

The Journey of Truth

Four Steps to Salvation in the Tanakh

A devotional study by Pat Adamson

What are the steps to salvation? Is there a Biblical process one must engage in before salvation can occur?

Volumes of books have been written on this subject but there is no formula (per se) in knowing the Messiah. Within the Bible however, there are passages that speak in very plain terms of our relationship to G-d both before and after Yeshua.

Many at this point would say, “If you’re going to make a decision for Yeshua, it really involves only one step,” and this is very true. Ultimately, any “step” toward Yeshua is a step in the right direction! But what I would like to address in this writing, are the preliminary steps one goes through in submitting to the G-d of Israel and appropriating the gift of salvation through Yeshua HaMashiach.

Someone once said, “Many things in the Bible I cannot understand; many things in the Bible I only think I understand; but there are many things in the Bible I cannot misunderstand.”

The need to make an informed decision in favor of Yeshua and the general process (or steps) one goes through to be right with G-d is clearly laid out in Scripture – and not only in the B’rit Hadashah (the New Covenant), but also in the Tanakh (the “Older” Covenant).

I would like to highlight four *Jewish* Spiritual laws – four steps to salvation in the Tanakh and hopefully you’ll be able to share these with a friend or family member. They are:

1. HaShem loves you and offers a unique and wonderful plan for your life.
2. Man is sinful and separated from HaShem and therefore cannot know G-d’s love or plan for his life.
3. Yeshua HaMashiach is HaShem’s only provision for man’s sin. Through Yeshua, both Jew and non-Jew can know and experience G-d’s love and plan for their lives.
4. Both Jew and gentile must individually receive Yeshua the Messiah as Savior and L-rd at which time G-d’s love and plans for life can be fully experienced.

Many agree that these so-called “four spiritual laws” exist in some form in the B’rit Hadashah, but did you know these four steps to Messiah are also available in the Tanakh? Let’s take a look at the first one.

1) HaShem loves you and offers a unique and wonderful plan for your life.

If you are speaking with a Jewish person – a friend, relative, or otherwise, most will be willing to look at the Psalms because they’re relatively “safe.” King David poured out his heart into the Psalms and the good, bad, and the ugly are recorded there. Within the Psalms there are many places where David spoke of the covering and direction for those who follow the ways of HaShem.

In the very first Psalm, he says, *“How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the Torah of Adonai, and in His Torah he meditates day and night. And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.”*

The Psalms are full of these types of verses and another Psalm that speaks of HaShem’s love and guidance through life is found in Psalm 16, verse 11:

“Thou wilt make known to me the path of life; in Thy presence is fullness of joy; in Thy right hand there are pleasures forever.”

In the 29th chapter of Jeremiah verse 11, HaShem says, *“‘For I know what plans I have in mind for you,’ says Adonai, ‘plans for well-being, not for bad things; so that you can have a hope and a future.’”*

This verse, although referring to corporate Israel, also speaks to us as individuals as we attach ourselves to His ways. As individuals, our faith journey can take many twists and turns, but with G-d’s Word to guide us, and His Spirit to empower us, there is no challenge that cannot be overcome to His glory. G-d has a unique and wonderful plan for any individual who places their trust in Him.

2) Man is sinful and separated from HaShem and cannot therefore know G-d’s love or plan for his life.

Now this may come as a shock to some people, but the Scriptures are clear that we all stand condemned before G-d. We all share in the guilt of our fallen condition no matter what our history or background involves. Theologically, this is known as “imputed guilt” and it’s important to understand this theological term to understand why we need a Savior in the first place. The word “imputed” means to have something ascribed or attached to you. And therefore when you were born, guilt was attached – it was *imputed* to you. Because of Adam’s sin, guilt was charged to all of us and because of the sin of this one man we have inherited that guilt. Oy vey! Not such a deal!

In the Mishnah – in 4 Ezra 7:46-48, I found an interesting statement. It reads,

“Who of those who have come into the world has not sinned? Or who among the earth-born has not transgressed Your covenant? Now I see that the coming age will bring delight to the few but torment to many. For the evil heart has grown up in us which has estranged us from G-d, brought us to destruction, made known to us the ways of death, showed us the paths of perdition and removed us far from life! And this is true of not merely a few, but of virtually all who have been created!”

