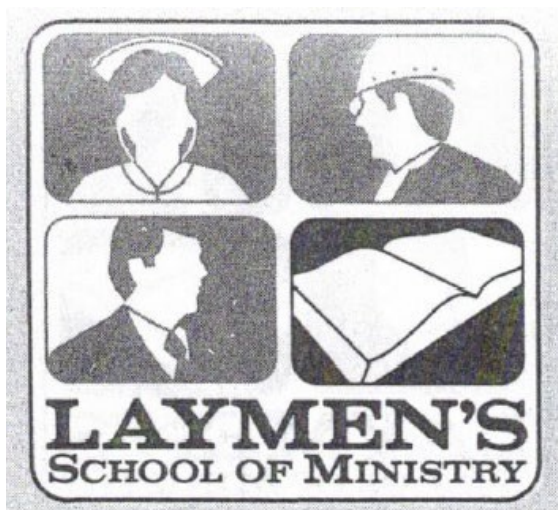


Lesson 7: Freedom From Sin – Alive to Elohim

Congregation of Yahshua
Growing in Yahshua – Part 1 - Foundations

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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I. INTRODUCTION

We have already seen in Lesson 3, that Elohim justified us through the sacrifice of Yahshua. Elohim forgave us all our sins and made us to be the righteousness of Elohim in Messiah (2 Corinthians 5:21). This righteousness (right standing with Elohim) is based, not on works, but on faith. There were no good works which we did which made us worthy to receive the forgiveness of sins. Elohim declared us righteous on the basis of His mercy and grace, as we put faith in His crucified and risen Son.

Every believer is righteous on the inside because he has become a partaker of Elohim's divine, righteous nature (2 Peter 1:4). Righteousness is infused into the very being of every Christian. That is why we can come boldly before Elohim's throne. That is why we can have the abiding presence of His Spirit with us continually. Without our having been made righteous, we could not be called the sons of Elohim (1 John 3:1). Elohim is righteous, and those who are born of Him have the same nature that He has.

But righteousness means more than just right standing with Elohim. *"Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous"* (1 John 3:7). John did not write this statement to condemn, or to make people feel that they are unsaved. He simply states that those who are righteous on the inside have the power and ability to **ACT** righteously. The idea of **ACTING** right cannot be separated from the New Testament concept of righteousness.

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Messiah Yahshua **for good works**, which Elohim prepared beforehand, **that we should walk in them**"* (Ephesians 2:10). We were not created *by* good works, but we were created *for* good works. Elohim's desire is that the righteous, holy nature that is within us (that nature which enables us to stand before Elohim unashamed) begin to manifest itself in our outward walk, in the way we live. It is *abnormal* for a righteous new creature to continue to walk under the bondage of sin. Elohim has made the way clear for ALL believers to walk completely free from sin's domination in their lives. Indeed, He has called every believer to this kind of walk. *"But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior"* (1 Peter 1:15).

II. DEAD TO SIN

Please read Romans 6:1 - 7

Elohim will not give a command to His people unless He has also given them the *ability* to fulfill that command. Elohim's call to believers is for them to live holy lives,

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free from the bondage of sin. But Elohim has also given to every believer the ability to walk *above* sin and sinful habits. The new birth resulted in a new man, one that is *not* sinful. On the contrary, that new man is perfect, made in the very image of Elohim. Elohim has enabled us to walk free from sin's power: by putting to death the thing within us that drove us to sin, and by placing within us a powerful and righteous *new nature*.

Many believers try to fulfill this call to holiness without having a clear understanding of the work that Elohim has done in their inner man. The work of the cross cleansed us from the guilt and condemnation of sin.

Yahshua's shed blood washed us clean from all our sins. Yet if that were all that was done, we would be forgiven, but still dominated by an evil inner nature which would make us sin. But the work of Calvary not only removed the guilt and condemnation of sin, it also removed the source of sin within us. The evil drive within us that made us slaves to sin was done away with on the cross. We must have a clear understanding of this *fact* of redemption, so that we may walk in all the liberty Elohim has purchased for us, the freedom to serve Yahweh in righteousness.

