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone (i.e.,Yahshua)" (Romans 9:32). Righteousness can only be achieved through faith in Yahshua Messiah; good works will never make anyone righteous.

1. The Law

The Law (by which we mean the commandments given through Moses) was never meant to be the way for man to receive righteousness, because " *... by the works of the Law, no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin*" (Romans 3:20).

The Law was given to show man that he is lost in sin (See Romans 7:14-24 in which Paul describes his state before he was saved), and that he is utterly helpless to achieve right standing with Elohim on his own merit. Paul called the Law a tutor that brings us to Messiah (Galatians 3:24), so that we can be made right by putting our faith in Yahshua's sacrifice.

2. Self-righteousness

Elohim's righteousness is a free gift that *cannot be earned*. If you had to work for it, it wouldn't be a free gift (Romans 4:4,5). Any righteousness which is based upon works is not Elohim's righteousness but is rather *self-righteousness*, a righteousness based on the flesh rather than on Yahshua's sacrifice.

B. RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH

"For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the Law" (Romans 3:28). Paul is emphatic in his assertion that *only faith* in Yahshua brings about righteousness. If works were capable of making a man righteous, then Christ's suffering and death were a waste of time (Galatians 2:21).

The only way to get a free gift is simply to *receive it*, and Elohim's method of receiving from Him is *Faith* (Hebrews 11:6). The only way any man will ever receive the righteousness which Elohim has made available is to **receive it by faith!**

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1. Our believing

"And Abraham believed Elohim, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness" (Romans 4:3). Abraham wasn't justified because he was a good man or because he deserved to be justified. He was justified because he believed Elohim.

We can stand before Elohim without condemnation, not because we worked ourselves to a position of worthiness before Him, but because we have *faith* in the fact that Yahshua's sacrifice was sufficient to eliminate sin. When Elohim sees a man or woman not striving to establish his or her *own* righteousness, but simply accepting Elohim's free gift and *believing* in Yahshua's all-sufficient sacrifice, Elohim credits them with His very own, holy and pure *Righteousness*.

2. Elohim's Grace

*"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by **grace**" (Romans 4:16).* The fact that Elohim's righteousness can only be received by faith insures that that righteousness is imputed completely on the basis of Elohim's *unmerited favor* and has nothing to do with our deeds. We are made righteous through faith only because faith is the hand which reaches up and receives the provision of Elohim's Grace (unmerited favor). *"For by **grace** you have been saved, **through faith**" (Ephesians 2:8).*

Faith is not a work to which a Christian can point and then say to Elohim, "See there! I *deserve* to be justified." A child who receives a gift from his parents doesn't then go out and start bragging about how wonderful *he is* for the way in which he received the gift. He tells others how wonderful and loving his parents are! In the same way, faith brings glory not to the one who believes, but to the One who bestows the gracious gift which faith receives. *"Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:31).*

3. Our Receiving

Faith which receives Messiah is as simple an act as when your child receives an apple from you, because you hold it out and promise to give him the apple if he comes for it. The belief and the receiving relate only to an apple; but they makeup precisely the same act as the faith which deals with eternal salvation. What the child's hand is to the apple, that your faith is to the perfect salvation of Christ. The child's hand does not make the apple, nor improve the apple, nor deserve the apple; *it only takes it*. And faith is chosen by Elohim to

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be the receiver of salvation because it does not pretend to create salvation, nor to help in it, but it is content humbly to receive it.

4. Continuing in Grace

Our continuing relationship with Elohim is based upon the same grace that brought us into salvation. We were saved by grace and now we stand in that same unmerited favor! Through Yahshua " ...we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand" (Romans 5:2).

You are no more righteous and acceptable in Elohim's sight today than you were on the day in which you were saved. You didn't deserve the favor of Elohim then, and you don't deserve it now! Elohim's favor can never be earned by man. Your right standing with Elohim is based on the fact that you believe in the sufficiency of Yahshua's sacrifice.

5. Receiving Forgiveness

If, after we are saved, we succumb to the flesh and stumble in some kind of sin, our forgiveness is based upon the same principles as was our salvation: confession and faith. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Elohim forgives us when we stumble on the same basis as He redeemed us - Grace! The idea of penance (doing good deeds to pay for sins) came into being because men thought that they could earn Elohim's forgiveness. Penance is nothing more than the flesh saying, "I don't need the grace of Elohim; I can earn His forgiveness!" But, the Bible says, "No flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Corinthians 1:29 KJV).