In Romans 5:12 Rav Sha’ul (the apostle Paul) provides a “drash,” as he expounds on the fallen condition of mankind. He says, *“This is how it works: it was through one individual that sin entered the world, and through sin, death; and in this way death passed through to the whole human race, inasmuch as everyone sinned.”*

Some would say, “Yeah, yeah! But this idea of sin – actually committing sin and being judged for it is a Christian concept and really has no place in a Jewish theology.” Oh really? Well, it’s true, many people believe there’s inherent goodness in mankind and that this inherent goodness will eventually win out in the end. Actually, I think we’d all agree that within man there is the potential for both good and evil, but for someone to believe in a prevailing and overriding goodness in mankind is either ignorant of what the Scriptures have to say, or they’ve crafted their own philosophy apart from the clear statements in G-d’s Word!

It’s important for **ALL** people – Jewish or non-Jewish, to know about total depravity – about how utterly bankrupt, totally unclean and thoroughly guilty we all stand before the holiness of the Almighty One. Consider the following Scriptures:

Isaiah 59:2, *“Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your G-d. Your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear . . .”*

In the JPS Tanakh, in Psalm 51:5, David says, *“Indeed I was born with iniquity; with sin my mother conceived me.”*

Perhaps one of the most powerful verses to grasp in this step to Salvation is found in Yesha’Yahu (Isaiah) chapter 53, verse 6. It reads, *“We all, like sheep, went astray; we turned, each one, to his own way; yet Adonai laid on Him the guilt of all of us.”*

So is the idea of inherent sin a “Christian” concept or is it a Jewish concept, or does this condition actually belong to all of humanity as identified from the pages of Scripture?

Isaiah 64:6 says, *“**ALL OF US** have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, **LIKE THE WIND**, take us away.”*

Our iniquities like the wind, take us away! Every once in a while in sunny Southern California, the Santa Ana winds will kick up. Sometimes they can be pretty fierce in the Rancho Cucamonga and Ontario areas. In the office where I am employed in Rancho Cucamonga, I have a beautiful window view of the mountains, unobstructed by any buildings. One day as the Santa Ana winds blew, I watched as a bird made a feeble attempt to fly across a field but was quickly swept up and taken away by the sheer force of the wind. Blew it clear out of sight! Our iniquities – our sinful condition, like the wind, “take us away” – they separate us from the presence of HaShem.

The Scriptures tell us that, *“The wages of sin is death and that **ALL** have sinned and fall short of the glory of G-d.”* And again, the Tanakh says, *“There is none righteous – no not one!”* (Tehillim/Psalms 53:3)

Listen, whether its active rebellion against G-d, or passive indifference, it’s still called sin and so there remains a huge barrier between human beings and any kind of a relationship with HaShem. The idea – the concept of sin separating us from G-d is not a Christian idea, it’s not a Christian concept! It’s actually a very Jewish thing to believe that man is sinful by nature and separated from HaShem.

And of course, this is important for all believers to know because whenever G-d opens an opportunity to speak about His wonderful plan of salvation, whoever we are speaking with – whether our Jewish friends and relatives or whomever, people must first know how totally separated we are from G-d because of this inborn sin condition. And more than that, salvation and the wonderful plan G-d has for people’s lives **CANNOT BE REALIZED UNTIL THIS ISSUE OF SIN IS DEALT WITH.**

So the Scriptures are manifestly unambiguous and we need to communicate this Scriptural principle of sin clearly and lovingly that the minute we were conceived in our mother’s womb, we were “tamai” to HaShem – we were “unclean” and separated from Him. And we’ve inherited this condition not because of any specific wrongdoing of our parents – rather, in our humanness, we are born into it.

Consequently, as a result of the first Adam’s fall, we are all infected with an eternal disease of the Spirit that eventually leads to death and separation from our Creator in the eternal realm. So spiritually we are destitute, defiled, and depraved. Certainly not pleasant things for our ears to hear but it is nonetheless the harsh reality of our human condition which brings us to the third step in the process of salvation:

3) Yeshua is the only provision for man’s sin. Through the sacrificial death of Yeshua, both Jew and non-Jew alike can know and experience G-d’s love and plan for their lives.