A. THE OLD MAN

"Knowing this, that our old self (old man) was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin" (Romans 6:6). The thing that kept us enslaved to sin was the "old man." This "old man" (or old creature) had to be killed in order for us to be freed from sin's power. This was the part of us that was crucified with Yahshua. "I have been crucified with Messiah, nevertheless I live" (Galatians 2:20).

1. Born Into Death

Our old man was that part of us that was *dead to Elohim* before we were born again. When Adam sinned in the garden of Eden and fell from the glory of Yahweh, he was born out of life and was born into death. He became a sinful creature, ruled and dominated by an inner nature which drove him to sin. This helpless state was passed onto all of Adam's descendants (Psalm 51:5; 1 Corinthians 15:21,22).

Unsaved people are thus left with an evil inner nature, which Paul calls the "old man." The old man cannot be reformed or rehabilitated. That is the reason that humanistic philosophy fails to bring about any real change in people. Trying to reform the "old man" will only end in failure. There is only one effective way to deal with the evil inner nature: **it must be killed.**

2. The Unregenerate State

In Romans 7:14-25, Paul describes the state of an unregenerate man who is ruled by his sinful nature. Here we find a vivid picture of what it is like to be dominated by an old man that is yet alive and well. The man Paul describes:

- a) Is sold into bondage to sin (Romans 7:14).
- b) Does the very thing that he hates to do (Romans 7:15).
- c) Is unable to do the good that he wants to do (Romans 7:18).
- d) Is a *prisoner* of the law of sin in his body (Romans 7:23).
- e) Serves the law of sin in his flesh, even though it is contrary to the law of Elohim which his mind acknowledges (Romans 7:25).
- f) Is a *WRETCHED MAN!* (Romans 7:24).

3. The Law of Yahweh Exposes Sin

Yahweh's Law, which is His character, exposes man's real sinful condition. The Law is like a bright light, and a bright light always exposes darkness.

The Law is holy, righteous, and good (Romans 7:12), but because of the law of sin and death which operates in the flesh, the flesh is unable to do the law of Yahweh without the inner man first being regenerated and without the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 7:21 – 8:4 ESV

21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ***22*** For I delight in the law of Elohim, in my inner being, ***23*** but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that ***dwells in my members***.

24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ***25*** Thanks be to Elohim through Yahshua Messiah our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of Elohim with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Paul writes above that though he may desire to serve the law of Elohim, he cannot do it in the flesh because of the law of sin and death that is in his flesh.

Paul then writes that when he got saved, he was given the Holy Spirit who gives us eternal life and another law, the law of the Spirit of life, that sets

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us free from the law of sin and death in our flesh. We are no longer bound to the law of sin and death, having an inability to serve Yahweh through His law. We are now free to serve Him in righteousness because of the law of the Spirit of life.

Chapter 8 1 *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Yahshua.^a 2* ***For the law of the Spirit of life has set you^b free in Messiah Yahshua from the law of sin and death. 3*** *For Elohim has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4* ***in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.***

Because of the Holy Spirit, we now have the power to walk, that is live, according to the Spirit. Oh bless the Name of Yahweh!

B. CRUCIFIED WITH MESSIAH

Paul said that the old man was crucified with Messiah (Romans 6:6). That inner disposition to sin, which left us helpless, was put to death with Yahshua. That was the beginning of our identification with His redemptive work on the cross. Paul was so acutely aware of the reality of this vicarious death that he told the Colossians, ***"For you have died, and your life is hid with Messiah in Elohim"*** (Colossians 3:3).

The key to our being freed from the slavery of sin is our death with Yahshua. ***"He who has died is freed from sin"*** (Romans 6:7). Because we are now dead (that is, our old man is dead), **sin is no longer our master.**

1. The body of sin made powerless

Once the old man is crucified with Yahshua, then the "body of sin" is made ineffective. "For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we should no longer be slaves to sin"

(Romans 6:6 **NIV**). This gives us insight into what happens when the old man is crucified. The body of sin, that thing which drove us to sin, was "rendered powerless!"

The old inner nature always went in a way that was contrary to Elohim and His ways; it was a power within us which made it impossible for us to overcome sin. But the Bible says that the old man *was killed*, put to death on the cross. Since the old nature is DEAD, **it no longer has**

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the power to dominate us. "If any man be in Messiah, he is a *new creature; the old things have passed away*" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

2. Dead to the world

The death of our old nature on the cross means that we are totally separated from the world and its sinful principles. "But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Yahshua Messiah, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Galatians 6:14). We are separated from the world and all that it stands for, just as much as a physically dead man is separated from this physical world (i.e., his physical surroundings).

