

Dying for Jesus?

(What is a Martyr?)

*(When quoting scriptures, from the Rotherham Emphasized Bible New Testament,
I will substitute the Hebrew word Yahshua for Jesus, Yahweh and Elohim for God and Anointed for Christ.)*

A “martyr” is defined, according to the dictionary, as “a person who chooses to suffer or die rather than give up his faith.” Most Christians would consider Stephen, a great man who served Yahwehⁱ (God) and His son Yahshuaⁱⁱ (Jesus), a martyr. He was stoned to death because he testified concerning Yahshua. The question is: “Does Yahweh want us to die or be murdered, in the line of duty, for Him? Will Yahweh lead us into a position that will kill us? If so, is Yahweh unable to deliver a saint from being murdered? Does it please Yahweh that we are killed in His service? Should we seek to die for the Lord?” We will take a look into the scriptures, which will determine the Father’s will, concerning these questions, for our lives. We will handle the question concerning dying because of Yahshua but we will not handle the suffering aspect in this paper.

The Greek word, which we get the word martyr from, is “martus.” The word means “witness” and has nothing to do with death or suffering. It is used in Acts 1:8, “But ye shall receive power when the holy spirit cometh upon you and ye shall be my witnesses” “A witness (one who avers, or can aver, what he himself has seen or heard or known by any other means” (Thayer’s). A “martyr” in the Bible is not a martyr as we use the word today. We will proceed to look into the scriptures concerning the suffering and dying for the Lord Yahshua but first we must look at the life of Yahshua as our perfect example.

Yahshua was never stoned, whipped, ship wrecked or experienced any other physical harm, while he served Yahweh, until he allowed himself to be our sacrifice. Yahshua gave his life in obedience to Yahweh. “Because of this did the Father love me, because I lay down my life, that again I may take it; no one did take it from me, but I lay it down of myself; authority I have to lay it down, and authority I have again to take it; this command I received from my Father” (John 10:17,18). We have been given the same authority and power as Yahshua was given. “Verily, verily, I say unto you—He that believeth on me, the works which, I, am doing, he also, shall do; and, greater than these, shall he do, because, I, unto the Father, am going” (John 14:12). The thief wants to kill us. “The thief comes not, save that he may thieve and slay and destroy” (John 10:10). We have been given authority over the thief. “Lo! I have given you the authority—to be treading upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and, nothing, unto you, shall in anywise do harm” (Luke 10:19). “With all, having taken up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall have power, all the ignited darts of the wicked one, to quench” (Eph. 6:16). There were many attempts to kill and physically harm Yahshua. These attempts to kill Yahshua were made by people and other physical forces by way of spiritual wickedness but none of them

succeeded. Why? Yahshua and his parents walked by the revelation given to them by Yahweh.

Yahweh will give His children the necessary information in order that we can escape death. For example, in Matt. 2:13 “a messenger of the Yahweh, appeared by dream unto Joseph, saying, Arise, take unto you the child and its mother, and flee into Egypt, and be there, until I tell you,—for Herod is about to seek the child, to destroy it.” Another example is in John 7:1, “and Yahshua was walking after these things in Galilee, for he did not wish to walk in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him.” And then in John 11:7-9, “he said to the disciples, ‘We may go to Judea again;’ the disciples say to him, ‘Rabbi, now were the Jews seeking to stone you, and again you can go there!’ Yahshua answered, ‘Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any one may walk in the day, he did not stumble, because the light of this world he did see.’” He went back to Judea and raised Lazarus from among the dead. Then the religious Leaders sought to kill him. “From that day, therefore, they took counsel together that they may kill him; Yahshua, therefore, was no more freely walking among the Jews” (John 11:53,54). How did Yahshua know when to enter Judea and when to leave? He listened to his Father. “And of myself I do nothing, but according as my Father did teach me, these things I speak; and He who sent me is with me; the Father did not leave me alone, because I, the things pleasing to Him, do always” (John 8:22,28,29). Yahshua was given authority and power over spiritual wickedness and the elements just as also we have been given the same authority and power. Another example of the enemy trying to kill Yahshua is in Matt. 12:14,15.

We, the Body of Christ, have been given authority and power over the enemy (Luke 10:19). “Above all, having taken up the shield of the faith, in which you shall be able all the fiery darts of the evil one to quench” (Eph. 6:16). We have been equipped to do the works of Yahshua (John 14:12). “And Yahshua said to him, ‘If you art able to believe! All things are possible to the one that is believing” (Mark 9:23). The enemy could not take Yahshua’s life neither can he take our life but we must walk as also Yahshua walked, by the spirit of Yahweh. Then where do we come up with the idea that we are supposed to die for Jesus? Maybe it is because Yahshua gave his life and we believe that we should follow in his steps?