V. THE EFFECT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

"The work of righteousness will be **peace**, and the service of righteousness, **quietness** and **confidence** forever" (Isaiah 32:17). When Elohim gave His righteousness to us, He restored us to the right standing which Adam had enjoyed before the Fall. That right standing has a profound effect upon a person.

Righteousness returns to him the dominion which Elohim had given Adam at the outset.

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Righteousness restores to him the freedom from fear which Adam lost after he fell (Genesis 3:10).

Righteousness enables him to come into Elohim's presence without any feeling of guilt, inferiority, or condemnation.

A. PEACE WITH ELOHIM

*"Therefore having been justified by faith, we have **peace with Elohim** through our Lord Yahshua Messiah" (Romans 5:1).* With the sin that had separated us from Elohim taken out of the way, a relationship without fear can be established between us and Elohim. This is the fellowship which Elohim had desired when He created Adam and to which He predestined *us* in Love before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4,5).

1. Yahshua Removed the Sin Barrier

There is no longer any barrier between Elohim and us. In fact, we are encouraged to come boldly into the holy place, that is, into the very presence of Elohim (Hebrews 4:16; 10:19 KJV). Under the Old Covenant, the presence of Elohim was a fearsome thing, and the High Priest entered the holy place once a year, and then only after elaborate preparations (Leviticus 16:33,34).

But we are under a better covenant than they were because Yahshua has opened the way into the presence of Elohim for us. We can come freely without any fear (Hebrews 10:19,20).

2. Free Access to Elohim's Presence

The exhortation of the scriptures to us is to come freely into Elohim's presence. *"Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22).* Elohim is not pleased when those whom He has redeemed, justified, and sanctified by the blood of His Son stay away from Him because of fear. He is calling us to *"draw near,"* because He sees us as holy and blameless (Ephesians 1:4).

We are righteous before Elohim, and so He is at peace with us. The sin and condemnation that caused Adam to fear have been removed (Romans 8:1), so there is no reason for us to be afraid of Elohim. Elohim has imparted to us His own righteousness, the same right standing that Yahshua had when He walked the earth. *"He (Elohim) made Him (Yahshua) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the **righteousness of Elohim** in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).*

B. QUIETNESS AND CONFIDENCE

There is an assurance and a boldness that comes when a person knows that he is in right standing with the Elohim who created the universe. The scripture says that *"the righteous are **bold as a lion**"* (Proverbs 28:1).

The people of Yahshua's day often marveled at the authority and boldness in which Yahshua spoke and acted (Mark 1:22,27). When He prayed before the tomb of Lazarus, He said: *"Father, I thank Thee that Thou heardest Me. And I knew that **Thou hearest Me always**"* (John 11:41,42). Yahshua was always confident that He had Elohim's ear. That confidence stemmed from His awareness that He was in right standing with Elohim Who loved Him and Who could do anything that He asked.

When you are in right standing with Elohim and can stand blameless before Him, that means Elohim is *for you*, **He is on your side!** Your quiet assurance comes from this realization: *"If **Elohim** be for us, **who can be against us?**"* (Romans 8:31 KJV). This is the boldness that enabled Peter to tell the lame man at the Beautiful Gate to rise and walk (Acts 3:6). This is the confidence that is able to tell a dead woman to arise (Acts 9:40).

VI. ESTABLISHING THE REALITY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Many Christians go through life ignorant of the fact that they have been made the righteousness of Elohim in Christ. They don't know that they have right standing with Elohim, so they have little confidence to come before Him. The author of Hebrews called this kind of Christian a "babe." *"For everyone who partakes only of milk is **not accustomed to the word of righteousness**, for he is a babe"* (Hebrews 5:13).

That these believers don't know that Elohim has made them righteous doesn't in any way negate the truth of that fact. They are righteous whether they know it or not. The sad result, however, is that these people can't avail themselves of all the blessings which right standing brings. There is no barrier of sin between them and Elohim, but they are convinced that one exists. Many times this kind of thinking is the result of the gospel being preached as a revelation of sin, rather than a revelation of Elohim's righteousness.