There has been a lot in the news in recent months about DNA sampling and testing. Blood is the life force of all human beings and obviously without blood, you and I wouldn’t be living and breathing right now. As one person mentioned to me just recently, blood itself is perhaps the most precious gift a person can offer – it’s more precious than silver and gold, and truly, there is nothing that compares to its value.

Vayikra/Leviticus 17:11 says, *“For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for yourselves; for it is the blood that makes atonement because of the life.”*

This spiritual truth is also reflected in the B’rit Hadashah. In Messianic Jews/Hebrews 9:22 it says, *“Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.”*

We no longer have the Temple where blood sacrifices can be offered, so what do the rabbis say about that? Well, historically, the rabbis have somewhat arbitrarily replaced or superseded this vitally important Biblical injunction with mitzvot (good deeds), and prayer. But this simply fails to meet the Scriptural commandment for blood atonement which **IS STILL REQUIRED**, regardless of what the rabbis have superimposed as a replacement. In the eyes of HaShem, mitzvot and prayer – although good in themselves to practice, are not the same as blood sacrifice. One might say it’s akin to offering pots and pans as an atoning payment, but obviously there’s simply no redemptive value in pots and pans. Neither is there atoning value in mitzvot or prayer!

Back in Romans 5:18, *“In other words, just as it was through one offence that all people came under condemnation, so also it is through one righteous act that all people come to be*

considered righteous. For just as through the disobedience of the one man, many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the other Man many will be made righteous.”

In 1 Corinthians 15:45, it reads, *“Adam, the first man, became a living human being, but the last Adam has become a life-giving Spirit.”*

This is where trust in G-d’s Word is so vitally important because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of G-d. Faith in G-d’s Word points the person seeking Truth and salvation in the right direction, but even so, G-d **NEVER** violates a person’s free volition, and **WILL NEVER** interfere with a person’s right to choose. From the beginning of creation, when all things were perfect, there has always been choice – and we will be forever responsible for the choices we make. But it’s only the supernatural work of G-d’s Spirit that opens a person’s eyes to the “Last Adam,” the Messiah Yeshua – the Prince of Peace, the Savior, our King. And only because of the “Last Adam,” can we be reconciled to G-d and co-exist with Him in peace for ever and ever. This is the Messianic hope of our people and it’s the wonderful future that anyone who would place their faith in the risen Messiah can look forward to. In the Tanakh, the fourth step we find that leads to Salvation is:

4) All people, both Jew and non-Jew must individually receive Yeshua HaMashiach as Savior and L-rd at which time G-d’s love and plans for life can be experienced.

D’varim/Deuteronomy 4:27 says, *“Adonai will scatter you among the peoples; and among the nations to which Adonai will lead you away, you will be left few in number . . . vs. 29 “However, from there you will seek Adonai your G-d; and you will find Him **IF YOU SEARCH AFTER HIM WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND BEING.**”*

Part of that “seeking” involves an honest investigation the qualifications of the Messiah Yeshua. Most importantly, if a person asks in sincerity for G-d to reveal Yeshua to him, if he keeps an open heart and mind to what the Scriptures say, HaShem will honor that request.

Psalms 2:12. In the NASB it reads, *“Do homage to the Son, lest He become angry, and you perish in the way . . . How blessed are all who take refuge in Him.”*

Another related verse is found in D’varim/Deuteronomy 18:15. Remember, these references are all from the Tanakh. This is a verse that cries out for an answer. Moshe says, *“Adonai will raise up for you a prophet like me from among yourselves, from your own kinsmen. You are to pay attention to Him . . .”*

Who is this prophet being spoken of here? Messianic Jews have an answer to that question even though our Jewish friends and relatives may disagree.

In the B’rit Hadashah, in Romans 5:8 it says, *“G-d demonstrates His own love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Messiah [Yeshua] died for us.”*

And in 1 Corinthians chapter 15:3-6 it says Yeshua died for our sins; was buried; was raised on the third day; appeared to Kefa and the talmidim (Peter and the disciples) and to over 500 followers.

So Yeshua is life-giving because He has conquered death – once, for all time. The rabbi Sha’ul spoke of this in Romans 6:23: *“The wages of sin is death; but eternal life is what one receives as a free gift from G-d, in union with the Messiah Yeshua, our L-rd.”*

In fact, Yeshua Himself said in Yochanan/John chapter 14 verse 6, ***“I AM the way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.”***

Our friends and relatives need take those words to heart – because they are *life-changing* words. Your friends and relatives may have settled into a tradition that falls way short of G-d’s Truth or they may be legitimate G-d-fearers, seekers of Truth. They may even be sincere and may sincerely be looking for Mashiach. The problem is, if they’re sincerely looking in the wrong place they will never find salvation (Heb: “Yeshua”). Truly, He’s the only One who qualifies as the Messiah of Israel.