There was a definite purpose and profit for the Lord Yahshua to give his life for us. By his death we became children of Yahweh and received the gift of holy spirit. “The hour has come that the Son of Man may be glorified; verily, verily, I say to you, if the grain of the wheat, having fallen to the earth, may not die, itself remains alone; and if it may die, it did bear much fruit” (John 12:23,24). “But I tell you the truth; it is better for you that I go away, for if I may not go away, the comforter [gift of holy spirit] will not come unto you, and if I go on, I will send him unto you” (John 16:7). What profit will there be if I died for Yahshua? He died once for us and no other sacrifices are needed. The payment for mankind’s sins has been paid in full. He was raised from among the dead, after three days,

and went back to work for his Father. If I die, there is one less member of Christ's Body to serve mankind. I will not be raised from among the dead in three days to be working in heaven. That is why Yahweh says in Psalms 116:15, "Costly in the eyes of Yahweh is *the* death of his men of loving kindness." The only other people, that I am aware of, that were asked to physically die for Yahweh were the two witnesses of Revelation chapter eleven. They also will be raised from among the dead and ascend into heaven after three and a half days. Other saints have died prematurely when serving Yahweh. We should not look to their deaths as examples to follow after but their life's.

Yahshua was perfect in all areas of his life. He is the one to imitate in all situations. We imitate other godly people in their successes but not in their failures. Peter walked on the water and then started to sink. Stephen was stoned while Phillip fled and lived. James died by Herod's sword while Peter was delivered from the same death. Lets not focus on the saints that died but rather on the saints who escaped death. Some saints cannot believe to overcome illness while others do and receive their healing. If a saint dies from an illness we do not attempt to follow in his footsteps. Remember Thomas's reply when he heard that Lazarus had died? "Let us also be going, that we may die with him" (John 11:16). Instead of dying with him, Yahshua raised him from among the dead. Paul disobeyed Yahweh by going to Jerusalem. "And we remaining many more days, there came down a certain one from Judea, a prophet, by name Agabus, and he having come unto us, and having taken up the girdle of Paul, having bound his own hands and feet, said, 'Thus said the Holy Spirit, The man whose is this girdle—so shall the Jews in Jerusalem bind, and they shall deliver *him* up to the hands of nations. And when we heard these things, we called upon *him*—both we, and those of that place—not to go up to Jerusalem, and Paul answered, 'What do you—weeping, and crushing mine heart? For I, not only to be bound, but to die also at Jerusalem, am ready, for the name of the Lord Yahshua;' and he not being persuaded, we ceased saying 'The will of the Lord be done'" (Acts 21:10-14). Yahweh did not want Paul to die in Jerusalem but to live and serve Him by not going to Jerusalem. Yahweh told Paul by way of his holy spirit, which he did not listen to, so Yahweh, sent His prophet, Agabus to tell him again. Paul did not listen to Yahweh and he suffered the consequences. What are the reasons for a premature death of a saint?

Some reasons for falling short in our service to Yahweh are a lack of faith in His Word, disobedience, ignorance or not consulting Yahweh (by way of our holy spirit). There can be no other explanation. Yahshua never lacked faith; always obeyed the Father; knew Yahweh's Word completely; and always consulted the Father. He was never in a situation that he could not handle therefore he could not be killed. Peter lacked faith when he was walking on the water and started sinking. A man of Yahweh (prophet) disobeyed Yahweh and was killed by a lion (I Kings 13:26). Josiah did not have the Word of Yahweh (ignorance) until the latter part of his reign, which brought calamity upon his kingdom after he died (II Kings 22). Joshua did not consult Yahweh and sent men to conquer Ai and 36 men died (Joshua 7). These are all men who served Yahweh but they also made mistakes. We also will make mistakes and possibly die prematurely but this is not the will

of our Father. Our service to Yahweh can only be performed when we are alive not dead. Life is our Father's will for us not death. "I call upon you, therefore, brethren, through the compassions of Yahweh, to present your bodies a sacrifice—living, sanctified, acceptable to Yahweh—your intelligent service" (Rom. 12:1).

ⁱ Yahweh is the name of our Elohim, which means, "He will become [deliverer and helper]." Ex. 3:13-15 God is not His name.

ⁱⁱ Yahshua is the name Yahweh gave His son. Yahshua means, "Yahweh is Salvation." Jesus is not the name Yahweh gave him.