A man who is physically dead no longer has any relation to this physical world. It doesn't affect him because he is no longer a part of it. The government would not think to try to collect taxes from such a man, because governments and tax systems no longer have any relation to him. He is dead. He is not a part of this world. In the same way, believers are dead to the earthly principles of the world, because that old man, which made them a part of this world system is no longer alive. He was crucified with Yahshua. And so, every believer is **dead to sin**"; he is no longer a part of sin, nor is sin a part of him.

C. MADE ALIVE TO ELOHIM

Our identification with Messiah didn't end on the cross. "*Now if we have died with Messiah, we believe that we shall also live with Him*" (Romans 6:8). Paul is not speaking here of the resurrection on the last day. He refers to the fact that just as Messiah was raised from the dead, we too were made alive spiritually. " ... *as Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life*" (Romans 6:4). We were crucified with Messiah, in order that we might **walk in newness of life**, alive to Elohim and free from sin **today!**

"Even when we were dead in our transgressions, (He) made us alive together with Messiah ... , and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Messiah Yahshua" (Ephesians 2:5,6). Here we see the completion of our identification with Messiah: **Crucified with Him! Made alive together with Him! Raised up with Him! Seated in heavenly places with Him!**

1. Delivered and transferred

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Just as the death of the old man separated us from the world, so our being made *alive* to *Elohim* makes us a part of *His* kingdom. *"For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son"* (Colossians 1:13). We are part of His kingdom, because He has made us new creatures and filled us with His own holy and righteous nature. Our new nature is the nature of Elohim (2 Peter 1:4).

We were once alive to sin and dead to Yahweh, because our old man was still alive. But now we are dead to sin and alive to Yahweh, because the old nature is dead (separating us from sin and the world) and a new nature has been given to us (which puts us in contact with Elohim).

2. Willing and working

When we were alive to sin, we did by nature the things which sin desired. But now that we are alive to Elohim, there is within us not only the power, but also the **desire** to do what is right before Elohim. *"For it is Elohim who is at work in you, both **to will** and **to work** for His good pleasure"* (Philippians 2:13).

Our new nature within is made in the image of Elohim. The new man has the ability to do Elohim's good pleasure; but he also has the *will* to do Elohim's good pleasure. We not only have the power to do the will of Elohim, but we can do it without grudging or complaining.

III. WALKING IN FREEDOM

When one begins to realize all that has been done for us through the death and resurrection of Messiah, it becomes evident that **sin is NOT the normal Christian life!** Elohim didn't put the old man to death to have us continue to live in slavery to sin. He didn't crucify us with Messiah to see us flounder helplessly in sinful habits.

Elohim set us free on the inside, so that we could live in **complete mastery** over sin and over the enticements of the flesh and the devil. Elohim's desire is for every one of His children to rise above sin and live a life of purity and integrity. *"For Elohim has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in **sanctification**"* (1 Thessalonians 4:7; also read 1 Thessalonians 4:3). Sanctification signifies our separation from the world in the way we live our lives.

"How shall we who died to sin still live in it?" (Romans 6:2). To Paul, a Christian continuing to live in sin was an abnormality. It was a denial by the believer that

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Elohim had done anything inside the believer at all. Since Paul knew that the price for a believer's complete liberty from sin had already been paid, Paul was constantly exhorting Christians to live according to what Yahweh had done on the inside of them.

He told the carnal Corinthians: *"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from Elohim; and that you are not your own?"* (1 Corinthians 6:19). *"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to **walk in a manner worthy** of the calling with which you have been called"* (Ephesians 4:1). *"For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; **walk as children of light**"* (Ephesians 5:8).

A. FREEDOM TO CHOOSE

Paul gives us a vivid picture in Romans 7:14-25 of a man who is bound by sin. The man described there does not have the freedom to choose to do what is right. He is hopelessly trapped into doing the wrong thing. But the death of the old man in us means that *we have been given back the **freedom to choose** between righteousness and sin*. This was the freedom of choice that Adam had in the garden. After we got saved the old nature was done away with, and the driving force of sin was stripped of its power to dominate us.

