



HADEREKH RADIO
MORNINGS WITH YEHOVAH

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90 Morning Meditations

INTRODUCTION

In the natural realm many of us are accustomed to eating “on the go” – starting off our days in a rush to get to work or to school – maybe grabbing a piece of toast or a cereal bar as we head out of the door. If we have lunch at all, we eat it at our desks, keeping up with the workload that surrounds us. Then at night, if we are fortunate, we sit down to eat our dinners, often the largest meal of the day, on a tray in front of the TV. Then we are too full and too tired to move – and so in the evenings we become “vegged-out” “couch potatoes.”

Many of us can remember that we should “breakfast like kings, lunch like lords and supper like paupers.” They would advise us that this was a far healthier way to live. Similarly, we are often advised to rise early in the morning, as Yeshua often did, and to spend time with our heavenly Father, feeding on His presence before facing the rigours and challenges of the day.

We all know that life is not simple, nor easy to regulate, but this short devotional is a way of centring our hearts and minds upon the Yehovah in a morning, before facing the onslaught of issues that inevitably come. I would encourage you to begin your day by focusing, even for a few minutes on your Heavenly Father and His Son, Yeshua, asking the Holy Spirit to speak in that still small voice, in a way that will enable you to feed upon His Word throughout the day.

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Day 1 - Feed on the Words of Yehovah.

Job 23:12 “I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.”

If you, even as a follower of Yeshua, despite your positive confessions and aspirations, struggle to get into the Scriptures on a regular and consistent basis, you should know that you are not alone. One of the reasons can so easily be because many of us have set out determined to start reading more out of a sense of obligation, rather than having a desire to, feeling a need within our hearts to hear from Yehovah, or to learn more about Him. It may also be because we have sometimes started out by trying to sit and read long passages, chapters or even books in one go. That can be like attempting to eat a whole week's or even a month's worth of breakfasts, lunches and dinners all at one time. We become “over-faced,” bloated, unable to digest even a small amount of what we have consumed or, worse still, physically sick. Then we may feel guilty and lose the desire to try again in case we continue to fail in our attempts.

There is a saying that the only way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time. Similarly, rather than trying to devour the entire Scriptures in one go, we should start by reading bite-sized portions. That way we build a healthy appetite for more as we grow in our knowledge of and our relationship with Yehovah.

Daily devotionals, such as this, are designed to encourage each of us to begin the process steadily, growing gradually, until our appetite is whetted enough to begin to feast on the bread of life, more and more each and every day. In time we will learn, like Job, to “esteem the words of His mouth more than (our) necessary food.” (Job 23:12). Try “eating” a little, and more often, and allow Yehovah to help you grow.

DAY 2 - Lose the mirror!

Philippians 3:13-14 “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of Yehovah in Yeshua.”

It is said that certain car drivers may as well throw away the car mirror because they never look in it, believing if you need to look in your rear-view mirror, looking at what or who is behind you, you are obviously not going fast enough. While not justifying or excusing speeding, there is a life lesson we can learn from that attitude. A fact of life is that if you are always reflecting on what has already happened, particularly when there is nothing you can do to influence or change it, you can be distracted and deterred from paying sufficient attention to going forward towards what Yehovah is calling you into.

Even if you are forever looking at the positives that you have achieved in your past, the Apostle Paul’s stance suggests there is wisdom in recognising that no matter how good that was, it is necessary for each of us to press forwards into all Yehovah still has left for you to do and to achieve in the future. No matter how close you feel you are in your relationship to and walk with Yehovah, there is always going to be so much more for you to learn and to experience in your daily, intimate encounter with Yeshua.

If you need to repent over things in your past, do it, and then do like Yehovah Himself does, remove the guilt of those memories from your mind, banishing them as far as the east is from the west. Move forward with the peace of Yehovah ruling in your heart and mind. Press forward with confidence in His plans for your future - and choose life, health and peace for the road ahead.

DAY 3 - Do not be burdened and weary.

Matthew 11:29-30 “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me..., For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

The Scriptures tell us that if all the works that Yeshua did during his ministry on earth were to be written down, the whole world would not contain the books that would be written. (John 21:25). And yet, we never read of Yeshua becoming stressed by the pressure of, effectively, the world’s longest “to-do list.” In fact, He regularly stopped to take time to get away from the pressure and demands upon Him to spend with His Father. As followers of Yeshua, we are not only called to witness for Him, but to be witnesses of His life and power in our daily walk and talk. To do that, there are a number of vital lessons we must learn in order to emulate our Saviour.

Firstly, if we want to “walk as He walked” we must be linked and yoked to Him so that we walk at His pace and only where He walks. Secondly, we must not take upon ourselves any other task or burden which He does not intend to carry or, therefore, as we are yoked to Him, loads which He does not wish for us to bear either. Thirdly, we must remember that if the burden belongs to tomorrow, we are not allowed to pick it up today. When He said to “Take my yoke upon you, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light,” that was not only a clear instruction not to take on more than He intends us to - but that even the tasks and roles He wants us to take on, we must not presume to take them on in our own strength and in our own timing - unless and until He is “ready” to bear the load and responsibility alongside us. It is for you to choose to walk in union with Yeshua today.

DAY 4 - Home sweet home.

John 14:2 “My Father’s house has many rooms. If that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?”

“Home, sweet home”; “home is where the heart is”; we all know the sayings. It is interesting to note that while many of us love to travel, to see new places or familiar places and faces of friends and relatives, it is amazing how wonderful we feel when we come home again - and sit in our own lounge or “living room.” It is so relaxing, so reassuring, so calming to be where we feel “at home”, where we “belong”, where we are accepted and loved, where we do not need to pretend that we are something we are not or put on a false image to meet the unrealistic expectations of others.

“Everybody wants to go to heaven..., but nobody wants to die” is another saying which is synonymous with those. Each of us love to travel through this earthly life, seeing and enjoying the things it has to offer - and yet it is good to remember that this world is not our home; we are just passing through - on our way to our eternal and heavenly home - where we will be welcomed with open arms, a warm greeting of “well done, good and faithful servant”, and find somewhere we are accepted and made to feel truly “at home”, where we belong.

Never allow yourself to be fooled by the attractions of the sights, sounds and experiences of this natural lifespan, however long it may last, fool you into believing this is where you belong. Yeshua has gone ahead of you - to prepare a place for you, one where you will be “at home” in your Father’s house for ever and ever. Keep your eyes fixed upon your eternal destination.

DAY 5 - Living by priorities.

Philippians 3:13 “This one thing I do...”

We live in an age when many diverse demands are made on our time and attention throughout each and every second of each and every day. We are being pulled from all sides as 1001 things vie for our immediate involvement. Even the word ‘vie’ itself means ‘to compete eagerly in order to do or achieve something.’ The result can be that we no longer have and enjoy a sense of peace and relaxation. Whoever you are, you may at times feel like everyone and everything else has a slice of your life - so much so that there is no ‘me time’ left - let alone time to spend alone with Yehovah, a time when He can have your undivided attention. If that is how you feel, you may even be frustrated at my suggesting you need to set some boundaries and priorities in your life..., but that is just what we all must learn to do.

Today’s text from Philippians 3:13 says, “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of Yehovah in Yeshua.” The apostle Paul had a busier life than most of us - and certainly Yeshua did too - but both Paul and Yeshua set boundaries which meant they always had, or made, time to do the really essential things that were more important than anything else. Whilst the verse quoted here has more meanings than the one I am making from it here, it remains that Paul chose to prioritise his need to strive after one thing above all else - and that was to grow and nurture his personal, daily walk with Yehovah. And you and I must learn to do the same.

DAY 6 – I am held in the grip of Yeshua.

John 10:28 “... neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

Henry Cooke once said, ‘Life happens to us when you are busy making other plans.’ We can be so busy, so involved in the things we have set our minds and hearts on to do, that sometimes we get a wakeup call when we realise five, ten, twenty or even thirty years have rolled by with us barely noticing. We can be so distracted by what we have set our priorities on that that wakeup call shocks us out of our apathy.

When that happens, it is so easy to blame anybody and everybody who has been crying out for our attention - and we can be angry and frustrated at them for distracting us from our own goals and plans. We can feel they have robbed us of our time and stolen our very lives from us.

John 10:27-29 says, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.” This reassures us that while it is right and proper that we set Yehovah-centred priorities in our lives, Yehovah Himself will never allow either us, or anyone else, to rob us of all He wishes and plans to achieve through our lives. Not only can we rest assured that we are held secure in His everlasting arms, the times and seasons of our lives are safe and secure in His control. He will accomplish all He has planned and has in store for us to be and to do in and through Him. Rest secure today, knowing His plans and purposes will be fulfilled in your life.

DAY 7 - Rescue the perishing.

Matthew 10:8 “Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.”

“Rescue the perishing.” It is a phrase we seldom hear any more in most of our me-centric, self-centred, often feelings-based church services. We can easily equate how well a service went, how well the preacher spoke, how good the praise and worship time went” by how good those things made us, personally, feel. People often come out with comments like, “I did not enjoy in church today.” A wonderful response to that, which few of us would ever dare to say, would be, “Well, that is too bad, but then again, we do not gather together to worship you!”

Our primary reason to gather together should be to worship our Saviour, Yeshua, and Yehovah, our Heavenly Father. Secondly, we gather to fellowship one with another, with fellow sojourners on this walk of faith - and to be taught, equipped and trained to live our lives in a way that honours Him as well as to be witnesses of His grace, mercy, forgiveness and ever-open-arms to those who have not yet experienced the depth of His love towards them. The church or fellowship building, that is, wherever we meet is, in many ways incidental - but it should be a place into which we can invite and welcome those who have not yet met or experienced Yehovah personally, where they can be introduced to a living and loving saviour. The church should be a lifeboat for desperate, drowning people, not a yacht for the well-healed, not a place for those who consider themselves already members of “the club” or a select and elite, social, spiritual circle. The church is meant to be a hospital for the hurting, not a country club for the mighty. May that challenge our hearts as we gather together this weekend.

DAY 8 - Present throughout the storm.

Mark 4:38 “And he (Yeshua) was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow.”

A recent post on social media said, “Do not take the presence of the storm to indicate the absence of Yehovah.” We all face the storms of life and, despite coming through them, it is easy to find ourselves in a blind panic, imagining we will never survive the latest one to hit us, because of some seemingly unique and awful set of circumstances.

Several of Yeshua’s disciples were experience fishermen, accustomed to the storms which occurred on the Sea of Galilee, where many of them earned their livings. The gospels record a number of occasions when storms hit their sturdy fishing boats - causing them to be tossed about and the disciples to fear for their lives. There was the time when Yeshua came walking upon the water towards the boat they were sailing in - while the sea was far from calm. Yet, despite the rough conditions, Peter called to Yeshua, saying if it was Him, to call him to walk to Him on the water. While we may criticise Peter for “beginning to sink”, at least he got out the boat and walked on water - which is more than most of us would do.

On other occasions the disciples were panicking - even though Yeshua was actually with them in the boat. They woke Him up, questioning as to whether cared that they could perish in the storm. But Yeshua was so confident that He would safely land at their destination, He had even brought his pillow so He would get a good rest while they were on their way. That is the sort of confidence He expects us to have in His presence with us.

Whenever you face a storm in your life, never forget that He is with you in it - and that He will bring you safely through whatever the enemy throws at you. So, relax and enjoy the journey with Yeshua.

DAY 9 - Fear no evil - Part 1.

Psalm 23:4 "I will fear no evil: for thou art with me."

Have you ever, whether as a child at school or in the playground or, maybe worse still, as an adult in the workplace, been bullied by someone who wanted to undermine, belittle, control or dominate you? The bully in the office may be bigger, older and sometimes bolder than the playground bully, but their behaviour and tactics resemble each other more accurately than we may imagine. Unfortunately, when you are on the receiving end of such overbearing dominance when it is being played out by adults, you may feel as equally, if not more so, unsure of how to deal with it than when you were a child and the bully was twice your physical size.

When you were a child though, it helped when you had a big brother you could call upon for help. Then, whenever the bully appeared you just needed to call out their name and then, as soon as they appeared, the bully would bid a hasty retreat. In time though, you only needed to call out your big brother's name and the bully would run for cover. One important lesson we all need to learn is that when we have a relationship with our Saviour, Yeshua, and have submitted and entrusted our lives to Him, we have no need to fear the evil one who comes to steal, kill, destroy and bully us. We then only need to call out His name and the enemy will flee from us. (James 4:7). Some translations even use the term that he will flee in stark terror. Now there is a promise to remember next time the enemy of your faith tries to bully you!

DAY 10 - Fear no evil - Part 2.

Psalm 23:4 "I will fear no evil..., thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

As a follower of Yeshua, we learn early on in our walk with Him, that we have an enemy who opposes our stand for Him and our determination to live our lives in a way which pleases and honours Yehovah.

The Scriptures warn us that the devil comes like a thief to steal from and to kill and destroy us. (John 10:10). It also warns us that he stalks around, roaring like a lion (not that he is a lion, but he likes to pretend to be one), trying to make us fearful and to find ways to devour and overcome us in our walk as victorious followers of Yeshua. (1 Peter 5:8).

Above all else, we must not fear what He can do to us but, instead, to submit ourselves to Yehovah's authority over our lives. We have no need to fear what the devil can do to us because Yehovah has promised to protect and keep us from all the enemy can throw against us. We can find strength, comfort and support knowing that it is both Yehovah's rod and staff that will discipline us, guide us and fight our battles for us.

How comforting it is to know and to be secure in His love, care and protection - confident that no evil will befall us and that no plague can even come near where we live (Psalm 91:10), because Yehovah, Himself is watching over us every moment of our lives. Today, and every day, you can rest secure in His loving arms.

DAY 11 - "We will meet him in the air, and we will be like him."

1 Thessalonians 4:17 "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

In 1 Corinthians 15:52 we are told "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Have you noticed how few churches ever mention the second coming, the rapture or even "the end times"? It seems the closer we get to those things, the less they seem to be mentioned. Certainly, whenever the second coming will be, it is closer now than it was ten, twenty or fifty years ago - when it was more readily and regularly spoken of and preached about. However close it is, the Scriptures say we are to comfort one another with the knowledge that, as Yeshua promised, He went to prepare a place for us, and He will return to take us to be with Him forever.

Scripture promises us that unless our natural bodies die beforehand, when He returns those who have believed upon and put their trust in Him will rise to meet Him in the air - and then we will be with Him forever. But one promise we often forget is that we are told we will be changed "in the twinkling of an eye" and then "we will be like Him." Any limitations we have had in our lives, like physical disabilities, emotional disorders, learning difficulties, dyslexia, in fact any form of physical, mental or emotional handicap will drop away as we rise to meet Him in the air - to live with Him for ever and ever. Why? Because then we will be like Him. Our "corruption will put on incorruption" and this "mortal will put on immortality." (1 Corinthians 15:53-54). If you have friends and relatives who have gone to Heaven before you, whilst bearing those issues throughout their natural lives, be ready to rejoice when you see them in your Father's house; they will be restored to perfection and be just like Yeshua is.

DAY 12 - “You lost Yeshua??!!”

Luke 2:43 “And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Yeshua tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.”

We have, in Luke 2, the account of how Mary and Joseph lost the 12-year-old Yeshua, whom they knew was the Messiah, the Son of Yehovah and whom they had been tasked to raise from a baby to manhood. They had been to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover and, when it was finished, assuming He was traveling back home with family and friends, they set off without him. Now this was not a short-lived incident, lasting a few minutes while he was out of their sight, thinking He was playing with friends like you would expect a 12-year-old boy to be doing, but a whole day and night passed as they went on their way without Him.

When finally, one of them asked where Yeshua was, they were filled with panic. Think about it, not only had they lost their 12-year-old son, they had misplaced Son of Yehovah, the Messiah, and had carried on with their lives as if nothing had happened. Just think, how easily we can get so busy with our day-to-day routine that we too could all too easily “lose” Yeshua and lose the sense of His presence in our lives. Before we know it, one day, two days, a week, a month or even a year could pass before we become aware He is not around anymore.

Now we know that He has promised to never leave us, nor forsake us, and promised to always abide with and in us, but it can be all too easy to lose sight of Him in the increasingly busy and preoccupied lifestyles we all have these days. Above all else, strive to “turn your eyes upon Yeshua” as the old song used to say. May “the things of this earth grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace” as we commit ourselves to put Him first place in our hearts and lives.

DAY 13 - Fulfil your life's purpose on earth.

2 Timothy 4:7 "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

In the hustle and bustle of our log-jammed, busy lifestyles today, it is good to be challenged to keep our priorities in line with some that Yehovah Himself sets for our us. Let us consider some of those today.

1. Keep the main thing the main thing. 2 Corinthians 11:3 speaks about "the simplicity which is in Yeshua." Stop complicating things! Our Christian walk is all about our relationship with Yehovah and our relationship with people, which we could sum up as "love Yehovah; and love people like He does." Remember, the only thing you will take into heaven is your relationship with Yeshua. But also, do not lose people in the process of living your life. Take and use each opportunity you get to impact people; remember, this may be your one chance today to impact them for eternity. Take it - and be a blessing, not a curse to them.
2. Isaiah 61 says that the Spirit of the Lord is upon you and has anointed you to DO something - not just to feel good, or to have "goose bumps."
3. Till your last breath, fight a good fight, finish your course, keep the faith. (2 Tim 4:1-8). Make full proof of your ministry. In other words, determine that, by Yehovah's grace, you will do, accomplish and finish all your Heavenly Father created and planned for you to do and accomplish in your life on planet earth - so that you will not be ashamed to meet Him in Heaven - but be thrilled to hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord."