Even though there’s a huge gap separating us from HaShem, Yeshua bridges that gap with His blood sacrifice and transcendent love. In Colossians 1:14 we’re told, *“It is through Yeshua that we have redemption – that is, our sins have been forgiven.”*

So just to reiterate the four steps to Messiah in the Tanakh:

1. HaShem loves you and offers a unique and wonderful plan for your life. Psalms 1:1-3 and Psalm 11:16
2. Man is sinful and separated from HaShem and therefore cannot know G-d’s love or plan for his life. Isaiah 9:2; 64:6; Psalm 51:5; 53:3 and Isaiah 53:6
3. Yeshua is HaShem’s only provision for man’s sin. Through Yeshua, both Jew and non-Jew alike can know and experience G-d’s love and plan for their lives. The Temple is gone, but there’s still a Biblical requirement for blood sacrifice and this can be shown in Leviticus chapter 17, verse 11.
4. Both Jew and gentile must individually receive Yeshua HaMashiach as Savior and L-rd at which time G-d’s love and plans for life can be experienced. Tehillim/Psalms 2:12 and D’varim/Deuteronomy 4:29; 18:15.

The decision for Yeshua is obviously a decision our Jewish friends and relatives need to make on their own. As an individual, they need to come to terms with Yeshua and it’s a difficult decision to make – for anyone really.

But I can tell you from the bottom of my heart, if you’re Jewish and you’ve made a decision to follow Yeshua as your Messianic hope, on one hand you can say it’s due to your decision influenced by the clear testimony of G-d’s Word – yes you could say that and it’s true. It paints a very clear picture of who the Messiah is. But honestly, the only reason you’re being confronted with this information today is because G-d has been RELENTLESS in His love for you and He has pursued a relationship with you even when your faith was non-existent!

In one of my conversations with one of my wife’s orthodox cousins I said, “You’re Messianic!”

He said “No, I’m not!”

So I replied to him, “Look, I see it this way. You’re orthodox and you’re waiting for the Messiah to come. So I’m Messianic and I believe He’s already come, His name is Yeshua and He will come again. Now when the Messiah does come, at that time we’ll both know which one of us was right. Right?”

He said, “I suppose you’ve got a point!”

And I said, “So then you’re Messianic!”

He said, “No Way!” We both laughed and the conversation continues. Now if there should come a day when he humbles himself before Yeshua in his search for Truth, once again, *G-d will honor that request!*

The Messiah said in Yochanan/John 10:10, “*I have come that they might have life, life in its fullest measure.*” Abundant life. That’s what awaits Jew or Gentile in receiving Yeshua as the King of Kings and the L-rd of lords.

Yeshua’s single-minded purpose was to reach out to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and today, He is still reaching out to His people.

You and I, as much as anyone else who’s ever lived from the beginning of time, are responsible for the death of Yeshua because it was the inherent sin condition of all humanity that put Him on that execution stake in the first place. And although we once had that guilt imputed to us, check this out – it’s now replaced with *Yeshua’s imputed righteousness in our behalf*. Truly, there’s nothing more freeing in this world, than to know we have a G-d that actively pursues a relationship with us which is precisely why Yeshua HaMashiach came in the first place. And as we nurture that relationship through the study and application of His Word, we can live a life of abundance. Of abundant hope.

At a recent conference in Southern California, one of the speakers, Avi Misrahi, an Israeli believer, said there are close to 130 small Messianic congregations in Eretz Yisrael! And that my friends, is no less than a miracle – it’s a sign of the times! More and more Jewish people are coming to know their Messiah without forfeiting their Jewish identity one iota. Indeed, many are discovering that following Yeshua involves an intimacy with HaShem they have previously missed.

Today, more than ever before, may we allow the bright Morning Star to rise in our hearts. May we continue to draw ever closer to Him through His written Word, and may we continue to reach out with the love of Messiah to both Jewish and non-Jewish people.

Baruch HaShem!