So, the choice between sin and righteousness is before every believer. As a child of Yahweh, you are called upon to make this choice on a **daily** basis, as various temptations come your way. You can choose to follow the inclination of your regenerated spirit, or you can choose to follow the inclination of your flesh. Yahweh has given you the freedom to choose.

1. The truth

After Paul tells us that we are dead to sin, he goes on to enumerate the choice that is before us. "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to Elohim as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to Elohim" (Romans 6:12,13). All the power to walk above sin has been given to us, but it is then up to us as to whether we will "let sin reign in our mortal bodies. "

When confronted with a temptation or enticement to sin, remember that you do have a choice. Satan will always try to convince you that falling into sin is inevitable, that there is no choice. Often, he will quote the Bible (out of context) to support his lie.

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For example: *"For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish"* (Romans 7:19). This verse, describing a man **before** he is born again, is often used to try to convince ignorant believers that falling into sin is an inevitable way of life for them. Some people will remark, "We all sin," or "Everybody sins," but sin is not the way of life for the believer.

The truth is, however, that you are free to choose between sin and righteousness, because the old man is dead. If this were not the case, then Paul's exhortation for us not to *"let sin reign in our mortal bodies"* would be devoid of any truth or meaning. Paul exhorts us to choose because we do indeed have that freedom through the redemptive work of Messiah Yahshua.

2. Servants of righteousness

You are the servant of the one to whom you present yourself and the members of your body. If you present your body to sin, to obey its desires, then you are sin's servant. But, if you present yourself to Yahweh on a daily basis, then you are a servant of Yahweh and of righteousness (Romans 6:16,19).

"I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of Elohim, to **present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to Elohim, which is your spiritual service of worship" (Romans 12:1). Because Elohim has restored to us our free will (i.e. freedom to choose), we can present ourselves to Elohim, as servants of righteousness. We are given this option.

B. PUT TO DEATH THE DEEDS OF THE BODY

"So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh - for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live" (Romans 8:12,13). We are NOT obligated to obey the lusts of the flesh. As we have said, we are **FREE** to choose not to sin.

However, there is something which we as believers must do with our bodies. We have been freed from sin, but this does not mean that every desire or thought that comes into our heads is Godly and should be obeyed. Christians need to learn to put to death the deeds of the body. Because the body has not yet been redeemed from the fall (remember that this will not occur until our bodies are glorified), we need to control it. Even Paul said that he kept his body

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under control, so that he wouldn't be disqualified [unapproved, found to be a counterfeit] (1 Corinthians 9:27).

1. Controlling fleshly desires

Since our bodies (flesh) are still mortal (as yet unredeemed), there remains in them desires that are contrary to Elohim. Before we were saved, we had no control over those desires, because the old man within us empowered the flesh. But now the dominating power of sin has been *removed*. We are still left, however, with a body (or flesh) which likes to do things which are against Elohim's ways.

Remember, our spirits are the part of us that get born again. Our minds are renewed by the Word of Elohim. But our flesh is neither born again nor is it renewed. It must be kept under control. *This controlling of fleshly desires will get easier and easier as a person's mind is renewed to the fact that sin has no real dominion over his will.*

2. The war of the flesh and the Spirit

The desires of the flesh and the desires of the Holy Spirit who dwells within us are the source of the inner conflict with sin that all believers experience. *"For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please"* (Galatians 5:17).

Every believer has the Holy Spirit inside him or her, and the Holy Spirit prompts, and moves, and speaks to the believer to guide the believer in the way of righteousness. The inner man, the recreated spirit inside the believer, is who feels the promptings, the moving, and who hears from the Holy Spirit to obey the Holy Spirit.

But that inner man is housed in a body that likes to disobey Elohim and to go the way of the world. And so, you have the desires of the flesh warring against the desires of the Holy Spirit. But if you choose to follow after the Spirit, then the deeds of the flesh will be put to death in your mortal body. *"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and **you will not carry out the desire of the flesh**"* (Galatians 5:16).

Some mistakenly believe that this inner conflict against sin (the desires of the flesh) is really a fight between the "old man" and the "new man," who are simultaneously housed in the body. The struggle is thought to be between two equally powerful forces.