DAY 14 - Yehovah chose YOU!!

1 Corinthians 1:27-29 “But Yehovah hath chosen the foolish..., the weak..., the base..., the despised..., the...are not...”

When we are feeling “on top of the world”, feeling good about ourselves and feeling like one of the world’s elite, it is easy to be haughty and judgemental about anyone we consider, at least at that point in our lives, to be below us. But, come on, let us be real; that is only for a fleeting moment - and all those “pluses” are mere, momentary “feelings”, simply because we all know the true “me” and the stupid things we all think and do when, thankfully and hopefully, nobody is watching us. In the cold light of day each of us know ‘the real me’ needs Yehovah’s grace, mercy and strength just to get through the day in one piece. A balanced view is to see that with Yehovah’s grace, mercy and strength, He can turn a zero into a hero, He can reduce the mountains we feel overwhelmed by into molehills. He can turn tragedy into victory - if we rely on Him to work in and through us. He has done it before, and He will do it again.

So if, in those “real” and sober moments you think Yehovah cannot use you, remember: Noah was a drunk, Abraham was old, Sarah was barren, Isaac told lies, Jacob was a deceiver, Gideon was afraid, Moses lacked confidence, Samson was a womaniser, Jeremiah and Timothy were young, Elijah was depressed, the Samaritan woman had been married five times, Peter denied even knowing Yeshua, Thomas doubted, Peter, James and John fell asleep while praying, all the disciples forsook Yeshua and fled and Lazarus was actually dead. Whatever their ups and down, Yehovah remained faithful to His calling upon their lives. If He could do it in the lives of these men and women in the Scriptures, He can and will do it with you.

DAY 15 - Shake the dust from your feet.

Luke 9:56 “And they went to another village.”

If you were invited for lunch at a friend's house and, because you were still sitting there at 10.30pm, one of your friends excused themselves, went upstairs and reappeared in their pyjamas, with a teddy bear in one hand and an alarm clock in the other, said goodnight and went to bed, you would know you had simply overstayed your welcome and it was time to leave. But when Yeshua told the disciples to go and preach the gospel, He said if they went somewhere they were shunned and not welcomed, they should shake the dust from their feet and move on to the next town. That is a different situation. When James and John saw the Samaritans did not welcome Yeshua into their village, they wanted to call fire down from heaven to destroy them (Luke 9:53-56). Yeshua said no, and so they carried on to the next town on their way up to Jerusalem. Yeshua knew there was no need to call fire down on people; time would prove He was the Messiah, so He just, in a sense, kicked the dust from His feet and moved on with His life and mission.

Sometimes you may feel rejected, personally or because of your beliefs. Sometimes “your face (just) does not fit”, to quote today's terminology. You may feel hurt, betrayed, even humiliated. But sometimes you just have to swallow your pride, accept the hard fact of life that you are no longer accepted in the picture others have of their future, accept the fact that you no longer fit in with those you thought you did, you should or even did previously. That is when you need to refrain from cursing those who now reject you, kick the dust from your feet, and walk away from them in order to meet those who will rejoice with and welcome you. Do not stay where you are tolerated - go where you are celebrated.

DAY 16 - Count the cost and do it anyway.

Matthew 6:33 “But seek ye first the kingdom of Yehovah...”

David Robinson of godspot.co.uk said, “If we do nothing, we die, and if we do something, we die; so why bother trying to make a difference? Simple; those that do nothing leave nothing behind but failure, while those who do something leave a ladder up which those who consider themselves failures can climb out of despair.” What challenging and inspiring words.

It seems the closer we approach “the end times” and the day of the Jesus’s return, the more people appear to be taken up building their own empires and making this natural life more financially and physically comfortable. What an indictment it is on those of us who claim to be Yeshua’s disciples, that instead of spending our time, talents, passion, energy and finance furthering His Kingdom, we spend those assets building our ministries and bank balances, while the overwhelming majority of the world’s population are heading towards an eternity without Yehovah.

If we are true disciples of Yeshua we need to count the cost of serving Him in spirit and in truth, take up our cross and follow Him. May we count the cost of building His Kingdom, as workers together with Him, and be 100% sold out to paying the necessary price of giving our all for His name’s sake. That cost may include sacrificing our own agendas in order to work in partnership with others to help them to reach the lost, rather than spending time and effort building our ministry profile; it may and should mean we seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, regardless of what “return” or personal benefit there is to us. May each of us be willing to lay it all down at the cross - in the same way and to the same extent He did for us.

DAY 17 - Hand in the cookie jar.

Hebrews 13:5 "Be content with such things as ye have."

The story goes that a father offered his young daughter as many coins as she could pick out of a cookie jar. When she agreed to the challenge, her father placed on the table a cookie jar filled with 5p coins. Anxious to take as many as possible she thrust her hand inside. Clutching as many as she could, she was about to withdraw her hand when her father put another jar on the table, this one filled with 50p coins. Seeing this, the little girl wanted to take some of those too - but when she tried to withdraw her hand from the 5p jar, while still clutching a handful of 5p coins, she found she was unable to, simply because she was holding on to the 5p coins. Then the father added a third jar to the table, one filled with £1 coins. Realising the value of the £1 coins far exceeded that of the 5p, she now desperately wanted some of those too. But once again, frustration struck because she insisted on holding onto the 5p coins. Only when she realised that to fill her hand with the most valuable coin on offer, she would have to let go of the least valuable coins, did she loosen her grip on them and was able to withdraw her hand and place it the jar of £1's. Sometimes we can be so like children. We see the good things Yehovah has on offer for us to receive and enjoy, but we can all too easily settle for less than Yehovah's best because we cling onto what we already have rather than trusting He knows something better is on its way. Choose to be wise and believe Yehovah has only the best in mind for you and for your future. Let go of the second and third best and reach out in faith for Yehovah's best. Trust His wisdom and His timing. In fact, just trust Him..., He knows best!!

DAY 18 - Where do you turn in times of need?

Psalm 61:3 “For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.”

David Robinson of godspot.co.uk has said, “Yehovah has a way of speaking to us in so many ways. For example, when I am facing a problem bigger than me and He whispered one word to me to me. ‘GOSHEN.’ This was the place where the children of Israel were kept safe from plagues. Moments later I realised that Yeshua is my GOSHEN, my safe place, my hiding place, where no evil can befall me and no weapon formed against me shall prosper.”

That reminds us of another David who, in Psalm 32:7, says ‘Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.’ And in Psalm 119:114, ‘Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in Thy word.’ King David certainly has his weaknesses, faults and failures. And yet, through the prophet Samuel, Yehovah called him a ‘man after (His) own heart.’ (1 Samuel 13:14). Why, knowing David was not a perfect and sinless man, would Yehovah give Him such an endorsement? Could it be because David kept short accounts with Yehovah over his weakness and tendency to sin? (See 2 Samuel 12:13 and Psalm 51). David knew he only had one place he could run to in times of weakness, sin, threat and danger, and that is where he ran for comfort, grace and mercy. In Psalm 71:3 he declares, ‘Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress.’ And in Psalm 144:2 ‘My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and He in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me.’ Where do you run to at such times? Have you learned He is your Goshen, rock, shield, deliverer, high tower and your fortress? He will sustain and protect you from all evil - so run into His loving arms today.

DAY 19 - What is your heart centred upon?

Matthew 6:21 “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

It is said that if you want to get to know someone, listen carefully to what they mostly talk about. In Luke 6:45, Yeshua said, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” In other words, whatever is in the heart of a person, it will, sooner or later, be revealed through the words which come out of their mouth. So, how can you tell what someone is passionate about? Listen to what they talk about. If they are passionate about football, basketball, cars, or gardening, art or books, to quote a phrase, they will ‘spill the beans’ or, effectively, confess it openly by how they passionately talk about it to anyone and everyone. Similarly, you will have a very clear indication as to what they are passionate about and centre their lives upon by watching what they spend both their time and their money on.

If someone is a “fan” of a sports personality or team, singer or musical artist, or, to expand that word to its full meaning, fanatical about a particular thing or person, they will spend their time and money pursuing after it - or them. People will spend hundreds or even thousands of pounds buying tickets for and traveling to events where the person or object of their attention will be performing. Others will spend what those without that mindset would consider exorbitant amounts of money collecting books, artwork, cars, even models or toys - all in line with their passion. Now - consider, who or what do you mainly talk about? Do you have that sort of passion in your relationship with and desire to follow closer with and be more intimately acquainted with Yeshua? If you do, it will be evident to all around you by what you talk mostly about, on what you spend your time and energy and where you invest your money.

DAY 20 - Check your temperature regularly.

Luke 24:32 “Did not our heart burn within us?”

The first law of physics states inertia is when a body is at rest it will remain at rest unless it is acted upon by a force which causes it to move. We could also say that a law of nature is that people tend not to like change, and instead of moving forwards it is so easy to settle for the status quo. Too easily our instinctive tendency can be inertia, unless and until something disturbs our apathy and stir us into action. Some of Yeshua’s disciples had become accustomed to the life they had been living as His followers, even while awaiting what they thought was going to happen - His being revealed as the deliverer from the Roman occupation of Israel - rather than His crucifixion at Calvary. After His death, some left and went their ways, dejected and questioning how what had happened fitted in with their preconceived ideas. Two such disciples were walking on the road to Emmaus when Yeshua joined and talked with them on their journey. Later, as we read in Luke 24:32, they said one to another, ‘Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the scriptures?’

Are you aware of His abiding presence with you today? Does your heart burn within you as He walks and talks with you on your life’s journey? Does His presence warm your heart and stir your spirit? If so, you will be aware of a burning within as He and you converse together. If that is not your experience, listen to the words of Yeshua to the Laodiceans in Revelation 3:15-16. (paraphrased) “I know... that you are not hot or cold. I want to be one or the other, but not lukewarm. If you are lukewarm, I will spue you out of my mouth.” That is why it is important to regularly check “the temperature” of your heart’s relationship with and connection to Yeshua. Why not do it today?

DAY 21 - Walk with Yeshua.

Matthew 4:19 “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

Some years ago, a group of church-going people declared they were no longer calling themselves “Christians” but, instead, “followers of Yeshua.” Upon delving deeper, it became apparent that their reasoning was because, as they saw it, the term ‘Christian’ had been cheapened by its overuse by people they perceived as church attendees whose lives seemed little different from everyone else around them who did not “go to” church. These people felt their lives should be different from the lives they would otherwise be living not so much by going to a church building or meeting on a certain number of occasions each week. Instead, their decision to call themselves “followers” or “disciples” of Yeshua was to reflect their purpose and intention was to declare their desire and commitment to walk as Yeshua walked, talked like He talked, act like He acted and be as close an ambassador of His life and lifestyle as was in their power, by His enabling grace, to do and be.

When Yeshua said “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,” He was, in fact, proclaiming if people truly followed Him, He would show, exemplify and train them to be like He was, and to do the works that He was doing. Then, by truly walking with Yeshua, as His followers, the “walk with” would become “walk like.” The days of people wearing ‘What Would Yeshua Do’, wristbands appear to have passed for the time-being, but it remains a challenge to we who call ourselves followers of Yeshua to walk so close to and in harmony with Him that we reflect both Him and His character to everyone around us through all we say and do. Are you a true follower or merely an admirer of the One whose name you have adopted? There is a challenge to consider today.

DAY 22 - Great in Yehovah's Kingdom.

Mark 9:35 "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all."

It is apparent that the majority of people do whatever they can to, as they see it, better themselves, their prospects, income, position and standing in the eyes of others. That is often manifested by how we take every opportunity to promote ourselves and raise our profile above our contemporaries so that we stand out from them.

Strange then that when it comes to church and ministry matters, we adopt what can only be described as an unreal, pseudo-humble mask - because we know deep down that such an attitude of heart is in line with what Yehovah's Word demands of us. But it is unreal, a mask and an easily seen-through one at that. Take that same person out of the church or ministry setting and place them in a secular job interview, and that person will instinctively switch from being Dr Jekyll to being Mr Hyde. However, Yehovah requires truth in the inward parts, in the depth of our hearts (Psalm 51:6), and such a false veneer is an abomination to Him.

If we genuinely want to please Yehovah we need to learn to remove the masks we so quickly adopt to please ourselves and others, repent of our hypocrisy and ask Yehovah to create in us a clean and righteous heart so we can stand before Him in confidence. We must ask Him to equip, enable and empower us to serve both Him and all those around us, to whom He calls us to minister. False and insincere masks are far from pleasing to Him - but He is delighted to see us as being great in His kingdom when we have an honest desire to be a servant of all. So, if you want to be great in Yehovah's Kingdom, you know what you have to do.

Day 23 - Proclaim the Word – in words!!

Romans 10:17 “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Yehovah.”

In the book of Judges, we read that Yehovah called Gideon, a man who was, at the time, in hiding, to defeat the Midianite army. Gideon thought He had made a mistake, but Yehovah called him a mighty man of valour. Yehovah then called 300 men to stand with him. They were not equipped with swords and shields – but with a trumpet, a light covered by a pitcher - until the appointed time. At Gideon’s signal, they blew their trumpets in unison, calling out, “The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”, broke the pitchers and allowed the light to be seen by all around. In their panic, the Midianites turned upon and killed one another, and so were routed and defeated.

As followers of Yeshua we know the Scriptures describe the sword of the Lord as the Word of Yehovah. We read also that Yeshua is the Light of the World, and that He calls each of us to let our light shine before men. Yehovah commands us to declare the Word of Yehovah, the good news of the Gospel, and to make disciples of all nations, including where you live.

In these troubled times we have an incredible opportunity to proclaim the Gospel message. Millions of people are becoming acutely aware of their own weakness and inability to survive by their own wits and wisdom. Now is the time to share the good news of the gospel when and wherever we find those receptive hearts. St Francis of Assisi said, “Preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words.” That is a challenge to let the way we talk and behave speak louder than the words we speak, but never forget that the Scriptures say that “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Yehovah.” (Romans 10:17), so always be ready and prepared to share the Word of Yehovah with them.

Day 24 - You are not facing this alone.

Psalm 34:7 “The angel of Yehovah encamps round about them that fear him, and delivers them.”

In 2 Kings 6 we read that Yehovah kept revealing to the prophet Elisha the schemes the king of Syria was hatching against the children of Israel, even things he spoke of in his bedroom. The result was that Elisha was able to warn the King of Israel what their enemy were plotting against them, so the Israelites were always able to outsmart the Syrian army. When the King of Syria learned this, he sent a large company of soldiers, horses and chariots to surround the city of Dothan, where Elisha lived, planning to capture him and take him back to their king. When Elisha's servant saw the enemy approaching, he was terrified, nervously asking his master what they should do - but neither the Syrians nor his servant's fear concerned Elisha. He merely asked the Yehovah to “open the young man's eyes.”

Imagine the scene as the Yehovah opened the eyes of the servant. He instantly became aware of hundreds, maybe thousands of Heaven's angels surrounding him, his master Elisha and the whole city they lived in - and that they were there to defend them from any and all enemies who dared to come against Yehovah's people. Now picture yourself standing in the middle of a valley - surrounded by a formidable enemy - seeking your demise. But standing on the hilltops all around you are thousands of Heaven's army of angels - sent to defend and protect YOU!

Determine today that you will live every day in light of the knowledge that Yehovah has promised His angels are permanently encamped around you, because you both fear and love Yehovah. That is a never-ending sign of Yehovah's commitment to keep and protect you all the days of your life.

Day 25 - Stay humble.

James 4:6 "Yehovah resists the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."

Yehovah was grieved when the Israelites asked Him to give them a king to reign over them, like the surrounding nations who all had kings. Until then, they had only judges to help keep order and resolve disputes between them. Besides that, the people did what was right in their own eyes, with priests leading them in spiritual matters. Though Yehovah was reluctant to put another tier of authority between Himself and His people, He conceded to their pleas and gave Samuel the job of locating and anointing the best candidate. Soon after, when Saul was in the fields looking for his father's donkeys, he was met by Samuel. We see in 1 Samuel 9:21 that Saul's response was "Am not I a Benjamite, the smallest tribe of Israel and my family the least family in the tribe? So why are you speaking to me about this?" He was shocked that Yehovah had chosen him as Israel's first king.

Over the following years Saul's heart changed. We see him making crazy and unwise decisions, like choosing not to destroy the Amalekites' king, Agag, and keeping the best sheep and oxen to sacrifice to Yehovah, both decisions contrary to Yehovah's instruction. Besides his disobedience, sacrificing was the priests' job, not the king's. Obviously, Saul now felt he was qualified to ignore Yehovah's commandments and make his own mind up on things. Samuel's response was "When you were small in your own eyes, Yehovah anointed you king of Israel" Saul had gone from being the humble 'finder of the donkeys' to overriding Yehovah's commandments to him. As a result, he lost both the anointing and his job as king of Israel. Are you still as small in your own eyes as when you came to Yeshua; weak, helpless and needy, or have you abandoned your humility, preferring to rule over your own kingdom? If so, it is time to repent.