Believers need to establish firmly in their hearts and minds that **Elohim has declared them righteous** on the basis of Yahshua's sacrifice. Elohim sees us as holy and blameless, washed pure from our sins by the blood of His Son. We should continue in that righteousness by confessing our sins daily. As we affirm in our

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minds that we are righteous before Him, we will become mature adults, not only "*accustomed,*" but **well-versed in "*the word of righteousness.*"**

A. DON'T LOOK TO YOUR EMOTIONS

Emotional feelings can't always be trusted to tell you the truth, so it is foolish to base your assurance of righteousness on emotions. Emotions can change from one day to the next, but your righteousness is based upon the sacrifice of Yahshua, and the effects of that sacrifice are eternal and unchanging. No matter what you may feel like, Elohim sees you as holy and blameless, because of Yahshua. If you sin, confess your sins, and your right standing in Elohim will be restored.

Righteousness is by faith (Romans 1:16,17), and faith is not an emotion. Our right standing before Elohim is based upon our faith in the work of the cross. When we choose to believe feelings of unworthiness, we are in effect saying that Christ's sacrifice was not sufficient. Put your faith in what the Word says Yahshua accomplished for us on Calvary, and not in what your emotions say about your worthiness.

B. SEE YOURSELF AS ELOHIM SEES YOU

The Word of Elohim is the only true reflection of who you are before Elohim. The Word gives us "Elohim's eye view" on reality and tells exactly what Elohim thinks of those whom Messiah has redeemed with His blood. As we dwell on what the Word says about us and our place in Christ, our thoughts about ourselves begin to conform to Elohim's thoughts about us.

The Word says *you are the righteousness of Elohim* (2 Corinthians 5:21), because **that is how Elohim sees you!**

The Word says *you are holy and blameless before Him*

(Ephesians 1:4), because **that is what Elohim thinks of you!**

The Word says *you are part of a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for Elohim's own possession* (1 Peter 2:9), because **that is how Elohim feels about you!**

Agree with Elohim and His Word, rather than your emotions.

You are a righteous person!

VII. SUMMARY – THE VALUE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The value of anything can only be judged by the *price* that was paid to obtain it. When we see the great price that was paid to forgive us and to impart to us Elohim's righteousness, we can then fully appreciate the value of that righteousness. Our right standing with Elohim is not lacking in any point, for He has " . . . *forgiven us all our transgressions*" (Colossians 2:13). There is nothing that can bar us from the presence of Elohim.

"Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Yahshua ... let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:19,22).

VIII. LESSON THREE – THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ELOHIM - STUDY QUESTIONS

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

A. Day One

1) What is the Gospel a revelation of? What does it show us?

2) Describe man before the fall by listing three different characteristics and/or possessions of Adam, the first man, before he sinned.

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

3) Adam's sin had a great effect on him as well as on the rest of mankind. How did the fall affect Adam and how does it affect us today (i.e. before we are born again)?

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- 4) What was Elohim's plan for redemption from the very beginning? Give two scriptures which show that Elohim had no other plan in mind.

(a) _____

(b) _____

B. Day Two

- 1) The New Testament states explicitly that the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin. Why was Elohim able to forgive (pass over) men's sins on the basis of animal sacrifice under the Old Covenant? Give scripture to support your answer.

- 2) The description of the Day of Atonement and the sacrifice of the two goats described in Leviticus 16 symbolizes the two-fold nature of Yahshua's sacrifice. What were these two basic aspects of Christ's death?

(a) _____

(b) _____

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- 3) What is the effect of the blood of Yahshua within us? What does Yahshua's blood speak of?

- 4) What does propitiation mean? What does it signify to **you**?

C. Day Three

- 1) Briefly explain how each of the following scriptures attest to Yahshua's **humanity**.

(a) Luke 2:7 _____

(b) Hebrews 4:15 _____

(c) 1 John 1:1 _____

Briefly explain how each of the following scriptures attest to Yahshua's **divinity**.

(d) John 8:58 _____

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(e) John 10:30 _____

2) Why was it necessary for our Redeemer to be fully Elohim **and** fully man?

3) Fill in the blanks: We were saved by _____, through _____.
Explain why faith is not a work, by which we merit the salvation of Elohim.

4) How would you respond to a person who said, "I know I'm going to heaven because I obey all the rules of my church!"? What scriptures would you show him?

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D. Day Four

- 1) According to Isaiah 32:17, what are the three main effects or works of righteousness in the hearts and minds of believers?

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

- 2) How has a revelation of righteousness through Messiah changed the way in which you approach Elohim? How has it changed the way you view yourself?