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But the scriptures do not bear this idea out. The old man was crucified, and the body of sin rendered powerless. As we have already seen, the old man and the new man cannot coexist in one body. Either, the person is a new creature, or the person is an old creature; the person can't be both at the same time.

3. The fruit of obedience to the Spirit

Every believer has the power to say **NO!** to sin and temptation. The deeds of the body (flesh) are no match for the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, because the dominating force behind the flesh, the old man, is dead. But believers must use their free will and choose to obey the Holy Spirit rather than the flesh. They must choose to keep their bodies under control and put to death evil deeds.

The fruit of doing this is *sanctification*, that righteous outward walk that Elohim desires to see all His children experiencing (Romans 6:19, 22). The result will be a life above sin, free from sinful habits that destroy faith and fellowship with Elohim.

C. TEMPTATION

Every believer, while he remains in his "earthly tent," will experience temptation. The desires of the flesh will try to pull a believer away from Elohim and into sin (James 1:14,15). The key to overcoming temptation, and not succumbing to it, is in acknowledging who we are in Messiah. *"Even so reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to Elohim in Messiah Yahshua"* (Romans 6:11 KJV). When Paul says "reckon," he means that we are to meditate on the fact that we are dead to sin and its power. We are to set our minds on the things of the Spirit, and not on the things of the flesh. *"Set your mind on things above, not on the things of the earth"* (Colossians 3:2).

1. Resist condemnation

In dealing with temptation, one must recognize that **it is not a sin to be tempted!** Often, Christians feel condemned because they have a lustful or a hateful thought. Unholy thoughts will emanate from the flesh. These could be memories of sinful pleasures you used to enjoy, or the enemy will plant an evil thought in the mind of a believer, and then accuse that believer of being a vile and sinful creature. If the believer allows himself to be condemned by a temptation, then his next thought will be: "Thinking it is as bad as doing it, so you might as well

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indulge." But having a tempting thought is **NOT** the same as carrying it out.

The Bible says of Yahshua that He " ... has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). Yahshua was tempted in every way, and those temptations were not considered sin. He was victorious over every temptation and was without sin. It is no more a sign of failure or defeat for a believer to be tempted than it was for Yahshua to be tempted. A believer's response to temptation should be one of resistance instead of condemnation.

2. Respond immediately

It is not a sin to be tempted. But temptation will inevitably lead to sin if evil thoughts are entertained for any length of time. Dwelling on the things of the earth and of the flesh will only lead to a fall into sin (James 1:14,15). *Temptation must be dealt with quickly, **the moment it arises**. The longer a person waits to deal with those temptations, the harder they will find it to resist.*

Yahshua's response to temptation was **immediate** and **effective**. Whenever the devil brought a temptation before Him, He responded, *"It is written!"* (Luke 4:4,8,12 - 13). He didn't wait and think about what the devil had said; He refuted the devil's lies with the Word of Elohim. He resisted the devil and the devil left Him.

Believers ought to respond to temptations the same way Yahshua did. If they do that, they will always be victorious. Yahshua used the Word against Satan, and Yahshua stood firm in the faith. The Word is a sword which will cut any false teaching to pieces. If we stand firm in the faith we shall not be shaken by Satanic temptations, worldly temptations, or any desires of our flesh.

Some verses to keep in mind include:

Colossians 3:16 NKJV Let the word of Messiah dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Psalms 119:11 NKJV Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.

1 Peter 5:8 - 9 NKJV Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may

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devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

*James 4:6 – 7 NKJV ... “Elohim resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble. 7 Therefore submit to Elohim. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”*

3. “Flee immorality”

We believers will never reach the level of maturity in which we cannot be tempted. As long as we are in our earthly bodies, we will have to deal with temptation. That means that *we cannot expose ourselves* to the "gravitational pull" of sin. It is one thing to be tempted by the enemy but it is quite another to place yourself in a position where temptation is inevitable.

Do not place yourself in places where you can be tempted to sin. That includes the movies you watch, the people you spend time with, the music you listen to, the games you play, the job you have, and how you spend your free time.

Believers also ought to be careful spending time with family members who can cause them to sin. Family ties are not an excuse to remain in an area of temptation. Family ties are strong but your desire to be free of sin should be stronger. Messiah taught that so strong should your desire be that even if your right eye or your right hand (or dominant hand) caused you to sin, you ought to remove them from body and throw them away! Yahshua was not teaching self-mutilation. He was teaching that you should be willing to cut off anything in your life that caused you to sin and maintain that separation (Matthew 5:29 – 30).