Day 26 - Bring the roof down if you need to!

Mark 2:3-4 “They came to Him, bringing one sick of the palsy, borne by four of them. And when they could not get near, they uncovered the roof where He was and let down the bed wherein he lay.”

In three of the four Gospels we read of a paralysed man being brought by four friends to be healed by Yeshua. But the house where Yeshua was speaking was so crowded they were unable to get near, let alone into the room where Yeshua was. We know these men loved their friend very deeply as they were not about to be put off receiving the miracle he needed because of a crowd of people around Yeshua.

These four men carried their friend up onto the roof and proceeded to dismantle the ceiling above Yeshua’s head, making a hole big enough to lower him down right to where Yeshua was. Proverbs 18:24 says, “there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother.” In fact, this man had four such friends, who so wanted him to be well that they were not only prepared to carry him around on his bed, but to break through someone’s roof to get him to Yeshua. The Scriptures tell us Yeshua healed the paralysed man when He saw their faith, manifested by their actions. What was in it for them? Probably nothing; but they loved their friend so much they were prepared to risk life and limb, the indignation of the crowds and the anger of owner of the house, and to pay for mending that roof.

It is said that the true test of friendship is what you are prepared to do for someone you call a friend when there is nothing that they are able to do for you in return. What is more, Yeshua Himself said, “Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:13). While we know that was certainly how Yeshua showed His love towards us, by the way He laid His life down for us, that we may have eternal life, what a challenge we have to live up to.

Day 27 - Growing pains.

Psalm 4:1 "Hear me when I call, O Yehovah of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me and hear my prayer."

None of us like pain, be it physical, emotional or spiritual. We go to extraordinary lengths to avoid discomfort or painful experiences. Chemist and supermarket shelves are stacked high with pain relief medication. Doctors' surgeries are booked days or even weeks in advance by people seeking consultations regarding anxiety, depression and other mental health issues. A recent survey showed that 20% of adults in the U.K. suffer from these ailments, while 25% of 18-24 year olds in the USA said they had contemplated suicide in the previous month. Never before, particularly in our relatively affluent western societies, have people been so desperate for pain relief in all these areas. And yet, it is in our 'low' times, our periods of barrenness and despair that our roots go deeper - like a thirsty plant seeking out the sustenance of the water and nutrients it needs to survive and grow. Similarly, when the storms of life batter the houses we have built, be they on a rock or on sand, we realise it is imperative that our roots, our foundations, must go deep into Yehovah.

In Psalm 4:1 David says he was enlarged in his distress, in his time of need, his time of weakness and desperation. None of us craves to go through tough or hard times. Yet often it is often only while we are walking through the valley of the shadow of death, battling against doubt and temptation, that we really become aware of His abiding presence with us, reassuring us that we need not fear nor despair. Our faith and our hearts are enlarged in the times we feel most in need - in the times of our distress - because that is when we are most likely to call out to and rely upon His abiding presence. Today, remember that Emmanuel is with you to grow, enlarge, strengthen, deliver and settle you. Stand fast and you will see His salvation.

Day 28 - In the morning.

Psalm 5:3 “My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.”

In the natural realm many of us are accustomed to eating “on the go”, starting off our days in a rush to get to work or to school, maybe grabbing a piece of toast or a cereal bar as we head out of the door. If we have lunch at all, we eat it at our desks, keeping up with the workload that surrounds us. Then at night, if we are fortunate, we sit down to eat our dinners, often the largest meal of the day, on a tray in front of the TV. Then we are too full and too tired to move. So, in the evenings we become “vegged-out” “couch potatoes.”

Many of us can remember that in years gone by our parents would tell us that we should “breakfast like kings, lunch like lords and supper like paupers.” They would advise us that this was a far healthier way to live.

Similarly, the Word of Yehovah encourages us to rise early in the morning, as Yeshua Himself often did, and spend time with our heavenly Father, feeding on His presence before facing the rigours and challenges of the day.

We all know life is not always that simple, nor easy to regulate. It takes self-discipline and a decision of the heart, mind and body to rise early from our beds to centre our hearts and minds upon Yehovah in a morning, before facing the onslaught of issues that inevitably come. Begin your day by focusing, even for a few minutes on your Heavenly Father and Yeshua, asking the Holy Spirit to speak in that still small voice, in a way that will enable you to feed upon His Word throughout the day. Set the alarm a few minutes earlier than usual tomorrow morning.

Day 29 - Grace came first.

Ephesians 2:8 “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of Yehovah.”

When we first put our trust in Yehovah and in the death, burial and resurrection of His Son, Yeshua, as our Saviour, we do so knowing that we had to come, like the old hymn says, “just as we are, without one plea, but that Thy blood was shed for me.” At that point in time we realised that we cannot earn our salvation, but must simply accept it as the free gift of Yehovah, undeserved and unearned.

However, often over a period of time, we grow a more earnings-based mindset. We then spend our lives swinging the pendulum between two polar opposites positions. On one hand we try to earn the love of Yehovah, doing things we think will make us worthy of that which He has given us freely and without limit. On the other hand, we can easily adopt the belief that we were saved because we chose to put our faith in Yeshua, earning His love and our salvation through something we chose to do. But the very faith we put in Yehovah’s grace was given us – and it was His grace, rather than our faith, that saved us.

The foundation of our salvation is built entirely upon one fact. As Romans 5:8 tells us, “But Yehovah commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Yeshua died for us.” No matter how much faith we have, be it a mustard seed or mountain sized, even that faith could not save us if the love and grace of Yehovah had not been bestowed upon us. As 1 John 3:1 says, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, (so) that we should be called the sons of Yehovah.” We must always remember that it is only because of His love, mercy and grace, given freely to us, that we are saved.

Day 30 - Forget who and what is behind you.

Philippians 13:3 “...this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.”

As we get older it is sometimes easy to get into the habit of thinking how tough things are “these days”, and how great things were in the past, in “the good old days.” But, as someone once said, “the one good thing about the ‘good old days’ is that they are gone; they *are* in the past.”

A simple fact of life we all have to and should accept is that all the “good”, as well as the “bad” days, and things that happened to us in the past are, indeed, in the past, never to return. All the good and the bad things have to be left or laid to rest behind us if we intend moving forwards into the life and experiences Yehovah has prepared for us in our futures. Jeremiah 29:11 tells us that Yehovah has plans to give us a “hope and a future.” Both hope and future are words which describe what is ahead, not behind us.

Imagine running a marathon race and spending all your time and effort thinking about what, who or how many people are behind you, or considering and being concerned about the slips or trips you experienced 5 miles after they happened. Instead of doing that you concentrate on the road ahead of you - facing each new and fresh challenge as you reach it, rather than getting distracted by worrying about those things you can no longer avoid or change.

We must run the race set *before* us. As the writer of the book of Hebrews encourages us, “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Yeshua the author and finisher of our faith.” (Hebrews 12:2-3).

Day 31 - Build your house upon the Rock.

Matthew 7:25 “And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.”

On the side of a disused railway line, now a cycle and footpath near where I live, is something which stirs my mind and heart each time I pass it. There are two, twenty-foot-tall trees growing out of a narrow ledge on the front of a vertical cliff-face. The cliff and ledge are both solid rock - with a thin layer of soil on the ledge, which has obviously dropped from above and settled there over the years. Both trees are thriving and growing strong, withstanding all the elements, like the rain, snow and the blustery winds which blow up and down the valley where they stand.

Each time I see them they remind me that whenever things are hard, tough and “impossible”, the only way we will survive and prosper is if our roots go deep. However the seeds from which those trees grew got onto that ledge in the first place, and however they became buried, out of sight, in the soil which had collected there, they have literally taken root and grown. They have grown and prospered against all the odds, despite the elements which have certainly not been in their favour.

These trees teach us an invaluable life lesson. It is essential that you always ensure you build your life upon The Rock and that your roots go deep in Him. The tougher and harder things are, or things become, the deeper your roots need to go - and grow. In the same way that Yeshua counselled us to build our house upon a rock - rather than on sand - we need to ensure our foundations are built upon and our roots are planted deep upon something, Someone, Who will ensure we remain well founded and secure when tough times come.

Day 32 - Yehovah found you first. Part 1.

Genesis 3:7 “And he (Adam) said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

In the very beginning, Yehovah gave Adam and Eve freedom to eat of every tree in the Garden of Eden, except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But they disobeyed and, as a result, we witness what we now term as “the fall.” The immediate effect we witness is that they became aware of their nakedness; they lacked something, namely clothing to cover their bodies. Obviously, Yehovah had seen them naked; He made them that way in the first place. Until they sinned, they had not even noticed they had no clothes on – but when they disobeyed Yehovah’s command, they became both aware and embarrassed. Their response was to sew together leaves to cover themselves and to hide from Yehovah. Whether that was because they were embarrassed that He would see them uncovered or because they realised that when He did so, He would know they had sinned we do not know, but hide they did. Ever since then every person ever born, apart from Yeshua, has tried to hide and to cover up their sin, from Yehovah and from others, ashamed that He, and they, will see their nakedness and guilt. People will go to extraordinary lengths to ignore, deny and plead not-guilty to their short-comings and failure – as if by doing so, they will avoid the consequences. Genesis 3 tells us that after Adam and Eve had sinned, Yehovah came walking in the garden in the cool of the day, no doubt to meet and fellowship with them. But He discovered them hiding because of guilt and shame. Yehovah called out, “Where art thou?” not because He did not know, but because He was giving them the chance to admit, as Adam did, “I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” The first step in restoration of our relationship and fellowship with Yehovah is to recognise and confess that we have sinned and fallen short of His design and purpose for our lives. If today, you recognise that is you, do not hide from Yehovah. Come into the open before Him. Confess your need for His forgiveness and trust that He will clothe you in His righteousness.

Day 33 - Yehovah found you first. Part 2.

Genesis 3:7 “And he (Adam) said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

We have seen the instinctive tendency and reaction of the human heart is to cover up and hide every sign of failure, lack, weakness or inadequacy, ashamed that we so obviously and so frequently fall short of perfection. Not only are those shortcomings obvious to and even built into us by the Yehovah when He created us, they are also so evident to all those around us that we are not as perfect as we may like to pretend to be. After all, they witness our lack of perfection through our mistakes, shortcomings, bad behaviour, temper tantrums, mood swings (the list goes on and on), no doubt on a daily basis.

And yet, we all so often try to maintain an air of strength, self-sufficiency, independence, confidence, and super-spirituality. We want people to love, accept and respect us – without perhaps realising that if they do so based on a false and exterior-only image we have portrayed to them, then we will certainly lose that high regard if and, more likely when, that false façade falls.

In Revelation 3, Yeshua speaks to the Church of Laodicea, telling them that while they may say they are rich and in need of nothing, He sees them as wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. Perhaps they had become so accustomed to putting on a false image, one they thought would impress others who saw them, maybe even Yehovah Himself. But Yehovah saw through the disguise and saw them for what they really were. In the same way, He is looking for us to see ourselves as He sees us, to stop putting on a mask and an outfit we think will impress Him and others. He desires truth in the inward parts. After all, He knows us as we really are, and He loves us despite our all too obvious shortcomings and inadequacies. Romans 5:8 tells us it was “while we were yet sinners” that Yeshua came and died for us.

Day 34 - Stop judging others.

Romans 14:4 “Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for Yehovah is able to make him stand.”

Perhaps you, like me, could list people, preachers, pastors, evangelists, ‘healing’, ‘miracle’ or finance emphasising ministers, who are not your, or my, “cup of tea.” This may be because of their ministry content, personality, ‘delivery’ style or something we saw or heard them do or say. It may be because we have an uneasy feeling about them or their ministry. However, as shocking as it may be, we are not always 100% right about everything we think, do, say or even preach!! And what is more, none of us are Yehovah; we are not all-knowing, all-powerful or ever-present. Romans 14:4, counsels “Who are you to judge another man's servant? To his own master he stands or falls.” Yehovah sometimes chooses to use people like the woman at the well (see John 4), to reach a whole city. Others discounted her for what they saw as all the right, justifiable and understandable reasons. They despised her, but she was used by Yehovah to introduce the people of her city to Yeshua, the Messiah.

Obviously, we need to beware of false prophets and teachers and the error they preach, but it is not our role to publicly criticise and denigrate them to others, especially in front of non-believers. We also need to swallow our pride and realise we too, are not everyone’s ‘cup of tea.’ No doubt, some probably think we are ‘up the wall’ doctrinally, or have strange personalities or preaching styles.

None of us are Yehovah and, therefore, we have no right, authority or responsibility to dismiss anybody out of hand. In any case, 1 Corinthians 1 says that Yehovah chooses the weak, despised and people who ‘are not’ to show His power and glory through. 1 Corinthians 12 tells us that Yehovah chooses, saves and places in the Church of Yeshua people who differ in gift and calling, and we are forbidden to question His choice. We have been warned!

Day 35 - The Princess and the Pea.

John 14:16 “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.”

Hans Christian Andersen tells the story of a prince who wanted to marry a princess but had difficulty finding a suitable wife. Something is always wrong with those he meets and, for various reasons, he cannot be sure they are actual princesses. One rainy night a young woman seeks shelter in the prince's castle. As she claims she is a princess, the prince's mother decides to test her by placing a pea, covered by a thick mattress and blankets, in the bed she is given for the night. In the morning she tells her hosts she had suffered a sleepless night, kept awake by something hard in the bed that she is certain has bruised her. With the proof of her bruised back, the princess passes the test, and the prince rejoices. He could barely believe he had found his true princess. It was said that only a real princess would have the sensitivity to feel a pea through such a quantity of bedding. So, the two are married, with a huge wedding taking place in the palace.

This children's story reminds us that when we were born again, the Holy Spirit came to live with and within us. The Holy Spirit guides and teaches us the things our Heavenly Father wants us to know and to be aware of. We know that much of what Yehovah wants us to know about His will and direction for our lives, the “dos” and “do not's” for instance, are recorded in the Scriptures, but in addition to what we could term as the “Maker's Manual”, the Holy Spirit Himself will teach, instruct and guide us in our daily walk with Him. Only as we watch out for, and listen to, the gentle whispers of His voice will we pick up on things like the feeling that something just is not quite right. It may simply be an awareness that something is making us feel uncomfortable with a situation, or the position we find ourselves in. If we learn to be sensitive to His whispers and His promptings, we will develop a sense of calmness and peace that only the indwelling Holy Spirit can bring.

Day 36 - Yehovah is with you.

Job 23:10 “He knoweth the way that I take.”

We have all been in the position when we have asked, “What on earth is going on, for Heaven’s sake?” We have all tried to work out what is happening in our lives and if and how we will ever get through the situation we find ourselves in. At the time of writing this, the whole world is facing and battling through a pandemic, a worldwide health crisis. Many millions have been infected with a deadly virus and already over two million people have died. There will be few of the almost 8 billion people on this planet who have not wondered if they, their families and loved ones, or even their country’s population, will endure and survive what is happening all around us.

BUT YEHOVAH... That simple phrase contains a tremendous length, breadth, height and depth of meaning, of power and of promise for each of us – if we will put our faith and trust in Him. John 10:10 tells us that it is the thief who comes to steal, to kill and to destroy – BUT Yehovah sent Yeshua to bring and to give us LIFE, and that “more abundantly.” Yehovah does not come to bring death, destruction, plague, famine or peril, but He will defeat all these things which can and do, at times, come against us and will work them together for good in our lives as we learn to trust in and rely upon Him. Our Heavenly Father is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient; that is all-powerful, ever-present and all-knowing. He is never caught off-guard and unaware, nor baffled as to how He will turn around everything that seems negative and impossible. He will work all these negative things together for our good and bring us out of them in victory. The Scripture assure us that He knows the plans He has for us, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ([Jeremiah 29:11](#)).

He will deliver you out of whatever crisis – or crises - you may be facing now, or at any time in the future. So, look forward with hope, for your future has been guaranteed by your Heavenly Father.

Day 37 - Great expectations.

Matthew 9:29 “Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.”

We read in scripture of how Yeshua healed the sick, cleansed the lepers and raised the dead. On many of these occasions we see that He told them to do something – demonstrating an evidence of their faith, through their actions, such as to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam. On other occasions, He asked them a question – which demanded a verbal answer, declaring their faith in Him to heal and restore them. In this account mentioned in Matthew 9, two blind men were following Yeshua, calling out “Thou son of David, have mercy on us.” The simple fact they were calling Him the “son of David”, rather than “Yeshua of Nazareth”, as most people regarded Him, was a clear declaration that they believed Him to be the Messiah, Yehovah’s anointed One. On hearing that statement of faith, Yeshua asked them if they believed He was able to heal them, and they replied “Yes, Lord.” Again, both the fact they said “Yes” and that they called Him “Lord” were declarations of their faith and trust in Him to perform the miracle they so desperately needed. Yeshua responded by saying that it was according to their faith, their expectation, their belief that because He was the Son of David, the Messiah, Yehovah’s appointed deliverer, they would receive what they were asking Him for. Many of us can all too easily drift through life with a “que sera, sera” (whatever will be, will be) attitude and mindset, believing that if Yehovah wants us healed, wants us well, wants us to receive the provision, the miracle, the answer to our prayers, He may – or may not - come through with what we need. It is as if we think Yeshua may, or may not, do it, all dependant on how He is feeling at the time. But Yeshua responds to our faith in Him, and our willingness to stand upon the promises of Yehovah, as proclaimed clearly in the Scriptures. If we, through our faith, have every confidence that He will do all and whatever He has promised us in and by His Word – evidenced by our expectation that we will receive that tangible answer to our prayer - He will not disappoint us.

