

The Promised Land: Choosing to Enter In

A great deal of New Testament is devoted to exhorting and warning Believers in Messiah, regarding "Entering In" to the Promised Land. But today, most Pastors and Leaders have ceased warning the people. Why is this?

Many of these New Testament warnings have two common elements. First, they remind us that all that happened to the Israelites is for "our example."

Second, these warnings state that we, too, could fail to "enter in," for the same reasons the Israelites failed to enter in. Since these warnings are so serious, we will look closely at the Israelites' example, and then try to learn from their experience, so that we might avoid making the same mistake they did.

Here is a summary of the Israelites' experience in the wilderness:

1) They were redeemed from Bondage in Egypt, and they came out by the Blood of the Lamb. This event corresponds to our being redeemed by the Blood of Yahushua, the Lamb of YHWH, and of our being "Born-again."

2) They were baptized in the Cloud & in the Sea (1 Corinthians 10:1-2). This event corresponds to our baptism in water and in the Set-apart Spirit.

3) They were refused entry into the Promised Land, even after being brought out by the Blood of the Lamb, and after being "Baptized" in the Cloud and in the Sea.

Warning! Warning!

This is the warning of the New Testament for us today! Notice carefully: **Despite coming out by the Blood of the Lamb, and despite the Baptism in the cloud and in the Sea, the Israelites failed to "enter in" to the Promised Land! We are warned to take notice, and to not repeat their example!**

This is the great warning given for us today. The warning for us is found by noticing the reasons why they were refused entry into the Promised Land. The reasons given for the Israelites will become the same reasons many will fail to enter the Promised Land today, under the New covenant!

Notice why the Israelites failed to enter in, given in Ezekiel 20:

- 1) Disobedience to YHWH's Law (Torah) (Eze 20:13,16,19,21,24)
- 2) Despising YHWH's Sabbaths (Eze 20:13,16,20,21,24)

The Book of Hebrews is clear. Like the Israelites, we may have come out by the Blood. Like the Israelites, we may have been baptized in the water, and in the Set-apart spirit. However, we are warned greatly in the new Testament that we may not be allowed to enter in to the Promised Land.

Much of the New Testament centers around points of Torah that Believers in Messiah are called to keep today. Whoever "Believes in" Messiah, is "grafted in" to Israel, and becomes a partaker of the Covenant promises of Israel. The promises applying to Israel, now apply also to those grafted in.

However, the conditions for achieving the promises still apply, both for Israel, and for those grafted in to Israel! This is why the warnings in the Book of Hebrews is so important!

Who Can Enter In?

As we study the Israelites' example, it does not take a rocket scientist, to realize one thing: The Israelites, as well as we today, are not able to keep all the Law - the Torah - in our own strength.

But this realization presents a problem. If we are not able to keep the Torah in our own strength, why is there nothing at all in the New Testament, that would "nullify" the keeping of Torah for New Testament Believers?

From the logic of the Israelites' example, it appears that we, too, can not keep the Law, and therefore we, too, can not enter in to the promised Land. What is the problem here? If keeping the Law is the only way to enter in, we must ask, "Did YHWH change something in the Law that might allow us to enter in?"

Scriptures reveal that YHWH did not change anything of the Law ("Torah"). He simply reminds us, over and over again in the new Testament writings, of the most important "mystery" of the New Covenant: that is, He has given us "Messiah-in-you" (See Col 1:27), who provides the Grace from within, enabling us to keep the Torah!

Joshua and Caleb Enter In

Does the Israelites' example in the wilderness show us this "Messiah-in-you" example of entering in? Yes! Although that generation of Israelites fell in the wilderness, and did not enter in, there were two exceptions - Joshua and Caleb. These two are there for our example - of who WILL enter in to the Promised land.

Joshua (Hebrew 'Yahushua') speaks of our Saviour, Yahushua. Caleb, the Hebrew word for Dog, was called the son of Jephunneh, Strong's Number <03312>, which in turn comes from the Hebrew root 'pahah,' Strong's number <06437>, meaning "turned back, and prepared."