*"Put on the Lord Yahshua Messiah, and **make no provision for the flesh, in regard to its lusts**"* (Romans 13:14). Staying around sin and its pull will always result in a fall.

The believer has been freed from sin and has been given power over sin. But that does not mean that he is free to frequent places of sin or to consistently fellowship with sinners. *"Bad company corrupts good morals"* (1 Corinthians 15:33).

Paul said, ***"Flee sexual immorality"*** (1 Corinthians 6:18), and ***"Now flee youthful lusts"*** (2 Timothy 2:22). We should flee all manner of evil. The redemptive work in you has given to you the ability to *"abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul"* (1 Peter 2:11). But we

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must be careful that - we *"do not give the devil an opportunity"* (Ephesians 4:27) by **placing ourselves** in a position where we can easily be tempted.

D. WALK BY THE SPIRIT

The Bible makes it clear that believers have a *responsibility* to set their minds on the Spirit and not on the flesh. *"For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace"* (Romans 8:6). Whether or not a person sets his mind on the flesh or on the Spirit is up to the individual; Elohim will not do it for us. But we are told that if we *do* set our minds on the Spirit and *walk by the Spirit* then we will **not** fulfill the desires of the flesh (Galatians 5:16). This is Elohim's prescription for walking in total liberty from the bondage of sin and sinful habits.

Setting your mind on the Spirit means filling your mind with the Word of Yahweh with the expectation to obey it, singing truthful songs to Yahweh and about Yahweh in your heart, talking to and praying to Yahweh. Do this daily and you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh. Make it a point to surround yourself with the Word of Yahweh in the videos you watch, the songs you listen to, the people you spend time with, and in all you do daily.

E. THE WAGES OF SIN

Sin is destructive! One look around at the state of the world will suffice to show beyond a shadow of a doubt that sin always results in death and destruction. *"For the wages of sin is death"* (Romans 6:23). **That is why it is dangerous for a Christian to take a relaxed or neutral attitude toward sin.** Sin always results in misery, as it did at the Fall when Adam sinned. It should be regarded as a deadly enemy because that is what it is. *"Do not be deceived, Elohim is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life"* (Galatians 6:7,8).

1. Sin destroys faith

Sin destroys a believer's faith. It is impossible to receive from Elohim through faith when one is living in sin (1 John 3:22). Sin puts a barrier between us and Yahweh and Yahweh may choose not to answer our prayers. We may start to doubt Yahweh and start to lose faith in Yahweh

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because He is not answering our prayers. But it is not that Yahweh cannot answer our prayers, Yahweh answers prayers according to His will, but it is that sin puts a barrier between us and Yahweh.

Isaiah 59:1 – 2 NKJV Behold, Yahweh's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have separated you from your Elohim; And your sins have hidden [His] face from you, So that He will not hear.

In Joshua chapter seven is the story of Israel's defeat at Ai. The children of Israel had just soundly defeated the people of Jericho and went forward in the same faith to destroy Ai. Yet they were defeated by the inhabitants of that city. When inquiry was made, it was found that there was sin in the camp; some of the soldiers had taken spoils from Jericho, as was strictly forbidden by the Angel of the Lord (Joshua 6:18). It was not until sin was eradicated from the people that Israel could go up and defeat Ai (Joshua 7 & 8).

2. Sin destroys fellowship with Elohim

Sin also destroys fellowship with Yahweh. **One cannot have fellowship with Yahweh and walk in sin at the same time.** *"If we say we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth"* (1 John 1:6 KJV). If a believer continues to violate his conscience with sin, he will not have any confidence before Elohim, and fellowship will remain dead until that sin is repented of.

If he persists in that sin, his heart will become hardened, and the awareness of Elohim's presence will drift farther and farther away, and he will be cast off into the Lake of Fire as one who was saved, had the Holy Spirit, yet continued sowing to the flesh and thus reaped corruption instead of sowing to the Spirit to reap eternal life (Galatians 6:7 – 8).