Day 38 - Tiredness Kills. Take a break.

Matthew 14:23 “And when he (Yeshua) had sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.”

As we drive along our motorways and highways these days, we see regularly spaced “Services” or, as some countries call them, “Rest Stops.” Often, a couple of miles before them, we see road signs which boldly state “Tiredness Kills. Take a break.” That is quite an incentive to stop and take a break, particularly if you are on a long journey, are tired and if you are transporting precious “cargo” in the form of your loved ones - your spouse and children. Yeshua lived one of the busiest lives ever known to man. The Scriptures say if all the works He did were to be recorded, the whole world would not be able to contain the books telling of them. But Yeshua had learned a vitally important lesson in life – and that was that He sometimes needed to “Take a Break”, to spend one-to-one time with His Father, to pray and to just be alone, away from the clamour of the crowds. You can imagine Yeshua today, having no qualms about pulling over into a service station, getting away from the heavy traffic of life’s journey, taking a rest.

Carrying on with the same analogy, our cars are equipped with what are called “warning lights.” Their job is to forewarn us that something may not be quite right with the vehicle, and that we need to pay attention, to check it out, maybe to take it to the manufacturer’s appointed dealer, who will be able to check if all is well, or if remedial work needs to be carried out. By ignoring those warning lights, we risk something more serious happening, like a breakdown, an emergency call-out to rescue a stranded vehicle and its occupants at the side of the road. It would be unwise of us to take care of our cars more than we take care of ourselves. After all, if the Son of Yehovah Himself recognised He needed to balance action, rest and recuperation in His life, in order to function correctly, what makes you think you do not need take a rest from time to time?

Day 39 - Overcoming in a crisis.

Psalm 91:15 “He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him.”

Before a pilot is allowed to fly solo, fly at night, fly over a certain height, carry passengers, or fly into potentially hazardous conditions, such as poor visibility or bad weather, they are tested to ensure they are competent to survive and to bring themselves, the plane and any passengers safely back to an airport. These are some of the steps they need to remember in the event they encounter bad weather or poor visibility. Knowing and practicing these steps will also help us battle through the crises we so often encounter throughout our lives. When crises arise: 1. “Calm down.” Remember, as we have been redeemed by, and belong to Yehovah, He has promised to take care of and to keep us in perfect peace if we keep our minds stayed upon Him. Whatever the devil may throw at you, do not panic, as Yehovah has promised to bring you through. 2. “Check your instruments.” Yehovah has also promised you His peace, so check if you have it. If not, it may indicate your mind is not stayed upon and resting in Him. Allow that peace to rule and “act as an umpire” in your heart. He has promised to guide you; so, are you obeying His instructions and doing what He has told you? 3. “Communicate.” Pray without ceasing. Keep your spiritual eyes and ears focused on Yehovah and His Word, not the problem or circumstances. Speak with trusted counsellors, who will speak truthfully to you. 4. “Comply with the instructions you are given.” Yeshua promised to be with us and to guide us continually, but it is our responsibility to obey His laws and walk in line with His instructions. 5. “Climb.” We must rise up in praise above the natural issues of life, like King David who declared “I will bless Yehovah at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth.” (Psalm 34:1). And do not forget to thank the Yehovah and celebrate His deliverance when you “land” safely after the storms of life have passed.

Day 40 - Press on.

Philippians 3:13 “...forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching ...unto those things which are before.”

Living the Christian life can sometimes be described as similar to driving a motor car on one of our busy roads. See what you think...

A good driver keeps his eye on the road ahead of him. He watches out for hazards, the pitfalls or potholes that can easily cause damage his vehicle, costing hundreds of pounds to repair and even throw him off course and endanger his life. He does not spend all his time staring in the rear-view mirror. He knows that doing so would be one sure way to crash into something ahead of him, be it another vehicle, a lamppost, wall or, worse still, an innocent pedestrian walking along the footpath. He will look in his rear-view mirror, but taking only an occasional glance, simply to ensure something he has already passed or come through does not attack him from behind and curtail his onward journey. He does not, however, stare in the mirrors as they show only what is in behind, not what is ahead.

A wise driver keeps a watchful eye on the warning lights, the temperature and fuel gauges and that the power that is being used for lights, heating, air conditioning and screen heaters is constantly being regenerated, rather than him having to rely upon and not run down the finite power in the car battery. If he is wise, he will be aware that, even with several mirrors, there are always blind spots, areas around his vehicle where other cars or trucks can be concealed from his view. These blind spots can be a serious cause for concern, particularly if he makes a hasty decision to alter his course without checking, perhaps by a quick glance over his shoulder, to see if another driver is occupying that space. Live, or “drive” your life with your eyes on the goal, on reaching your destination without endangering others, whilst enjoying the journey. Keep your ears open, listening to your navigator, following His instructions and directions till you arrive safely at your journey’s end.

Day 41 – Season, reason, purpose.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.”

Often, even as followers of Yeshua, we can spend much of our lives wondering why particular things are happening, in general, to others and to ourselves. And while Yehovah does not send everything that arrives and occurs in our lives, because He is Almighty and sovereign, we have to acknowledge that sometimes He does allow things to come which we would prefer not to have arrive on our doorsteps. But although Yehovah does not send all that we would consider to be negative, we can be confident and fully assured that He will, in the due time or season, work it all together for our good. (See Romans 8:28). Let us look at a few Biblical examples of things that happened to the saints of old, which Yehovah turned around for good, although I am sure at the time, those people involved must have wondered how He could, or at least would, do it.

As a child Moses was placed in a basket and left floating in the river so he would be rescued and raised in Pharaoh’s household. After killing an Egyptian while defending an Israelite he fled the country and spent 40 years in a wilderness until Yehovah send him back to lead the Israelites to freedom. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were thrown into a fiery furnace, Daniel into a lion’s den – neither of which would be as comfortable as a five-star hotel vacation. Paul was shipwrecked, spent nights floating in the sea, was bitten by a snake, beaten with rods and whipped several times for his faith. Joseph was betrayed, sold into slavery by his own brothers, falsely accused and imprisoned for many years. And yet he was able to say that what they did to him for evil, Yehovah had meant for, and turned to good. The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10), but Yeshua comes to bring life and more abundantly than we could imagine, particularly when we are going through what seems like similar experiences to those we have just read about. So, while what you may be going through now does not feel comfortable and to be rejoiced over, Yehovah knows exactly where you are, what you are enduring, and He will, in due time, bring you through to victory by His power and sovereign grace.

Day 42 - When the enemy comes in like a flood.

Isaiah 59:19 “When the enemy comes in like a flood the Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard against him.”

When it comes to reading scripture, have you ever realised how each of us tend to read something in the same way we have always done? And then someone reads that same passage in church, or you hear it on-line, on Christian radio or television, or on a CD – and they sometimes read it very slightly different to the way you have always done. When that happens, it is amazing how sometimes someone else places the emphasises on a different word than you do – and it alters the way you have always understood that scripture and what it actually means to you. And here I believe is one of those examples.

I have always understood the passage from Isaiah 59:19, which says, “When the enemy comes in like a flood the Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard against him,” to mean that when the enemy, which is the devil, comes against us, he comes in like a powerful flood, overwhelming all that stand before him. That understanding compounds any underlying perception that we have that Satan is strong, powerful and can easily overcome and defeat us.

But let us consider an alternative understanding of this short passage, simply by positioning the emphasis slightly differently from how we may have done previously. Let us try reading it in the following way, “When the enemy comes in, LIKE A FLOOD THE LORD WILL LIFT UP A STANDARD AGAINST him.” Reading the same verse in this way changes our understanding from the concept that a mighty devil is coming in as an overwhelming flood – to one that when he tries the come in, THEN the Lord rises up against him – LIKE A FLOOD – raising a standard against him. Now that changes your perspective – and makes you realise you are on the winning side, Yehovah’s – and He is on your side, strong and mighty, overcoming all the devil dares to throw against you.

Day 43 - "Give me a hug!"

Romans 5:8 "But Yehovah commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Yeshua died for us."

An exotic dancer from a city centre night club met and surrendered her life to Yeshua. Some time later she took the decision to be baptised and, by way of a witness to her former friends and colleagues, she invited several dancers and bouncers to attend the event. That day the front two rows were left reserved for a group of people that, it must be said, had not been inside a church for many years, if ever. Of course, it could also be said that few of the regular congregants had seen such a group of people before, in church or anywhere else. It may have surprised some to see Rose, a lady in her 80's, take a seat next to one of the big, muscular bouncers. As some churches do, when the pastor started the service, he encouraged everyone to welcome their neighbour. Without hesitation Rose turned to her new "companion", greeting him with a broad smile. Somewhat embarrassed, he held out a hand to shake hers, only to hear Rose say, "Give me a hug, my dear." How could he resist? As he leaned down and was warmly hugged, his heart melted. Thirty or more years of rejection, indifference and animosity evaporated as he was enveloped and overpowered by a practical demonstration of love, acceptance, forgiveness and reassurance. People involved in prison ministry often say many inmates grew up without a father figure, or came from homes where no affection was verbalised or demonstrated, homes where they were abused more often than loved and accepted. The impact on young and impressionable hearts and lives can, and often does, last a lifetime.

When a child is naughty, disobedient, even downright obnoxious and, thereby, frustrating to its parents, it can be all too easy to react in a similar way towards them. But as we realise that it was while we were obnoxious, disobedient and "yet sinners" that Yeshua came to die for us, to reconcile us back to our Heavenly Father, that can be so like Yehovah Himself taking us into His loving arms, squeezing and hugging us – till all our hurts and resistance is melted before Him. If that is you today, allow the love of Yehovah to soften, melt and heal the pain within. He loves you deeply.

Day 44 - Fear not; you are not alone.

Hebrews 13:5 “...He has said, ‘I will never leave, nor forsake you’.”

Romans 8:37 “...in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.”

Most of our concerns, worries and fears are connected to our thoughts about the future. That can so easily lead to the “What if?” questions running wild in our minds, particularly if we fail to include Yehovah in the equation. Our minds will always tend to work overtime, imagining what will, or even could happen and our concerns turn to wondering how we will endure in these situations, be they real or imagined. Our minds consider a multitude of “What if’s” during the average day. We find ourselves asking, “What will I do if...happens?” or “What will I do if...does NOT happen?” Now, think about it; when we consider these things, our minds are actually visualising ourselves in a particular situation, position or circumstance. When we do this, we tend to think about how we, as an individual human being, would face, handle and resolve such matters on our own and in our own strength.

There is, however, an alternative to this mindset. Let us consider that Yeshua said He would never leave nor forsake us. He also said our Heavenly Father would send the Holy Spirit to guide, protect and comfort us. Just for a moment, as you are reading this, visualise Yeshua sitting on a chair or standing by the side of you as you face a particular problem or predicament, be it real or imaginary. Here we have the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Creator of everything that has, does, or will ever exist, ready to intervene and handle anything that could possibly come your way. He is not flustered, anxious, fearful, or in-the-least concerned about how you, with His help and intervention, can come through this, or any other problem you could ever encounter. Would you not think to ask for His help? He is waiting for you to simply invite and welcome Him in, to ask for His involvement in things. Now, that will change your perspective of what you are going through, knowing He has it all under control.

Day 45 - You are what Yehovah says you are.

1 Corinthians 15:10 “But by the grace of Yehovah, I am what I am.”

Have you ever been shocked listening to some of the things which come out of your own mouth? Most of us have, I am sure, found ourselves thinking, saying and even doing things that we are instinctively ashamed of. You may, on occasions, have thought something which you would be embarrassed and even horrified to have visibly appear in a “bubble” above your head, like something you would read in a comic strip – visible for all to see. Sometimes the pressure and stresses of our day to day lives cause things to surface so quickly and suddenly we fail to stop them coming out of our mouths. Indeed, “out of the abundance of our hearts, the mouth speaks,” (Luke 6:45) and “(both) death and life are in the power of the tongue.” Whatever is hidden within our hearts certainly tends to surface when we are under pressure and stress.

While we know that our spirits have been quickened, renewed, made alive and perfected for ever - and that we have been justified and made righteous (just-as-if-we-had-never-sinned and placed in a right-standing relationship with Yehovah), we still battle with a body which needs to be presented to Yehovah as a living sacrifice and a mind that needs to be renewed day-by-day.

Yet, because of the supernatural work that Yehovah has accomplished in terms of our spirit, we can boldly confess what He says about us in His Word, the Scriptures, whilst still recognising our minds and bodies are in a process of being renewed. And that is a process which will continue while ever we are alive on planet earth.

Many years ago, a pastor friend of ours would start all his services by asking everyone to stand with their Scriptures in their hands, and to boldly confess, “This are my Scriptures. I am what they say I am, I have what they say I have, and I can do what they say I can do.” And that is a truth worth rejoicing about!

Day 46 - Who do men say you are?

Matthew 16:13 “Whom do men say I, the Son of Man, am?”

Matthew chapter 16 tells us that Yeshua asked His disciples whom the people said He was. They replied that some said He was John the Baptist, some said Elijah, while others said Jeremiah or one of the other prophets. On hearing that, Yeshua asked them, ‘...whom do YOU say I am?’ That was when Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the Yehovah’.

Yeshua wanted to know who the people of Israel thought He was. After all, He was the Messiah the people of Israel had been expecting since the Old Testament prophets had foretold His arrival. But what was more crucially important, indeed vital to Him, was that the disciples knew Who He was. After all, He had hand-picked them to become His apprentices, knowing that, following His resurrection and ascension, they would be His apostles, commissioned to take the Gospel message across the world.

This conversation also raises some interesting questions in the hearts of followers of Yeshua. 1. We call ourselves “followers of Yeshua.” So, the question arises, “Are we truly *followers* of Yeshua? Do we do as He does, speak and behave as He would?” Would the people around us say of us that we are truly His followers? 2. While this is a very valid, thought provoking and challenging point, it can be all too easy for us to spend all our lives focusing on and worried about what earthly people think about us. Proverbs 29:25 tells us that the “fear of man brings a snare.” In other words, living our lives fearing whether we please or displease other human beings, who are as prone to sin and failure as ourselves, is a trap which will enslave us every minute of the day if we fall into it. The most important question for us is not “what do people think about or say about us,” but “What does Yehovah think of us? What does Yehovah say about us? Who does He say we are?” After all, the fear of man brings a snare, but “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (Psalm 111:10, Proverbs 1:7 & Proverbs 9:10).

Day 47 - Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow.

Deuteronomy 33:25 “...as thy days, so shall thy strength be.”

A verse from the old hymn we know as “Great is Thy faithfulness,” says, “Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide, Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside.” Consider for a moment, where are most, or perhaps all the things we are concerned or worried about? By far the vast majority of them are in the future; they lie in our imaginations in front of us, rarely behind us. What is more, if and when they are in the present, we tend to have the presence of mind and even the rush of adrenaline to face and deal with them as they arise. Our concerns, worries and fears tend to surround our thoughts about how we will cope with and handle them if, or when, they actually occur - in the future.

But the adrenaline rush, that which we sometimes refer to as the “fight or flight,” reaction and capacity, which we just considered, does not occur until the need for it arrives. That happens when we are confronted with making a decision to either face and fight something dangerous and threatening, or to take flight and run away from it.

In the same way that Yehovah has made us with the capacity to handle that situation – as and when it happens, He has promised to provide us with His strength and His grace - as and when we need them. Yehovah provided manna in the wilderness to feed the Children of Israel on their journey to the promised land. He supplied what they needed when they needed it. Similarly, Yehovah’s grace, which has been described as Yehovah’s “enabling empowerment,” is given you in proportion to what Yehovah knows you need on each specific day and at the specific time you need it.

Day 48 - Be aware of people who walk with a limp.

Genesis 32:31 "The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip."

One of the things people who have not put their faith in Yeshua sometimes say about those of us who have, is that they think we try to give the impression we are perfect, that we never think, say or do anything wrong. They often consider us to be proud, arrogant and accuse us of trying to portray an image that we always live victorious, even sinless lives. Unfortunately, we have to admit, we may also know people we think are like the Pharisees at the time of Yeshua's earthly ministry in Israel, people that Yeshua rebuked for their pride and arrogance.

So, let us consider Jacob, one of the patriarchs of Old Testament times. The Scriptures speak numerous times of Yehovah being the Yehovah of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And yet even the name Jacob means "heel grabber"; he plotted against and manipulated his brother Esau out of his birth-right. The Hebrew root of the name Jacob means "to supplant, circumvent, assail, overreach," none of which are very complimentary descriptions of a person – Christian or not. But Jacob knew the depravity of his own heart. He knew he lacked honesty, truthfulness and integrity. He knew he desperately needed Yehovah and His blessing, even more than that of his natural father Isaac. We read in Genesis 32, when he was confronted by a man, be he an angel or Yehovah Himself, he wrestled with him all through the night, to the point that he said he would not let him go until he blessed him. At the end of that encounter, Yehovah touched his thigh, said to be the strongest muscle in the body, putting it out of joint and causing him to limp for the rest of his life. From that point on, his name changed to Israel, "for as a prince you have power (or favour) with Yehovah and with men, and you have prevailed." The Scriptures say he walked with a limp, something that would not only be an ever-present reminder of his natural weakness and limitation, but also of Yehovah's blessing upon his life despite his own faults and failures. In the same way, we need to be constantly aware of our desperate need for Yehovah's mercy and grace, knowing it is only through Yehovah's blessing that we can stand.

