

NO LONGER SATISFIED WITH CRUMBS

In Matthew 15:27 Yeshua replied, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.” “Yes, Lord, she said, “ even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table. “O woman,” Yeshua answered, “your faith is great! Let it be done for you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour....

Long ago crumbs no longer satisfied me, I needed the bread of life! But what then do “crumbs” have to do with Rosh Hashanah?

As the High Holy Days approach, Rosh Hashanah begins on the eve of Friday September 18th, also Erev Shabbat, and flows into the Saturday Shabbat. Jews around the world have their attention on the observance of the up-coming Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah, which literally means, *head of the year*. This festival is among the seven great festivals, appointed by God to be celebrated on the first day of the seventh month, on the Jewish calendar, *Tishri*. The great theme of Rosh Hashanah is repentance, and the theme of the High Holiday season is forgiveness. *One can read of the seven great feasts in Leviticus chapter 23.*

The High Holy Days are prophetic; from Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, to First Fruits, Pentecost, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and then to Tabernacles, the entire plan of redemption is played out. These festivals are always appointed times to bring God’s people together in holy convocations, fellowshiping with God and to learn of His plan. Although, the major themes of the Jewish New Year are kingship, remembrance, and the blowing of the shofar, I wish in this time together to focus on one lesser known custom still practiced by Orthodox Jews, *Tashlich*. It has to do with bread crumbs.

Many Orthodox Jews will proceed to a body of running water, preferably one containing fish, and they will cast off breadcrumbs, which symbolizes their sins. The ceremony, *Tashlich*, is accompanied with the reading of Micah 7:19, “*He will take us back in love; He will cover up our iniquities. You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*” Prayers and supplications are as followed:

During this season of repentance, we are called upon to do T’shuvah, to return to God in sincerity and in truth. Through prayer and study, reflection and ritual, we strive to begin the new year in a spirit of humility,

self-scrutiny, and spiritual renewal. Today we come to this body of water to perform the Tashlikh ceremony, seeking, symbolically to “cast away” our accumulated sins and transgressions, to send away our unworthy thoughts, so that we may purify our hearts and our souls, as the new year begins.

The ceremony of *Tashlich* was developed around the 13th century, and became widespread, despite rabbinic concerns that people would put more emphasis upon the ceremony, than the power to change their lives. Superstitious rites as these most likely did influence this ceremony.

Primitive people believed that the best way to win favor from evil spirits living in and near waterways was to give them gifts. Some people, including the Babylonian Jews, sent sin filled containers (breadcrumbs) out into the water. Then an ancient practice consisted of growing beans or peas for two to three weeks prior to the New Year, in a woven basket for each child in a family. The basket, representing the child, was swung around the head seven times and then flung into the water.

Kurdistani Jews threw themselves into the water and swam around to be cleansed of their sins. In an early variation of the Yom Kippur *Kaparot* ritual, a rooster is swung around one's head and is then slaughtered while being declared a “substitute” for the individual, as an atonement for his or her sins. Water was seen as symbolic of the creation of the world and of all life. Kings of Israel were crowned near springs, suggesting continuity, like the King of Kings' unending sovereignty. The prophets Ezekiel and Daniel received revelation near a body of water, it was seen as a place to find God's presence.

As the element of purification, water was the means to cleanse the body and soul and take a new course in our lives. Although the rabbis preferred that *Tashlich* be done at a body of water containing fish, we know that man cannot escape God's judgment any more than fish can escape being caught in a net. Of course, this ritual is also filled with redemptive principles!

The breadcrumbs, remind us of Yeshua, who is the Bread of Life (John 6:25-59). The significance of water reminds us of the water that Yeshua gave to the woman at the well, (John 4:4-42) and said she would never thirst again! The fish that cannot

escape being caught in the net speaks of souls, as Yeshua was a fisher of men (Matthew 4:19). Yet, no substitute for sin is possible without the sacrificing blood of the Lamb of God that was slain on Passover. John called Him the Lamb of God (John 1:29). In the end what the ancient rabbis feared became a reality. Superstitions replaced wholehearted *Teshuva*, or repentance. Traditions, prayers and good deeds, supplanted the one and only requirement: *Personal repentance from sin through the sacrifice of the Jewish Messiah 2,000 years ago.*

During this season, pray for the salvation of the Jewish people. This is a holy season and a time of heightened spirituality. Pray that these rituals no longer blind them from the truth. Pray that the scattering of bread crumbs for personal sins, leaves them unfulfilled in their souls. Pray that they hunger for the “whole loaf,” the One and Only Bread of Life, Yeshua.