Believers cannot afford to take sin with a light attitude. Yahweh has called us to a life of holiness before Him because He knows the destructive power of sin. Yahweh tells us to live uprightly before Him because He knows that that is the **only** path of eternal life and peace (Romans 8:6).

Any parent would strictly forbid his child from playing in a pit that was filled with rattlesnakes. He would do so, not because he didn't want the child to have any "fun," but because he wants the child to **live!** In exactly the same way, Yahweh calls His children to live a life

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above sin, for He is fully aware of sin's destructive power. Just as a father doesn't want his daughter playing with rattlesnakes because she could get bit and die separating her from her father, so Yahweh doesn't want us playing with sin because He doesn't want us to be eternally separated from Him.

F. WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE

"My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Yahshua Messiah the righteous" (1 John 2:1). If a believer does sin, it is not the end. Yahshua is our Advocate with the Father, and if we confess [humbly acknowledge as wrong and choose to not do again] our sin, He will forgive us.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9 ESV).

Elohim will forgive us every time we sin if we will **confess** it before Him and ask **forgiveness**. This is not meant as a license to sin. It is meant to get us back into fellowship with Elohim, and back into a position of faith and confidence from which we can walk free from sin's bondage.

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Yahshua" (Romans 8:1), the Textus Receptus, the Greek manuscript the King James Version Bible New Testament is translated from adds "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

If a believer falls in some sin, the believer must ask forgiveness, repent, and then **get up again**. The believer **must not** remain in condemnation, self-pity, or woe. Furthermore, after doing these things, the believer must **believe** by faith that Yahweh has forgiven him because he has done what Yahweh asked him to do if he sins. Remaining in condemnation, self-pity, or woe is not of Yahweh and it denies the truth of mercy and forgiveness of Yahweh. Believers should not remain in condemnation after repenting of sins.

A baby would never learn to walk if he decided to stay on the ground after a fall. If a baby falls while he is learning to walk, he will get up and go again. Similarly, if a believer falls in some sin, he must confess his sins, repent and get up again. The righteous may fall seven times, but they always get up (Proverbs 24:16).

IV. WATER BAPTISM

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Water Baptism has its roots in the ritual washing prescribed in Exodus 30:17-21 and Leviticus 11:25. By the time of John the Baptist, some of these washings had developed into a practice called "baptism." The word "baptize" literally means "immerse in water," and this is what John was doing in the river Jordan. John's baptism was one of repentance. It was the people's sign that they had renounced sin. This explains John's sharp rebuke for the hypocrites, who came to be baptized; he rebuked them because they had not turned from sin because they were not bearing fruits worthy of repentance (Matthew 3:7,8).

John's baptism was a baptism of the Old Covenant, and it was very different from the baptism which Yahshua charged His disciples to perform, before His ascension (Matthew 28:19). John's baptism symbolized for that time the people's act of repentance and purification. The kingdom of heaven was at hand, so the people prepared themselves (Matthew 3:2). The New Covenant baptism which Yahshua commanded symbolizes a miraculous, inward transformation, in which all sins are washed away (Acts 22:16).

A. WATER BAPTISM IN THE NEW COVENANT

Yahshua gave to His disciples the command to make disciples of men and to baptize them (Matthew 28:19). Throughout the book of Acts we find that the disciples obeyed this command. As soon as a person had been saved, that person was baptized in water. The Philippian jailer was baptized the very night that he accepted Yahshua as Lord (Acts 16:33). The Ethiopian eunuch was baptized as soon as he was converted (Acts 8:36-38). Cornelius, the Roman centurion, was baptized when the disciples recognized that he had been born again and had received the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:47,48). In each one of these cases, new converts were baptized in water in *obedience* to the command of the Lord Yahshua.

Yahshua's command was that His disciples baptize ***in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit***" (Matthew 28:19). That Name is Yahweh. In the book of Acts, it is recorded that people were baptized ***in the Name of Yahshua*** (Acts 8:16; 10:48; 19:5), which means Yahweh our salvation.

B. WATER BAPTISM IN PERSPECTIVE

"Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Messiah Yahshua have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death ..." (Romans 6:3,4). When a believer is baptized, he is identifying himself with the death, burial, and resurrection of

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Yahshua (Colossians 2:12). Water baptism is the believer acting out his faith in the fact of the new creation.