Day 49 – Lessons from a Vessel. (Part 1). Bring your vessels, not a few.

2 Kings 4:6 “And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.”

This poor widow woman cried out to Elisha, the prophet, saying her husband had died and that, to clear her debts, the creditors intended to take her two sons into slavery as payment. Elisha asked her what she had in her house and she replied that only a pot of oil remained. Elisha told her to gather as many empty vessels as she could, to shut the door, pour out the oil into all the vessels and set aside all that they filled. So, she went, gathered vessels and began to pour out as she had been instructed. When all the vessels she had were full, she asked her sons to bring more, but was told there were no more left. At that point the oil stopped multiplying – because she stopped pouring it out. Elisha then told her to go, sell the oil, pay her debt off and live in peace with her sons at her side. We like to read about and would love to experience Yehovah providing for our physical needs in such a miraculous way, but we can also learn a number of powerful lessons from this story. 1. Yehovah will not forsake us. 2. He can and will provide all we need to live and support our families. 3. He requires and rewards obedience. And, of course, there are many others.

For now, though, let us look at one important truth we could easily miss. Elisha told the woman to gather as many vessels as she could. She was to pour the oil she had into as many vessels as she could possibly gather. The only limitation upon the miracle she would receive was the number of vessels she brought to pour the oil into. If she had brought fifty times as many vessels as she did, according to the word of the prophet Elisha, Yehovah would have continued to supply the oil it would take to fill them all. Her miracle was only limited by the level of her faith, demonstrated how many vessels she brought to be filled. Yehovah requires your faith and confident expectation that He will do all that He has promised and deliver the miracle that you so desperately need. Do not place limits on your Yehovah.

Day 50 – Lessons from a Vessel. (Part 2) You cannot fill full vessel.

2 Kings 4:6 “And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.”

People talk about whether a glass is half full or half empty, saying that a pessimist sees a glass of water as “half full”, but an optimist sees it as “half full.” Actually, the glass is always full, partly with water and partly with air. In the same way, that is just like people. All of our minds are full of ideas and opinions on all sorts of subjects. The saying goes that it takes wisdom to see that even if you have a strong opinion on an issue, you do not need to voice it or to pour it out into someone else’s ears, mind and heart. It is important to realise what one person considers a reasonable, well-thought-out point of view, be it in the natural, earthly realm, or on a theological or doctrinal subject, someone else may even label it as heresy.

Now, let us consider again the glass full to the brim with water. If you were to decide that, instead of drinking water, you would like a drink of squash, you would have to choose to pour some of the water out in order to pour dilutable squash into the glass. The glass cannot take any more unless there is room created to accept something else. Again, this is a simple example of how we can be when we discuss doctrinal matters with others. If two people are so passionately convinced that what they believe and think on a subject is the one and only opinion to have, and they begin to try to pour their opinion into the other, both will fail from the outset. That is, unless and until one of them is willing to empty out some of their pre-determined mind-set in order to take onboard more information from the other person. If one of those people happen to be you, remember, until that happens, no matter how long you both passionately argue your points of view, in the belief that the louder and longer you shout you will eventually force the listener to accept your point of view, you are both wasting their breath and sowing division until you are willing to be emptied out and have something new poured into you.

Day 51 - Dreams and Visions.

Acts 2:16-17 “...your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.”

You may have said, or perhaps heard someone who, perhaps would no longer be thought of as “young”, say that they “will sleep on it.” Some of us go to bed, and sleep soundly, but by morning, find we have woken once or twice thinking about something that was on our mind the evening before. We may even have dreamed about it and miraculously found the solution to a conundrum we had no answer to the night before. It is strange that when we are least physically conscious and thinking about a problem is when we most easily discover the way forward. Younger people are, so often, bursting with great ideas, vision and enthusiasm. They envision what *can* be done and what *can* be achieved. Seldom, of course, do they have the experience nor, possibly, the wisdom gained by having had a broad experience in life, to know how to accomplish those goals and fulfil the wonderful vision they have germinating and growing within their hearts. There is wisdom in the concept of young visionaries sharing their vision with older, more experienced men and women of Yehovah whom they trust and respect, people who will encourage and nurture a fledgling vision towards fulfilment. From this mindset comes the idea that we can all “stand upon the shoulders of giants.”

Such older people, though, must be able and willing to consider fresh ideas without feeling the need to take over and “own”, dominate or, worse still, to snuff the life out of a young person’s newly conceived vision. They need to be aware that, often, the enemies of a new, genuine move of Yehovah are the people who were deeply involved in, or even birthed a previous move of Yehovah. If you have a vision, ask Yehovah to show you someone you can trust to dream your vision with you. Find a “giant” whose shoulders you can stand upon. If you are an older, more mature “dreamer”, ask Yehovah whose vision you can help come into being. You could be the giant they speak of to those who come after them.

Day 52 - Marriage in the making. Part 1.

Genesis 2:18 “And the Yehovah said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.”

On the sixth day of creation Yehovah created man in His own image and likeness, made up of spirit, soul and body. When He had finished His work, He looked at all He had made and, the Scriptures say, “it was very good.” Genesis 1:27 tells us He made both male *and* female, and that both genders were made in His image. While we tend to assign certain characteristics to men and others to women, ALL such traits are found in our creator as He, after all, created both male and female in His own image and likeness. He is both strong and compassionate, both powerful and yet gentle and can be both angry and longsuffering. Genesis 2 speaks in more detail of how the process of creation came about. Verse 18 tells us Yehovah said “It is not good for the *man* to be alone,” from which we know that Yehovah initially created a male, whom we know as Adam. The verse continues, “I will make a help meet for him.” However, before we leap forward to how the woman, whom we know as Eve, came into being, the first thing Yehovah did was to parade all the animal kingdom before Adam, giving him the task of naming them all. When that was done, despite the wide variety of living creatures, not one of them was found to be suitable as a “help meet” for Adam, including “man’s best friend”, later known as Rex, Rover, or even Lassie!!

Yehovah created us with a desire and a need to live as part of a community of equally valued and essential members, co-existing, loving and honouring one another, even as the trinity itself, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, exists. When Adam surveyed and named the animals as they passed by him, it is evident that not one of them, nor anything else Yehovah had created, was suitable for him to bond and be united with. Yehovah needed to create a bespoke, “made to measure” woman, something equal to the task with whom, rather than “with which” Adam could become one. Whether you are, or will ever be married to someone, Yehovah did not make you an independent, self-sufficient, stand-alone person. You were made to function in unity with likeminded people whom Yehovah will send your way.

Day 53 - Marriage in the making. Part 2.

Genesis 2:21-23 “And...Yehovah caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs...and made a woman, and brought her to the man. Adam said, This is now bone of my bones...and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”

It is wise to consider that, while Adam, like each of us, would have had an opinion as to the attributes he was looking for in a help meet, Yehovah put him to sleep while He intervened in the process. After all, Adam had already viewed the whole animal kingdom and found none of them met his requirements. So, it appears, Yehovah chose to render him unconscious, while He went about making the perfectly matched help meet from Adam's own side. As the well-known saying goes, “The woman came from a man's rib. Not from his feet to be walked on. Not from his head to be superior, but from his side to be equal. Under the arm to be protected. And next to the heart to be loved.” Of course, Adam could not really turn his nose up at Eve anyway, bearing in mind she was even physically made from him so, one would assume, even having his DNA.

Whilst all those points are valid, we should understand that Yehovah, from the beginning had a perfect plan in mind. Knowing Adam, as He does each of us, acutely, intimately, and precisely, He knew in Adam's case, and now in yours too, who is the best-suited help meet and mate to match whom. So many marriages end in divorce and although, it seems, more so in recent decades, this has always been the case. Yeshua, 2000 years ago, spoke of Moses writing a “bill of divorce” (Mark 10:4), centuries even before that. While there are numerous reasons why this can happen, often it occurs because of unfulfilled expectations. The chosen spouse turns out not to be as..., whatever it may be, as was thought beforehand. Realising, however, that Yehovah is all-knowing - and knows the end from the beginning, it is sensible to seek and acknowledge His mind and choice when looking for a partner with whom to spend the rest of your life. Marriage necessitates walking in grace towards each other, but knowing from the outset that Yehovah has hand-chosen yours for you at least means you do not need to rely totally on your own, natural wisdom. So, ASK HIM!!

Day 54 - Marriage in the making. Part 3.

Genesis 2:24 “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

Whether male or female, the relationship with one’s parents is, in most cases, close, loving and loyal. Babies rely totally on their parents to provide for, feed, water and protect them. Because of this, parents tend to see their children as their *children*, whatever their age. But life moves on; babies become children, then teenagers, then adults and eventually, perhaps, parents themselves. Parents have to teach their children to mature, become independent and be able to take on the same role in the lives of the next generation. That progression inevitably changes the dynamics of the relationship between all those involved. Jehovah intends that as we grow up, we develop close and intimate relationships of our own. If and when he marries, Jehovah says that a man leaves his father and mother to *cleave* to his own wife. He must *leave* in order to *cleave*. Cleave means to cling to, join, be glued together with, in this case, his wife. It indicates affection, loyalty, closeness and a prioritising of that relationship over *every* other relationship. It is illustrated, although in different circumstances, when Ruth said to Naomi, “Where you go, I will go, where you lodge, I will lodge; your people will be my people; your Jehovah will be my Jehovah.” The Scriptures say Ruth cleaved to Naomi and they became inextricably bonded together.

Likewise, when he marries, a man leaves his father and mother to cleave to his bride. That relationship must take absolute priority over any and all other relationship either of them may have with anybody else, including their parents. Jehovah’s plan is that they become one, not only physically, but in spirit, direction and affection. This oneness is a joining of independent individuals as two, united and interdependent upon each another. In marriage, I, me, my, change to we, us and our. When their “children” marry, while it may be a challenge, parents must release and let them go. From that point on, parents cannot be the predominant influence in their grown-up children’s lives. And both bride and groom must prioritise that relationship over any other, including with their own parents.

Day 55 - Marriage in the making. Part 4.

Genesis 2:25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Upon reading this verse, many people's minds go straight to the physical realm. So, we will mention that briefly, then move on, as much can and is already said on this elsewhere. Before Adam and Eve sinned, Yehovah placed them in the Garden of Eden, where they lived together as naked as the day they were created. Of course, pre-fall there was no rain and no thorns, so we assume no problem in terms of the weather or being injured. It appears from scripture that no one else was on the scene, so nobody else to be embarrassed in front of. Neither were there others around to compare their looks and physiques with or to be shamed by.

However, in the context of marriage, we learn an important lesson from this verse. We know Yehovah intends a husband and wife to be united in both heart and mind as well as physically. Marriage is a process, not merely an event which happens on a single day. The outworking of that day's vows involves a lifetime of choosing to live every day with grace, longsuffering, forgiveness, gratitude, appreciation and many other things. While we live in a physical, earthly realm, although our spirits have been perfected through Yeshua's death, burial and resurrection, our minds need to be renewed daily and our bodies continually presented to Yehovah as a living sacrifice. This side of heaven we do and will sin against Yehovah and each another. We are told to confess our faults and failures one to another and pray for one another so that we may be healed (James 5:16). We know we need to operate in grace and to restore one another in meekness, because we too are tempted and often fall. (See Galatians 6:1). If there is one place on earth that we should be willing to forgive and be assured of forgiveness and acceptance, it should be between a husband and wife who love one another, indeed, even as Yeshua loved the church and gave Himself for it. The marriage union is intended to provide a safe place where both husband and wife can be totally open, honest and, in deep humility, emotionally naked and unashamed before each other.

Day 56 - Marriage in the making. Part 5.

Mark 10:8-9 “And they two shall be one flesh: so then, they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore Yehovah has joined together, let not man put asunder.”

The Pharisees tried to tempt Yeshua to say that divorce was OK. Yeshua did not to fall into their trap, but answered with wisdom, asking them what Moses had commanded. This time they fell into His trap, saying Moses had said to just write a “bill of divorcement” and “put (or send) her away.” Yeshua replied that the reason Moses had said that was because of the hardness of their hearts, adding that it was always Yehovah’s plan for a man to leave his father and mother and “cleave” to his wife. He then commanded, “What therefore Yehovah has joined together, let not man *put asunder*.” In context, obviously Yeshua was continuing the “discourse about divorce.” However, it is worth considering another point here, especially as “putting asunder” also means to “divide, disjoin, separate and disunite” - as well as to divorce. When a couple marry, they not only become “one” in the physical realm, but they should begin to be grow more and more one in the emotional, decision making and even spiritual realms. Married couples must strive to be united and viewed as such by people outside that close, intimate relationship. This can be particularly challenging when it involves relationships with both “birth families,” particularly their parents. Both sets of parents will have had 20+ years of experience in-putting their thoughts, opinions, biases and preferences into their son or daughter. It takes discipline for parents to stop doing this after their children have married someone else. This is why “a man will (and must) leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife.” Any and all other relationships, external to that married couple, must take secondary place to that one. Nobody should be allowed to “put asunder”, divide, disjoin, separate or disunite. And both of them must stand firm together and not allow any outsider to put them asunder. Whatever the cost, it must be paid for the sake of the marriage which Yehovah has ordained and sanctified.

Day 57 - Who you hang out with defines you. Part 1.

Matthew 1:23 “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, Jehovah with us.”

Dr John C Maxwell, the leadership coaching expert, says the two things which will more accurately define you and your future than anything else are, 1. the books you read and 2. the people you hang out with. The content of the books you read can be summed up as what you input into your heart, mind and spirit. As the saying goes, “Rubbish in – rubbish out.”

When the angel appeared to Joseph, who was engaged to Mary, the mother of Yeshua, he quoted the promise recorded in Isaiah 7:14, that Jehovah gave King Ahaz, that “a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” The fulfilment of that prophecy was the birth of Yeshua, the Son of Jehovah, who spoke into being the heavens, the earth and all that has ever and will ever exist. Because, as John 3:16 tells us, Jehovah so loved the world, He gave His only begotten Son, Yeshua left His throne and the splendour of Heaven to come and pay the ransom necessary to make us righteous before Jehovah.

Yeshua told us He would never leave nor forsake us, that He would be with us, and in us, and that one day He would return to take us to be with Him for all eternity. Those of us who have been followers of Yeshua for many years could read those words and easily miss the magnitude of their meaning. So, let us just imagine you receive an invitation to visit your nation’s king, queen or president, to sit and talk with them one to one. What an incredible honour you would recognise that to be. But to have them visit and spend time with you at *your* home would be unimaginable. And yet Yeshua, Emmanuel, which means ‘Jehovah with us’, has chosen for us to not only live with Him in Heaven for all eternity, but has come to live with and in us in the here and now. Using today’s language, He has chosen to “hang around with us.” What a privilege, what an honour. This is what defines *Him* to all mankind as our forgiver, gracious redeemer, sanctifier and friend.

Day 58 - Who you hang out with defines you. Part 2.

1 Corinthians 15:33 “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.” (KJV)

“Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.” (NIV)

“Do not be deceived, Bad company ruins good morals.” (ESV)

As we have already considered, both you and your future are defined by the books you read and the people you hang out with. The books you read and, in this media dominated age, what you view on TV and social media, with all their “on-demand” services, are all literally “downloading” information and entertainment into your heart and mind. Then, as Yeshua said, “out of the abundance of the heart” (what is stored there), “the mouth speaks.” Evil treasure in the heart means evil comes out and good treasure within means good treasure comes out.

Add to this, as you read in the more modern translations of 1 Corinthians 15:33, the people you associate and hang out with have an incredible impact on your life. It can be said that you become more and more like the people you spend most of your time around. If they are people who inspire you to excel and achieve greatness, encourage and speak positively into your life, you will instinctively seek to rise above the status quo you may otherwise settle for. However, if they discourage and deflate you, speak negatively into your life, or bully and dominate you, your tendency will be to accept things will always be as they declare them to be.

Realising this, and knowing the scriptures, one young man started a summer job while at High School. He spent his first morning with his new colleagues, listened to the negativity and complacency which flowed from their mouths and witnessed even their physical, downtrodden demeanour which resulted from it. He resigned and left the workplace before lunchtime, saying he knew if he spent any length of time around them, he would inevitably become like them. Christian – spend time with Yehovah, hang around with Yeshua - and watch your life transform into being more and more like Him each day that goes by.

Day 59 - A sure future and a hope.

Jeremiah 29:11 “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says Yehovah, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.” (NKJV)

You rarely know the whole story when you pick up a book; not every chapter, page, paragraph or phrase in advance of reading it. But if you know the author, you know you can trust him to bring the story to an “it will be all alright in the end” conclusion. You are confident that he had a ready-made plan, fully mapped out in intricate detail for each and every chapter. You trust that he, as the author, knew everything will round up to a “happy ever after” ending by the final chapter, whatever the rollercoaster ride it may be on route. Besides which, if things get tense part way through, you know you can always ‘cheat’ and skip forward for a quick peek at the last page. After you see there that the hero has beaten his enemy, won the battle and marries his bride, you return to the present page, knowing all will be OK in the end.