Together these names tell us the story of who they speak of today. All have gone astray, and considered nothing but dogs; but through turning back (repentance), we have become 'prepared.' So Joshua and Caleb speak directly of one today who has repented, and who, along with "Yahushua" ("Messiah-in-you" of Col 1:27) will enter in to the Promised Land.

Yes, YHWH knows that on our own, we can not keep all the Law, but He still expects us to keep it all, so that we may enter in. Therefore, He expects us to allow "Messiah-in-us" to keep it for us, by His grace, on our behalf, in our bodies, as He lives in us daily.

Those Who Are Willing Will Know Him

It is "Messiah-in-You" that will bring us in, by giving us the Grace - the Set-apart-Spirit power to keep the Torah. It is by His Set-apart Spirit, that He will first find willing hearts that would follow the Lamb wherever He goes, even if into unfamiliar spiritual territory.

And, for those that are willing, He will then turn our feet away from our iniquities, and then will cause us to walk in His Torah, His statutes, and His Precepts. Those who walk in His Torah will be allowed into the Promised Land as "Firstfruits" (See Rev 14.4).

For those that are NOT willing to follow the Lamb wherever He goes, we are told in (Lk 14:27) that they can NOT be Yahushua's disciples.

It is from those who love Him, that He will choose His Bride. It is those who Love Him, that He will resurrect as "Firstfruits." It is those who Love Him, that will keep His Commandments.

Yahushua did not say, "If you love me, keep the 'Old Testament' Commandments. Nor did He say, "If you love me, keep the 'New Testament' Commandments. He said, "If you love me, keep 'MY' Commandments (Jo 14:15). But what ARE Yahushua's commandments? Let's look:

Yahushua answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings: and the Word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me. (John 14:23-24)

For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My Words? (John 5:46-47)

Those who truly know Him, realize that it was Yahushua Himself - as the "Word" of the Father - who gave the Commandments to Moses. Thus Yahushua calls them "My Commandments," and also calls them "Not my Word, but the Father's who sent me." He then reveals to us in John 5:46-47 that Moses' Words ARE His Words. We might then examine ourselves. Am I keeping His Commandments? Am I keeping His Words?

Choosing wisely

Israel "came out" by the Blood of the Lamb. However, they made many choices while in the Wilderness, which prevented that generation from "entering in" to the Promised Land. We are warned in 1 Corinthians 10:11, and also in Hebrews 4:11, to heed their example.

The nature of the New Covenant is such that everyone is given a "choice" of whom they will serve. Here are two examples that apply to us today, regarding New Covenant choice:

In Joshua 24:15, YHWH said, "Choose this day whom ye will serve." Joshua's answer is our example for us today: "as for me and my house, we will serve YHWH."

In Isaiah 56:4-7, YHWH makes some New Covenant promises:

Even them will I bring to my Set-apart mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. (Isaiah 56:7)

But then we are reminded that these promises are only for those who choose accordingly. Notice the conditions, a few verses prior:

For thus saith YHWH unto the eunuchs that keep My Sabbaths, and choose the things that please Me, and take hold of My covenant; (Isaiah 56:4)

Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to YHWH, to serve Him, and to love the Name of YHWH, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant; (Isaiah 56:6)

Notice the above promises refer to YHWH's Everlasting Covenant, as it refers to "Everlasting Covenant" features. These are 1) "choosing" the things that please YHWH," and 2) the grafting in of the "Sons of the Stranger," which are the "Gentiles."

These two passages also show us exactly how we may "choose" to be a part of His New Covenant. However, remember that The Blood of Messiah does not "guarantee" what we choose - it simply frees us from bondage, and "enables us" to choose!

YHWH tells us that the promises are for all those who choose the things that please ("delight") Him -- and He even tells us what "delights" Him, so that we might choose wisely! He also equates choosing the things that please Him with "taking hold" of the Covenant.

In summary, those who choose to enter in to the Promised Land are those who choose to "take hold of My Covenant." Those who enter in are those who have chosen wisely.

Beloved, how will you choose?