When a person is born again and the old man crucified, he is separated from the world and its values. Identifying with Yahshua in baptism is then making a **statement of the fact that we are no longer a part of this world**. We are in the world, but not of the world (John 17:15,16).

1. The point of separation

In 1 Corinthians 10:1 we are told that the passing of the children of Israel through the Red Sea was a type or shadow of baptism (1 Corinthians 10:1, 2). To the children of Israel, the Red Sea was their point of absolute separation from Egypt and their former life of bondage. Egypt is symbolic of the world and of our former bondage to sin.

So, **water baptism is to be a clear point of separation in the life of every believer**. It signifies the death of the old man, which connected us to the world's system, and the birth of the new man, which connects us to Elohim Himself. *"Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life"* (Romans 6:4).

2. Identifying with Yahshua

The apostle Peter likened baptism to the experience of Noah, in which Noah and his family were saved from a society which was under the judgment of Elohim. The people in the ark were saved from destruction because they were separated from that wicked society.

Through water baptism we cease to identify with the world that is in darkness and unite ourselves with Messiah's body, the church family, which is in the light.

If you are a believer, and you have not been water baptized, do so. You need to make this step of obedience to the Lord Yahshua. You need to affirm by a physical and public *act* that you no longer consider yourself a part of this world system. You are now a child of Yahweh, and therefore you are not of this world.

If you *have* been water baptized, mix faith with what you have done and walk in the light of your being a new creature in Messiah.

V. SUMMARY – WALKING IN THE LIGHT

Elohim has made every provision for us to walk uprightly before Him. He put to death the power that forced us to sin and placed within us a righteous new nature. There is no reason for any believer to walk in anything but complete victory and mastery over sin and sinful habits. Elohim created His Church for victorious living, not for constant defeat at the hands of sin. However, it is up to the individual as to whether or not he or she will make the quality decision to walk according to the Spirit within him or her, rather than according to the dictates of sin and the flesh.

If a believer chooses to walk according to the flesh, eternal death will be the result. But if that believer chooses to walk according to the Holy Spirit, then the result will be eternal life and peace. *"But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Yahshua His Son cleanses us from all sin"* (1 John 1:7).

VI. LESSON SEVEN – ALIVE TO ELOHIM - STUDY QUESTIONS

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

A. Day One

- 1) We have already established the fact that righteousness means right standing with Elohim. But there is more to it! What else is involved in our being righteous? What scripture clearly points this out?

What were believers created for? (Ephesians 2:10).

- 2) List six attributes of the man Paul describes in Romans 7:14-25.

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____
- (e) _____
- (f) _____

Does the Scripture refer to a man who is born-again or one who is unregenerate? Why? Give Scriptures.

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- 3) How does the fact that the old man was crucified enable us to live free from sin?
(Give scriptures.)

- 4) What are the four basic aspects of our identification with Messiah? (Give scriptures for each.)

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

B. Day Two

- 1) Define “sanctification.”

- 2) As believers, we now have freedom to choose. What is the choice that confronts us every day? Explain.

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- 3) Our spirits are born again; our minds are being renewed. But, neither of those things happen to the flesh. What are we as believers instructed to do about the flesh?

- 4) Why is there a conflict between the flesh and the spirit? What are we to do about this conflict?

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C. Day Three

- 1) Prove from the scriptures that it is not a sin to be tempted.

- 2) Why is it dangerous for a believer to entertain temptation? What must our response to temptation be? Explain.

- 3) A new believer tells you that he still goes to parties with his old friends, but, he does not drink or use drugs like everyone else. He feels that it's all right to go to such places, because he is now free from the power of sin. What Biblical counsel would you give this brother?

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4) What is the wages of sin? Give Scripture

What two things in the life of a believer will be destroyed if sin is practiced?

a) _____

b) _____

Why?

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D. Day Four

- 1) What do you do if you have committed a sin?

- 2) What do you do if you are feeling condemned about a sin you committed?

- 3) Summarize the main point in the following passages of scripture.

- a) Ephesians 5:8 _____

- b) 2 Timothy 2:19 _____

- c) 1 John 2:6 _____

- d) 2 Corinthians 7:1 _____

- e) 1 Corinthians 15:34 _____

- f) Romans 6:12 _____

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g) Colossians 2:5 _____