Our Heavenly Father, the omniscient creator, author and finisher of all things, clearly says He knows the thoughts He has towards us, thoughts of good and peaceful things, and not of evil. He declares He has laid out His plans for each of our lives and stories, so that you can know you will have a safe journey and a final outcome after all that may happen between the here and now and the then and there. Hope sees what He has declared not only can, but will happen – and that gives you substance to set your sights on. Your faith will keep you both strong and firm in your resolve to endure the ups and downs that may and, indeed, will come to pass before that final paragraph of your story. You can be sure that whatever comes, it will pass, and be confident of a glorious future because your hope and faith are fixed upon Him.

Day 60 – He is a wonderful counsellor.

Isaiah 9:6 “For unto us a child is born... his name shall be called... Wonderful Counsellor.”

The ancient poem by John Donne says, “No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.” Only a fool tries to navigate life on their own, being not only the captain of their own ship, but the ship builder, navigator, radio operator and every other crew member rolled into one, self-contained superhero. We all need one another, the talents, abilities, experience and, therefore, the input which that entails in order for us to navigate this life successfully.

When our sons were in their early 20’s and had, by then, left home, they would occasionally call to “speak to dad.” We always knew that meant they were looking for a ‘listening ear’; not necessarily advice, but for someone to whom they could voice something they were considering doing. Although at that time, they would never have admitted it, they were actually seeking counsel from someone with broader experience and, therefore, more of a big-picture view than they perhaps had themselves at that time. Only a foolish person builds his house, or future, upon sand, while a wise one builds his house on firm foundations. There is safety in seeking wise counsel from a number of trusted people. Without it we can so easily make unsafe decisions and be disappointed in and devastated by the inevitable outcomes. In Yeshua we have more than a wealth of experience from someone with a “big picture” perspective. We have the counsel of Yehovah, manifested in the Son of Yehovah, Yeshua, the creator Himself. As parents, we would be disappointed to find our sons or daughters had made unwise decisions in areas where we have knowledge and experience that could have helped them avoid pitfalls. How much more must our heavenly Father be saddened when we fail to seek the counsel of our Wonderful Counsellor. He is waiting for us to call to seek His input and counsel, for ‘whoever calls upon His name shall be saved.’

Day 61 - Flee youthful lusts.

2 Timothy 2:22 “Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

The 80-year-old bishop was visiting the parish of a young curate, when, one evening the curate asked the elderly sage for some advice. He wanted to know if the bishop could give him an idea of when a man in his position could expect to no longer be tempted to lust after the ladies in his parish. The wise old man considered his response, then answered, “Young man, if and when I reach that stage myself, I will let you know.”

We know that sexual lust would have been something Paul was counselling the young Timothy to flee, but it would be wise for us to realise that 1. One does not need to be young to be tempted in that area. 2. Temptation in sexual matters applies to females as well as males. 3. The term “youthful lusts” covers more than sexual desires. Other issues covered by that phrase include an inappropriate, excessive desire for money, for things, or to achieve a particular goal or ambition at any cost. While there is both a natural and a Yehovah given drive to achieve a particular position or dream, or to fulfil a desire or vision, attempts to reach that at any price and whoever gets hurt in the process, shows a dangerous lack of wisdom and spiritual maturity. That applies, whatever the age of the person involved. Both Timothy and we, are counselled to flee from the lusts, or overwhelming desires which take us away from the purposes that Yehovah has for our lives. Instead, Paul instructs us to pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace and to actively flee selfish ambition, seeking power and position and being self-centred. Instead, we are to fervently chase after a right-standing relationship with Yehovah; seeking first His Kingdom and righteousness, to live in faith, peace and with love for both Yehovah and mankind. You can only pursue one thing at a time. You cannot chase after selfish ambition and self-interest at the same time as pursuing the things of Yehovah. Choose to go Yehovah’s way, the narrow way which leads to life; not your own way, which leads to certain destruction.

Day 62 - Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and to the uttermost. Part 1.

Acts 1:8 “But you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Before Yeshua ascended into Heaven, He commissioned His disciples to go into the world and preach the Gospel, making disciples of all nations. This accompanied His previous command, empowering them to go and heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead and cast out devils. He had already told them that even as His Father had sent Him, so He was sending them. These commands and the ‘great commission’ also apply to each of us as His followers and 21st century disciples. It is interesting to note how over the years we have watered down and diluted the words of Yeshua to become either a mere suggestion, or applicable only to someone who feels called into what is often called “full-time ministry,” someone employed and salaried by a church or other organisation to do it on their, or our behalf. As a result, we often tend to regard everyone else as unqualified to preach, teach or travel overseas as a missionary. Alternatively, we can even consider ourselves eminently qualified to do so, perhaps even more than our peers, or Yehovah Himself, would know to be the case. Nevertheless, we are ALL called to be witnesses to Yehovah’s working in and transformation of our personal life, firstly in our own ‘Jerusalem’, that is to our immediate family and friends. Once we have stepped out in our own sphere of influence, Yehovah will call us to do the same in our ‘Judea’, that is the next level of contacts we have with others, such as those we have a passing acquaintance with, people we meet and see on a day-to-day basis. Once we have been faithful witnesses there, He will open up opportunities to operate in ‘Samaria’s’, speaking to strangers and others we know very little, if at all. These tend to be people who would be less prone to trust and listen to what we have to say, but with whom Yehovah will give us favour and openings. The uttermost parts of the earth are those places and people whom Yehovah has said must be reached with the good news of the Gospel before Yeshua will return for His bride, the Church. Where are you witnessing on His behalf today?

Day 63 - Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and to the uttermost. Part 2.

Acts 1:8 “But you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

The theory behind ‘the butterfly effect’ is that the minute, unnoticeable flap of a butterfly’s wing somewhere in the world will have a knock-on effect which could result in a tornado on the opposite side of the world, thousands of miles away. Similarly, if you drop a stone in a pond or lake, you will see the ripple effect which that stone can have, as it hits the shore 100 or more yards away. Both these examples illustrate the impact a seemingly insignificant action can have upon people and things, producing eternal consequences. Praying for someone, smiling at, or speaking a word of greeting to a stranger, or providing a meal for a homeless person, can make all the difference to that person’s outlook on the day, or even their life.

A popular Christian song many years ago still encourages and challenges us as followers of Yeshua today. One line, saying “thank you for giving to the Lord; I am a life that was changed,” contained the truth of how a life can be transformed by the actions of a Christian’s giving to Yehovah. That may be in one of the ways we have just mentioned, but let us consider it further. Financially supporting a charity, be it Christian or otherwise, can and will have an incredible difference to the way they are able to operate, to impact people and to fulfil their goal to change lives for good. Teaching a Sunday School class at church provides you with an incredible opportunity to introduce young boys and girls to the King of Kings and Saviour of their souls. Praying for people in positions of influence in our land or overseas, in governments, in leadership positions, in ministries, schools, businesses and other organisations changes the course of history in all these spheres. Yehovah is calling and challenging us to be that butterfly, that tiny stone, the person who stands in the gap and prays the prayer of faith that changes history and the destiny of people and things across this world. Are you prepared to be available where you are today?

Day 64 - Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and to the uttermost. Part 3.

Acts 1:8 “But you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us the parable of the sower which Yeshua told to the multitudes who followed Him. It goes along these lines: a sower went out to sow... Some seeds fell on the wayside, the pathways at the side of the field; some fell on stony ground, where rocks and stones lay; some fell on thorny ground, which had not been cleared of weeds and briars; and some fell on good ground. The birds ate the seed from the wayside; the seeds in stony ground sprouted up quickly but, because they had little root-life, soon died off. Seed which fell on thorny soil had the life choked out of them by the plants which crowded around them. But the seed which fell on good ground produced a great harvest. Although, as we read in Hosea 10:12, someone should break up and prepare the ground in advance of the sower, that is not his responsibility. The sower's job is to GO and to SOW the seed, to sow it liberally across the whole field, without prejudice and foreknowledge of where it will and will not grow. Similarly, our responsibility, as Yeshua's followers, is to sow the message of the good news of the Gospel into the lives of everyone Yehovah puts before us. The Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 3:6 that his responsibility was to sow the seed into people's lives. Following him, Apollos came and watered the seed, the Word of Yehovah which had Paul had preached, helping and encouraging the Word to take root and grow in the hearers' hearts. Paul then emphasises that it was then Yehovah's role to grow that seed into a harvest. Paul was aware that he, as in Yeshua's parable, was called to GO, and SOW, that while Apollos watered, Yehovah would GROW the harvest which, in all likelihood, someone else would come and reap. Someone else would, as we would say, MOW the harvest field, gathering in souls into the Kingdom. Whatever position, task or area of responsibility Yehovah has called you to occupy, you must be confident in the calling of Yehovah, so that together we GO, SOW, allow to GROW, and then MOW an eternal harvest.

Day 65 - Good, acceptable, perfect.

Romans 12:1-2 “...present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto Yehovah, which is your reasonable service...be not conformed to this world: but...transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of Yehovah.”

In the chapters preceding Romans 12, the Apostle Paul explains that we were dead in trespasses and sin. He says the wages of sin is death, and that is what we would have earned and deserve if it were not for Yehovah’s mercy and grace. He explains that Yehovah redeemed us, made us righteous, justified and accepted us because of the death of His Son, Yeshua. In Romans 12, he declares that, in return for such sovereign mercy, it is both reasonable and a demonstration of appreciative devotion back to Yehovah that we present our bodies to Him as a living sacrifice. In addition to that, he explains it is essential that we no longer conform to the mindset of the world, but to be transformed in our thinking, having our minds renewed and, using modern terminology, have a “factory reset” to the Maker’s original design and specification. He explains that, as we do this, we will experience the ‘good, acceptable and perfect’ will of Yehovah in and for our lives. Let us look more at those three words. Some people say they will do a “good day’s work for a good day’s pay.” By that they mean that the quality of work they will do will match the level of pay they receive. If they are, for example, a builder, doing a “good” job means it will be “good enough” to satisfy their own conscience, in line with how well they consider they are being paid. Then there are people who go that bit further; they will do a higher quality job, something more “acceptable” to the customer as being a really good quality job. But then there are those who, whatever they are paid, whatever anyone else thinks, strive for perfection. They do the best possible job, one they are pleased with and proud of, something that a Master Builder would consider unbeatable and perfect. What level you strive for, good, acceptable or perfect, is a decision only you can make, but it starts with presenting your body to Yehovah as a living sacrifice and renewing your mind daily.

Day 66 - Honour your parents.

Exodus 20:11 “Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which Yehovah is giving you.

People often say that children no longer honour their parents, certainly not like they did “in the old days.” It is also said that, in western cultures there is far less respect towards one’s elders, as well as one’s own parents than is the case in many middle eastern and eastern cultures. But are these things a modern phenomenon or has it always been the case? When Yehovah gave Moses the 10 Commandments several thousand years ago, He included the command that the Children of Israel must honour their father and mother, promising if they did so their days would be long in the land that Yehovah was giving them. The fact that Yehovah included this commandment in, we could call it, His top 10 list of issues that needed to be addressed, indicates it was a problem back then too. The Apostle Paul widens the subject in Ephesians 6, by commanding children to “obey (their) parents.” He then emphasises the 5th of the 10 Commandments, saying to “Honour your father and mother...that it may be well with thee, and you may live long on the earth.” Paul here, is writing to a Gentile church in Ephesus, widening both the scope and the promise connected to the commandment to include them. This, of course, means Yehovah’s promise to prolong the lives of those of us who obey the commandment and honour one’s father and mother, extends to followers of Yeshua in these days, not only the Children of Israel of past millennia - and Yehovah’s promise that they would dwell in the land of Israel. So, as we see then, Yehovah commands children to obey their parents. However, Yehovah says a man will leave his mother and father and cleave to his wife. In fact, he has to leave his parents to cleave to and become one with his wife. From that point, if not well before, such a man is no longer a child and therefore, is no longer in a position where he must obey his parents. However, nowhere in scripture is the commandment for us to honour our father and mother, removed. If you are a child, you are commanded to obey your parents. If you are an adult, whatever your age, you must continue to honour your father and mother, with the promise that you will live long upon the earth.

Day 67 - Only Yeshua – the simplicity of the Gospel.

Romans 5:8 “But Yehovah demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Yeshua died for us.”

In our normal, everyday moments, when we do not feel like a superhero, superstar or super-spiritual giant slayer, we are all well aware of our weaknesses, inadequacies and tendencies to fall and to fail in virtually every area of our lives. In moments like these we are so glad that the grace and mercy of Yehovah has been freely poured on us. Grace has often been described as Yehovah’s riches at Yeshua’s expense. That simply means that all of our lack has been covered and, in fact, taken away and replaced by the riches of Heaven – which Yehovah has paid into our eternal bank account. And that has happened because the love of Yehovah towards us meant that when we could do nothing to earn anything from Him, He gave His only Son, Yeshua, to pay the debt we owed because of our sin and failure to live 100% holy. The simplicity of the Gospel message is that, however we feel on our “good days” or “bad days”, the love of Yehovah towards us means He has accepted us because of Yeshua. We have received His righteousness in place of our sinfulness. To receive all the benefits of that divine exchange, we must turn from our life of sin and disobedience and accept His forgiveness. From then on, He will begin to work in and through us to make us more like Yeshua Himself.

Think about it, only Yeshua would love us as we are, die in order to ransom and rescue us, and then live within us, changing us day-by-day to become more and more like Him. If you have never encountered Yeshua in that way, today is your day. Today is your day of salvation. You can take that step and ask Him to forgive and blot out your sinful past and make you anew. If you have already started out on this new life with Him, never take for granted the riches of His grace which He has poured out upon you – and never forget the simplicity of this Gospel message. You do not deserve it, cannot earn it nor work to repay it but, instead, live knowing it is all because of Him that you can live in victory today.

Day 68 - Whose report will you believe?

Isaiah 53:1 “Who has believed our report and to whom has the arm of Yehovah been revealed?”

Let us consider two different ways to look at a situation. 1. The natural. We grow up learning to use ‘common sense, which could be termed as the ‘normal’, natural and usual way to interpret information and, thereby, draw a particular conclusion. That method, in turn, dictates the way we react to something that is said or happens to us. However, that is only one way of looking at and interpreting that information. What happens when that information, or the conclusion we draw from it, is contrary to Yehovah’s Word? Can we train ourselves to view that same information in line with how Yehovah views it, that is, 2. the spiritual way? Let us consider you are facing a challenge or a physical ailment. It is what we would consider a natural reaction to draw a particular conclusion and, should someone try to speak contrary to that, something in line with the Scriptures, for us to say, “Yes, BUT....” STOP RIGHT THERE!! That word BUT effectively dismisses the Word of Yehovah, just as if we are saying what Yehovah says about it is wrong, inaccurate, immaterial and irrelevant. It is like telling Yehovah, to His face, that He is a liar and, for some strange reason, trying to deceive us.

Now, let us look at that same situation again, and draw a “Yehovahly” conclusion. Let us say we are facing a sickness, a confrontation or condemnation. The natural mind cries out negative and condemnatory thoughts. That is when we must stand against those thoughts in line with Yehovah’s Word. Whose word and report on a situation will you choose to believe? Joshua said to the Children of Israel, when they were hesitant to obey Yehovah and move forward, “Choose you this day whom you will serve, but as for me and my house, we will serve Yehovah.” Similarly, we can learn to say, “Choose you this day whose word you will believe and receive, but as for me – and those with me – we will believe and trust in the Word of Yehovah.”

Day 69 - Living by priorities.

Philippians 3:13-14 “...one thing I do..., I press toward the goal...”

100 years ago, the average family in the western world had several children more than they do now. They had no modern-day appliances and yet people's lives tended to be far less stressed, rushed, and packed with “to-do-lists.” These days we live in all-mod-cons environments, with cars, washing machines, dishwashers, microwaves - and instant everything, from mashed potato to ready-made meals. But something has happened in our busy, packed lifestyles. Despite boasting we can multi-task and do ten things at a time without dropping the ball, as a society we have never been so stressed, distressed, depressed and suffering from all manner of mental health issues. ‘What on earth are we doing to ourselves?’ Or, as we could, perhaps more accurately ask, ‘What on earth are we doing for *Heaven's* sake?’ Consider this. What is producing the high level of pressure in your life if, indeed, you are like the vast majority of people who admit to living constantly on a knife-edge, coping with stress and a seen or unseen taskmaster demanding more and more from you?

Let us consider two closely related questions we should all ask ourselves periodically. 1. Who is setting the ‘targets’ you subconsciously or consciously or strive to achieve and, 2. Who is setting the priorities for your life? If you are not setting those targets and priorities yourself, but having them imposed upon you externally AND, if you are not setting them in accordance with the Word and will of Yehovah, you will forever be at the mercy of outside sources and their demands on you. There were always demands being made upon Yeshua's time and yet He made time for the woman at the well, the boy with fish and bread and also to get away to commune with His Heavenly Father. The apostle Paul travelled widely, wrote half the New Testament and constantly taught the people. And yet, both Yeshua and Paul knew how to set their own priorities for their own lives. Paul said, “this ONE thing I do,” which was to press into what Yehovah, not people, nor himself, required of Him. And you must do the same.

Day 70 - How long is a piece of string?

Psalm 90:12 “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

Imagine a piece of string. Now imagine, however long that string is, it represents the length of your life, from when you were born to the day you die. Most of us know the date and year we were born, and perhaps we celebrate it each birthday with family and friends as a regular landmark, or milestone. Perhaps the older we get the less we celebrate it, and the more we commemorate it! But none of us know the date or time that our natural lives on this earth will end. Nevertheless, if we were to say that half of that piece of string represents the length of time we have already been alive. The other half represents what is still to come. Now let us say we will sleep for one third of that; another third to a half is spent at or traveling to and from work. The remaining third or so represents the time we are not asleep or committed to be ‘working for a living.’ That is taken up with relaxation, spending time with friends, going shopping, going to church, etc. That, in itself, may make you realise how valuable what you may term as “spare” time actually is. It has been said that time is more valuable than money or things. After all, you can get more money and more things, but you cannot get more time. Scripture tells us to “redeem the time”, in Ephesians 5:16, “because the days are evil” and, in Colossians 4:5, with regard to our relationship with non-believers and the witness we are to them of the goodness and grace of Yehovah. We are instructed to make the most of every opportunity that comes our way, not to “waste” time, or merely “pass the time of day” as if it were something of little or no value. None of us know the length of string, or length of time we have left in front of us. In Psalm 90:12 the psalmist prays that Yehovah would “...teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” Because you do not know how many days you have left to serve your Saviour on this earth, before He comes again or comes to call you home to live with Him in Heaven, you must ask Yehovah to give you daily wisdom to make the very most of every moment you have remaining to glorify Him and to live as He would have you live, doing what He would have you do. That is true, heart-felt wisdom, indeed.

Day 71 - Having a deep, intimate relationship with Yehovah.

Philippians 3:10 AMP “[For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person.”

The apostle Paul had many positive things going for him in both the natural and spiritual realms. However, he was very aware of his shortcomings and his need of Yehovah’s mercy and grace, calling himself the chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15). He recognised that, in himself, there was no good thing (Romans 7:18). And yet, was a highly educated Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee and lived a Yehovah-fearing life. Before he encountered Yeshua on the road to Damascus, he was zealously going around arresting and putting followers of Yeshua into prison and even to death, believing he was doing the will of Yehovah. And yet Paul, himself, recognised that all of those “positives” were insignificant and immaterial compared to having a close, intimate and personal relationship with Yehovah. In Philippians 3:8, Paul says he considers all those “pros” and positives as inconsequential, to the point he calls them dung. That is horse manure in today’s terms. In the same way that Isaiah speaks of our own righteousness being as “filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6), Paul recognised his own good actions and right-living got him no “brownie points” whatsoever with Yehovah. He knew he still desperately needed Yeshua’s righteousness to be acceptable in Yehovah’s sight.

In physical and medical terms, we use the phrase “vital organs”, and doctors, nurses and paramedics speak of checking for “vital signs”, signs that someone is alive, even after a major traumatic incident. Similarly, Paul recognised that the thing of “vital necessity”, was to have a heart that beats for and responds to a deep and meaningful connection to the Source of all life – Yehovah Himself. In comparison to that, everything else is immaterial. Is that the same heart you have for your Heavenly Father today? Do you consider Him as, and seek after Him as, Someone of vital importance and as a necessity? If not, make a decision to seek His face – as vitally important for your very survival and spiritual prosperity.

Day 72 - Are you extravagant in your worship?

Matthew 26, Mark 14 & Luke 7. Wherever the Gospel is preached...

There are two occasions recorded in the Gospels when women washed Yeshua's feet and, it appears, both of those were in Bethany. One of these times, as seen in John 12, was when Mary, Lazarus's sister, washed Yeshua's feet and anointed them with very costly spikenard. This was shortly after Yeshua had raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11). Mary was also the sister of Martha, who had complained to Yeshua that Mary should help her prepare food for the guests in the house, but Yeshua had defended Mary, saying she had chosen the better task of sitting at His feet, listening to his every word. (See Luke 10). No wonder Mary wanted to pour out her heart of gratitude, let alone a costly perfume, upon Yeshua, whom she loved and appreciated so much. However, Matthew 26, Mark 14 and Luke 7, speak of another woman, that the scriptures call "a sinner" and "a woman of the city," whom some believe was Mary Magdalene, from whom Yeshua had cast out seven devils. This woman approached Yeshua in the home of a Pharisee called Simon with an alabaster box of ointment. She washed and kissed the feet of Yeshua, drying them with her hair and anointing them with the costly ointment. On both of these occasions the women were criticised for being extravagant and, indeed, Yeshua was criticised for allowing a "woman of the city" to touch him. In a quiz, there would be many people, like Ithamar, Kohath, Zaccur and Zedekiah we would never have heard of. But Yeshua said that this unnamed woman would be spoken of wherever the Gospel would be preached from then onwards. Why is that? Could it be because she was so grateful to her Saviour for the grace, mercy and forgiveness He had shown her that she was prepared to demonstrate it whatever the cost, materially, emotionally and whatever people thought of her. Yeshua told the assembled witnesses that those who have been forgiven much would love Him much. How do you compare to that woman? Are you prepared to pour out your thanks and adoration to your Lord and Saviour – or do you hold back for fear of what it will cost? Count the cost – and do it anyway!

Day 73 - Keep the inner fire burning.

Psalm 119:164 “Seven times a day I praise You, because of Your righteous ordinances.”

Psalm 119 is believed to have been written by King David. In it he praises Yehovah numerous times for the words which He has spoken, not only to the world, but also into the hearts and lives of those who believe in and obey His instruction. In verse 164, David says he will praise Yehovah seven times a day for His laws and statutes. That takes discipline and determination, particularly when we read in Psalm 63:6, David says, “I remember you upon my bed and meditate on you in the night watches.” David’s life was consumed by his love for and devotion to Yehovah. Indeed, in Acts 13:22 we read that Yehovah described him as ‘a man after (His) own heart.’ Throughout the book of Psalms David communicates in an honest and intimate way, speaking openly and frankly with his heavenly Father. Yes, he rejoices and praises Yehovah, but at times he moans and complains about things, like someone can only do when they have a close, personal, open and honest relationship with someone, particularly Yehovah. Let us consider the practical outworking of the dedication it takes to praise Yehovah seven times a day, even when you are lying awake in bed at night. To illustrate this, let us consider how modern houses are built, certainly in Western Europe. Here the weather fluctuates dramatically between a sunny, warm climate in the summer to sub-zero temperatures, heavy snow and frost in the winter. Even with wall and roof insulation, double glazing and central heating, our homes do not stay warm and well-heated 24/7, certainly not without boosting the temperature, periodically switching on the heating, even if only for short periods. Without this the heat dissipates and we feel cold again, until we turn the heating on. That is when we draw upon an outside power source, be it gas, electricity, oil, solar or even a log burner. Within a short time, we notice the difference, stabilize, relax and feel secure and comfortable. A simple life-lesson this teaches us is that we need to draw upon The Eternal Source of power to thrive as well as to survive. Draw upon the relationship you have with your Heavenly Father for all you need, both in the natural and spiritual realms.

Day 74 - Who are your heroes?

Hebrew 12:1 “...we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses.”

In terms of our sporting heroes or heroines, we often use the term “Hall of Fame.” Sports clubs often have a “Wall of Fame” on which they display photographs of their passed stars and we collectively celebrate our “Sports Personality of the Year,” crossing over the lines between clubs as well as the various sports. Even places like the White House in Washington DC, have pictures of their former presidents displayed in places of honour – and after their presidency, past presidents are privileged to be honoured by being called “Mr President” for the rest of their lives.

We could say that the Scriptures, the eternal Word of Yehovah, has its own “Hall of Fame.” Our scripture today comes from the first verse of Hebrews 12, following on immediately after what we could term as a list of our “Heroes of the faith.” Take a few minutes to read the whole of that chapter and you will be astounded at some of the names which are included. It is quite an illustrious list of people. As you read through it, make a list of the people you would most like to meet, sit down and talk with. Make a note of the five people you would most appreciate spending an hour with, talking over how they came through the trials and achieved the successes they did while they were alive.

Over the next few days, we are going to consider a few of these men and women. From the outset though, be warned; in the same way that we recognise our own shortcomings – as well as some “successes”, and the same goes for all the people who we live alongside and know today - we will see they are all are men and women of both faith and also failure. But Yehovah chose and used them to bring glory to His Name. Just like me and you – if we put our trust and faith in Yehovah.

Day 75 – Yehovah’s men and women of faith, despite failure – Part 1. Rahab.

Hebrews 11:31 “By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.”

The Scriptures tell us that Joshua, Moses’ successor, sent two spies to check out Jericho before the Children of Israel captured the city. Somehow, the king of Jericho got to hear about them and sent men to Rahab’s house to tell her to bring them out so they could be taken captive. The Scriptures explicitly say Rahab was a harlot, a prostitute, who lived in a house on the walls of the city, an advantageous position for such an occupation as, no doubt, the soldiers who guarded the city were the most frequent by-passers of her front door. Rahab though had heard that Yehovah was with the Israelites and she knew He would deliver the city into their hands. So, instead she struck a deal with the spies, hiding them from the soldiers until they could escape. Because of this, and her faith in Yehovah’s coming deliverance, they told her to hang a red cord in her window so that it would be seen, and she would be protected when they attacked and took over the city. It is worth noting that although the walls of the city collapsed after the Israelites walked around it once a day for 6 days and 7 times on the 7th day, Yehovah obviously preserved the portion of the wall where her house was situated and, as a result, she was spared certain death. Some things to note about Rahab. Whenever she is mentioned in the book of Joshua and in James 2:25, she is referred to as “the harlot.” And yet, because of her faith in Yehovah, taking Yehovah as her personal Saviour, she became the grandmother of Boaz, the husband of Ruth, who was the grandmother of King David. You will see then in Matthew 1, that she was a great-grandmother of Yeshua Himself. She is later listed in the “Hall of Faith”, the people listed in Hebrews 11 (v31). Even here, her former occupation is brought up. Yet, what more evidence do we need that she was justified (made ‘just-as-if-she-had-never-sinned’) and righteous (‘in-right-standing-with-Yehovah’) than being chosen to be a great-grandmother of Yeshua and be listed alongside the likes of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as one of the heroes and heroines of our faith?

Day 76 – Yehovah’s men and women of faith, despite failure – Part 2. David.

Acts 13:22 “...I have found David..., a man after my own heart.”

It can be easy for us to think of David as some saintly figure. After all, he wrote so many beautiful Psalms, praising Yehovah - whilst also, at times, bemoaning his lot because so much of his life was in turmoil. He rose from the obscurity of being the overlooked ‘lad’, who was left out in the fields minding sheep, to slaying Goliath, becoming the people’s hero, killing thousands of their enemies’ soldiers to be crowned king of Israel and a great grandfather of Yeshua. In Acts 13:22 we read that Yehovah called him ‘a man after (His) own heart.’ However, David was also such a contradictory character – swinging wildly from one extreme to the other in terms of his life and life-choices. So, let us look a little closer at our hero of the faith.

Having conquered so many of Israel’s enemies, there came a time when he chose to stay at home while others fought on his behalf. It was while he was ‘absent without leave’, that he spotted Bathsheba bathing on the roof of her house. Despite the fact he could no doubt woo, love and marry any of the numerous unattached maidens of Israel, he chose to seduce this married woman, while her husband, Uriah, was away on the warfront. Realising that Bathsheba was pregnant, he conspired to ensure Uriah was ‘killed in action’ so that he could take her as his own wife. The prophet Samuel confronted David, something which could have been a dangerous step to take. Once David realised that his sin had ‘found him out’ (see Numbers 32:23), instead of hiding his guilt and shame, he immediately repented and sought Yehovah’s forgiveness and restoration. David’s heart was to serve and honour Yehovah, even to the point he wanted to build the temple in Jerusalem where sacrifices could be made, and praise and worship offered up to Him. But, because of the blood David had on his hands, Yehovah passed that privilege on to his son Solomon. While David certainly had his deep-seated weaknesses, including his mood swings from being a triumphalist at times, to being almost a manic depressive, he maintained his faith and trust in Yehovah to bring him through whatever situation he found himself in. He relied upon Yehovah’s grace and mercy to deliver him and bring him through every storm or valley. He had a heart that was 100% committed to his Yehovah – and so must you.

Day 77 – Yehovah’s men and women of faith, despite failure – Part 3. Noah.

Genesis 6:8 “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”

Noah lived in exceptionally wicked times. As bad as things are today, in Matthew 24:27-38 we read that Yeshua said that just like it was during Noah’s lifetime, so it will be when He returns. The people were eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, carrying on regardless of Noah taking many years to build the ark, whilst constantly warning them about the coming rain and floods. Similarly, today we can preach about the end times, of people’s need for Yeshua and His soon return, but we are largely ignored, and people’s lives goes on unchanged. We read in Hebrews 11:7 that by faith Noah, being warned by Yehovah, was moved with fear, prepared an ark to save his household and, as a result, the remainder of the world was condemned. Yet Noah was made righteous because of his faith. Noah’s faith and his resulting obedience to fulfil Yehovah’s instructions, meant he, his wife, their three sons and their wives, were saved from certain death, along with the animals, birds and other living creatures which he took into the ark. Noah believed Yehovah and, as a result, was saved. But was he a perfect and sinless man? Of course not. The Scriptures tell us that all have sinned and come short of the glory of Yehovah, that there are no righteous people, not even one, in terms of their own righteousness. Let us look briefly at Noah’s “feet of clay”, the evidence that he was an imperfect sinner, saved only because of the grace and mercy of Yehovah. In Genesis 9:20-24 we read that Noah planted a vineyard and drank so much of the home-made wine, he became drunk. He was so drunk he went and lay naked on the bed in his tent. When Ham, one of his sons, saw his father was naked, a shameful thing to have happen to the family patriarch, he went and gossiped about his father’s embarrassing situation to his brothers. Mercifully, Shem and Japheth took a garment, walked backwards into the tent and laid it over their father’s body so they would not see and shame him any more than he was already. So, we see that even Noah was not above reproach, and that it was only because of his faith AND his obedience that the lives of so many were preserved. Similarly, faith and obedience are what Yehovah requires of me and you.

Day 78 - Yehovah's men and women of faith, despite failure – Part 4. Jacob.

Exodus 3:6 “I am the Yehovah of Abraham...Isaac...and...Jacob.”

After Yehovah introduced Himself to Moses at the burning bush as “the Yehovah of Abraham, Isaac and the Jacob,” He told him to introduce Him that way to the Israelites adding, “This is My name forever and My memorial to all generations,” emphasizing the covenant that He had made with Abraham and all his descendants. There are numerous places in the Scriptures where Yehovah is, thereafter, referred to as the Yehovah of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Whilst Abraham and his son Isaac were, like all of mankind, imperfect, Jacob is an extremely interesting character. Born as the youngest of twins, we read that Jacob grew up to be a cunning, manipulative schemer, who stole the inheritance due to his brother Esau. Jacob then conned Isaac into giving him ‘the blessing’, sealing him in that privileged position. In Genesis 32 we read that Jacob wrestled with ‘a man’, whom some believe to be an angel, or even Yehovah Himself. The man told him from then onwards he would no longer be known as Jacob, but as Israel, ‘for as a prince (he) had power with Yehovah and with man.’ So, we see that Jacob, naturally speaking, was not a righteous man, treating others, particularly his brother Esau, so unjustly. Yet Yehovah blessed him to the extent of changing his name and, if that was not enough, his 12 sons became the fathers of the 12 tribes of Israel. Their descendants became the “Children of Israel” and, even today, in the 21st century, the very nation of Israel is named after him. In Hebrews 11:21 we are told that ‘By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the children of Joseph and worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff.’ This signified the father’s blessing was passing to Joseph and his descendants, rather than to any of his brothers, 10 of whom were in an older, therefore more ‘senior’ position in the family than he. Why then, in view of all the above, would Yehovah bless someone guilty of such heinous crimes against his brother Esau and his father, Isaac? Why too, considering all of this, would his heritage be the 12 tribes and the very nation being named after him? And why do we continue 3000 years later to call Yehovah ‘the Yehovah of Abraham, Isaac and JACOB’, not ‘the Yehovah of Abraham, Isaac and ISRAEL’? Could it be because of Yehovah’s grace and mercy, coupled with Jacob’s (or Israel’s) faith in Yehovah and the covenant He had made with him as an imperfect man? That is something for *you* to think about!

Day 79 - You too!!

1 Corinthians 1:28 “Yehovah chose...the foolish...the weak...the base.”

Over the past few days, we have looked at the lives of a several people whose stories are outlined in detail in the Scriptures for all to see. We have seen how even the people we, quite rightly, esteem as heroes and heroines of the faith, men and women of Yehovah, were people as weak and as liable to fail and fall as we are. So, what made them stand out above their contemporaries? Despite their limitations they had faith in Yehovah and His willingness and ability to bring them through every situation they faced - in victory. Hebrews 11:6 tells us that “...without faith it is impossible to please (Yehovah): for whoever comes to Yehovah must believe that He is (Yehovah), and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” The implication of that verse is, therefore, that *with* faith it *is* possible to please Yehovah – despite our weaknesses, frailties and tendencies to fall flat on our faces and fail Him. In other words, we must have faith in Him, in His grace, His mercy, His ability and His enabling and empowering strength – and not in ourselves.

So if and when you are sometimes tempted to think Yehovah cannot use you, remember this: Noah got drunk, Abraham and Isaac both told lies, Sarah was barren until she was 90 years of age, Jacob was a con man and deceiver, Job was fearful, Gideon was so afraid he hid himself, Moses lacked confidence, Samson was a womaniser, David committed adultery and then had a man killed, Jeremiah and Timothy were young, Elijah got depressed, Isaiah said he was a man of ‘unclean lips’, the Samaritan woman had been married five times, Peter was impulsive and had a short-fuse, Thomas doubted, Peter, James and John all fell asleep while praying, all the disciples deserted Yeshua when He needed them most and Lazarus was actually dead when Yeshua called him. Whatever their limitations, Yehovah remained faithful to them all and, as a result, they achieved great things for Him. And if He could do it in the lives of these men and women of the Scriptures, the heroes and heroines of the faith, He can and will do it with you.

Day 80 - Yehovah is able and willing.

Ephesians 3:20 “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.”

Have you ever reached the place where things appear to be so negative, contrary and impossible to understand or control, that you cannot see how even Yehovah Himself can sort it out? That is sometimes known as reaching “the end of your rope.” There is a saying which goes, “When you reach the end of your rope - let go, because underneath are His everlasting arms.” Deuteronomy 33:27 tells us, “The eternal Yehovah is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” It sometimes seems that we must reach the end of our own strength and efforts before we surrender and ask Yehovah to intervene and sort out what we cannot remedy.

The fictional character, Hercule Poirot, is quoted as saying, “There is nothing in this world so damaged that it cannot be healed by the hand of Almighty Yehovah.” While he is a fictional character, those are very true words. You may have heard today’s scripture quoted as, “Now, unto Him, who is able to do exceedingly abundantly.” That is great in itself, but wait, there is more! He is “able to do exceedingly abundantly *above all that we ask or think.*” Now, that is more like it!! He is able to do FAR more than we can even dream or imagine. But wait, there is yet more to this promise which Yehovah has given us. Paul adds that there are conditions which need to be met, implying that unless we meet those conditions there are limitations upon how that promise can be fulfilled. Those limitations are put on Yehovah’s ability to move in our lives - by us, mere human beings. He can only operate in and through us according to the level of the power we will allow Him to use in and through us. The solution is simple; release Yehovah to do all and anything He wishes to do in your life. Do not put restrictions upon Him and His ability and willingness to operate to the maximum in and through you. He is able and willing to do so much more than we so often limit Him to. Remember when Yeshua said to the people who saw Lazarus walk from the grave, still wrapped in his graveclothes? Today, you need to “loose Him (Yehovah) and let Him go.” Allow Yehovah to do all He desires to do in your heart and life.

Day 81 - Too blessed to be stressed - or too stressed to feel blessed?

Psalm 55:22 “Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you. He will never allow the righteous to be moved.”

Have you ever felt so stressed and overwhelmed with things that within seconds of feeling and behaving totally normal, you find yourself erupting like a volcano, saying and doing things that are out of character for you? Have you ever felt like that when someone walks by wearing a T-shirt that says something like “Too Blessed to be Stressed”? Did you ever want to scream, strangle them or, at least, respond in a way you knew deep down would have been totally inappropriate? Come on, whether or not we have seen those T-shirts, most of us have, at times, felt so overwhelmed with things that are happening within and around us that we have said things we knew were wrong, and reacted in ways that certainly did not glorify Yehovah. So, what causes that stress and what can we do about it? Firstly, it can be linked to a health issue, such as depression and anxiety. On some occasions, it may well be that the cause of that is a chemical imbalance in our bodies, and it can, therefore, be something which may be helped or rectified by a doctor prescribing medication to adjust the chemicals back in line with what they should be. However, it has been said that one of the biggest causes of stress is when something external to us happens that we cannot control or influence. Often that is linked to pressure that another person is putting on us, to the point of manipulation, control, bullying and coercion. We cannot “prescribe” miraculous, pain-free deliverances in short readings like this, but we do know that Yehovah understands and wants us to be free from the oppression which comes into our lives through things such as internally or externally induced pressure. We are told to CAST our burdens on Yehovah, to not allow our hearts to be troubled, to be anxious for nothing, but instead to ask Yehovah to release us from such captivity of mind. Know today that Yehovah is aware of your situation; He wants to deliver you from the chains that bind you. Turn to Him today and ask Him to comfort your heart and mind – and begin to show you the way out of the maze that stress has got you locked into. He will deliver you and bring you into a place of comfort and strength – where you know He is in charge and that He has delivered you.

Day 82 – The Lord’s prayer – An Introduction.

Matthew 6:9-13 & Luke 11:1-4

“In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

Over the coming days we will look at what we call ‘The Lord’s Prayer,’ which appears twice in the New Testament, in Matthew and Luke. While the backdrop to these accounts is different, the substance of what Yeshua said is broadly the same in both, and that is the primary thing we want to look at. Matthew places this prayer as part of what we term as ‘The Sermon on the Mount,’ while Luke says the disciples asked Yeshua to teach them to pray. There are, of course, differing opinions as to who was present at ‘The Sermon on the Mount,’ as Matthew 5:1-2 says, “And seeing multitude, He went up into a mountain: and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him: And He opened His mouth, and taught them.” Having said all of that, Yeshua gives clear instruction on how, when and where His disciples should pray. Various issues were addressed, such as people not praying loudly in the streets or in the synagogues (the equivalent of our churches), with the sole intention of ensuring everyone saw and heard them. Instead, Yeshua counselled people to primarily pray on their own, in private, in a place and manner that their relationship to and connection with their Heavenly Father was their primary concern. He said to avoid ‘vain repetitions.’ The word ‘vain’ here indicates unproductive prayers in that they are repetitive simply for show. Whilst, also, we are counselled to seek, knock and ask, and keep on doing so, we are instructed to pray in faith, believing Yehovah will, because of His love and faithfulness towards us, answer in accordance with His Word, His promises and, therefore, His declared will and purpose. Over the coming days, open your mind and heart to receive fresh manna from Heaven on the privilege of a prayerful encounter with your Yehovah.

Day 83 – The Lord’s prayer - PART 1.

Matthew 6:9-13 “Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name.”

The first word, phrase and sentence contain incredible treasures. Yeshua begins by calling Yehovah “*Our Father.*” By using the term ‘our’, He is identifying with us, mere mortals, coming alongside us as He did by leaving the splendour of Heaven to be born as a baby in a lowly village in Israel. He calls Almighty Yehovah *our Father*, stating that we have been adopted into His family by being born again. In doing so He also declares we are brothers and sisters, equal with one another in acceptance, privilege and position, equally loved by Yehovah Himself. Accordingly, we are commanded to love one another, even as Yehovah has loved us, despite our failures and imperfections. We are told that everyone will know we are children of Yehovah because we instinctively love our brothers and sisters. Similarly, an evidence that someone is NOT born again is that they do NOT love one another. While Yehovah is omnipresent, He is positioned in Heaven. Although He abides with and in us, is fully aware of and involved in our daily lives and situations, problems and struggles, He is above being adversely impacted and panicked by them. He can see them from His Omniscient perspective. He sees the “big picture” and where and how all these things fit into His plan and purpose for our lives. He knows the whole situation and how it will turn out (if we follow His instructions regarding them). We acknowledge Yehovah is above ALL and remind ourselves that HE is unperturbed by our problems, stresses and strains. He is not sitting, panicking and wringing His hands, worrying if it will all work out. He can overrule and bring us through, if we ask, allow and let Him. When we ‘hallow’ someone or something, we set them or it above all other things. When we hallow the name of Yehovah, we hallow Him personally, setting Him high above everything in terms of position and importance. We are commanded to exalt His name above all other names, people, things and situations. Whatever it is, if it has a name, be it sickness, poverty, guilt, condemnation, the Name of Yeshua is above it, and we are instructed to exalt the name of Yeshua over it. At HIS name every other name and situation in your life must bow.

Day 84 - The Lord's prayer - PART 2.

Matthew 6:9-13 "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven."

The very use of the word Kingdom implies the existence of a King, denoting sovereignty, royal power and dominion. The Moffatt translation of the Scriptures use the term "Thy reign begin," acknowledging the Majesty and Lordship of Yehovah. The Kingdom is the domain in which HIS rule is acknowledged. Yehovah has not given up His sovereignty in the face of rebellion, be it demonic or human. Instead, He has declared His Lordship over all creation. Our declaration of "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven" proclaims a total surrender of our own will to Yehovah's Kingship and Lordship over our lives.

What is your idea of the Kingdom of Heaven? Do you know that in Heaven everything, all authorities and powers bow to the authority of Yehovah? Is there sickness, defeat, problems, poverty, mental or physical deformity or handicap, selfishness, jealousy, envy, strife, pride, depression, sin, panic, self-will or tiredness in Heaven? "No, of course not!!" Why? Because YEHOVAH rules there. He is in command and everything and everyone in Heaven bow to His authority. When we say "THY Kingdom come" we are saying "YOUR reign begins HERE." We are not robots who automatically do whatever Yehovah wants. We must CHOOSE to obey and to live His way. Yehovah's will does not automatically come to pass in our lives. We must bow before His authority, lean on and trust in Him, receive what He promises and offers. He will not force His will on us. "Thy Kingdom come" is saying, "Reign in my life, as You do in Heaven." Not everything that happens in our lives is sent by Yehovah. Sometimes through our own stupidity, we bring situations upon ourselves. John 10:10 also tells us that the thief, the devil, comes only to steal from, kill and destroy us, but that Yeshua came to bring us life, and that more abundant. However, to receive the full benefit of that abundant life, we must first submit ourselves to Yehovah, then resist the devil, and at that point he will flee (run in terror) from us.

Day 85 - The Lord's prayer - PART 3.

Matthew 6:9-13 "Give us this day our daily bread."

One of our biggest temptations is to fear lack; that we will not have sufficient of what we need, or think we need. Yet, even under the Old Testament, Yehovah covenanted to bless and supply all His people needed. Yehovah blessed Abraham, saying that that blessing would also make him a blessing to others. The covenant included the generations which followed him. In fact, Galatians 3:13-14 says the blessing of Abraham transfers 'downstream', even to the Gentiles who have faith in Yeshua. In Psalm 37:25, Abraham's descendant, David, said, "I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his (offspring) begging bread." Indeed, he then adds, "...the Lord be magnified, Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant." In recent years there has been controversy at the concept of Yeshua's followers being prosperous, and yet, throughout the Scriptures, Yehovah promises prosperity to His children. (See Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3 & 68:19 and 3 John 2). The very word "prosper" means to thrive, succeed, flourish. We could even interpret it as: 'having enough of Yehovah's supply to accomplish Yehovah's instructions, with enough left over to bless others.' Here we would be wise to consider what Yeshua said to the rich, young ruler who asked what he must do to have eternal life. (see Matthew 19:16-22). Yeshua told him to sell all he had and give to the poor, and then to follow Him. He went away sorrowful because he had many possessions. We know then that prosperity, kept for our own benefit will actually be more detrimental than beneficial to us, spiritually speaking. Paul's epistles counsel us to be content with what we have – and to also give liberally to those in need, to those preaching the Word of Yehovah, etc. In Philippians 4:19 Paul commends those who gave materially into his ministry, promising them that Yehovah would supply all they needed 'according to His riches in glory', which, indeed, are so much more than being merely adequate. Putting all of this into perspective, it is wise for us to remember that Yeshua told us to 'seek FIRST the Kingdom of Yehovah and His righteousness, and all these things will (then) be added unto you.' Seek Him and His Kingdom above all else and He will ensure you have not only your daily bread – but all you need throughout every area of your life.

Day 86 - The Lord's prayer - PART 4.

Matthew 6:9-13 "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespasses against us."

In ancient times, in the Middle East, if a man had debts he could not pay, he could write them on a piece of paper and nail it to the gatepost of his house. As rich men passed-by they would tell their servants to take particular pages, fold and write their master's name across them. From then on, anyone that man owed money to needed to ask the rich benefactor for payment. The wealthier he was and the more he wished to show it, the more people he would help. Similarly, Colossians 2:14 says the debt we owed Yehovah for our sin was taken away and nailed to his cross." Yeshua, our Redeemer, took the sin debt of mankind upon Himself. Only those who understand the enormity of that truth love and appreciate His sacrifice to the degree Yeshua spoke of in Luke 7:47, where He said "...her sins which are many are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." In fact, the sins of the world were forgiven on the cross: past, present and future. Yeshua died once for the forgiveness of all mankind, but only those who, by faith, accept that pardon receive the benefits of it. We have all been forgiven much, so we should all love and appreciate Yehovah so much, being forever grateful to Him. However, our attitude to others indicates where we are in Yehovah. Yeshua told the story of the unforgiving servant. The seriousness of this account is summed up when Yeshua said that if we do not forgive others their trespasses, our heavenly Father will not forgive ours. Paul speaks of the extent to which we must forgive in Ephesians 4. "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, *even as* Yehovah for Yeshua's sake hath forgiven you." Consider this, you must forgive even as, as much as Yehovah has forgiven your sins and trespasses. So, to what extent has Yehovah forgiven you? Well, He will never again remember anything you have or will ever do wrong, making you just-as-if-you-never-sinned and in right-standing with Him. That is how the Scriptures say you must forgive those who trespass against you. When you pray "forgive us... as we forgive...", you are giving Yehovah your consent to forgive, or not forgive, you to that same degree.

Day 87 - The Lord's prayer - PART 5.

Matthew 6:9-13 "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

In John 10:10, Yeshua told us that the thief, the devil, comes to steal and kill and destroy, whereas He, Yeshua, came to give us life, and to have it, as one translation puts it, in abundance, to the full, till it overflows. In fact, Yehovah sent Yeshua to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8), equipping Him with the Holy Spirit to empower Him to fulfil that calling, so that He could redeem us back to Himself. In that same way, Yeshua commanded His disciples to go into the world with the same purpose, vision and mission the Father had sent Him (John 20:21-22). They were to 'tarry' in Jerusalem till they received the manifested power of the Holy Ghost, before moving out to fulfil that calling on their lives. (Luke 24:49 & Acts 1:8). So, we understand that the devil's intention is to steal from, kill and destroy us. He does this by trying to steal away the Word of Yehovah spoken into our hearts and lives. He brings persecution and temptations to draw us away from Yehovah, our one true source of hope and strength. Because he has no power over Yehovah, he has no power against the Word of Yehovah, nor us - when we stand upon it. Instead, he brings afflictions and problems to rob us of the Word that is in us. He knows if he can steal Yehovah's Word out of us, take away the "sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17), from our hands and hearts, we will be powerless. He is trying to destroy our faith, which is founded and built upon Yehovah's Word, to make us defensive, inactive and impotent. It is not Yehovah Who sends temptation. There are enough trials and problems in life that the devil throws at us, without us getting the idea that our heavenly Father is sending them too. (See James 1:3). It is wise for us to remember though, that, "...every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust (desires) and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death." (James 1:14-15). Conversely, in 2 Timothy 2:22, Paul counselled Timothy to "Flee... youthful lusts." We can do that, knowing that we are promised that no temptation will come against us from which He will not make a way of escape, empowering us with the indwelling Holy Spirit, to overcome any and all temptations by calling upon and relying on His strength to be able to endure and escape.

Day 88 - The Lord's prayer - PART 6.

Matthew 6:9-13 "For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever, Amen."

We have already established that where there is a Kingdom there is, by definition, a King Who reigns and rules over it, and all that happens there. The Son of Yehovah is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords and all creation does and will bow the knee, acknowledging Him as Lord of all. That is why the first commandment is "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." (Numbers 20 & Mark 12:29). A democracy is a state in which one can choose a person to govern, to carry out the wishes of the people. Should the government fail to perform as the electorate desire, they can replace it with another, and another, and yet another. The American government is seen as being "of the people and for the people." However, what we term as a theocracy is where Yehovah's position is acknowledged, where He is the supreme authority, and we are His subjects. We willingly submit to and obey Him, recognising that all things, including us, were created by and for Him. Hence our desire should be to love, worship, serve and please Him. While temporary rule may have been given, by man's descent into sin, to the devil, in finality, the ownership of all creation remains Yehovah's. Yehovah has not relinquished His sovereignty in the face of rebellion, human or demonic, but has declared His purpose to establish His Lordship over all things. Accordingly, He calls upon all men everywhere to repent and submit voluntarily to His rule. Where the King is and where His rule is acknowledged, is firstly in the heart of a believer. Entrance into the Kingdom is by new birth. Nothing that a man can be in his own nature or do in his own strength can make any change to his spiritual position. We must be born again, accept by faith the atoning work of Yeshua, acknowledging Him as supreme, sovereign ruler over our lives, when the King of Kings and Lord of Lord comes to live and reign within us. Truly then, "The Kingdom of Yehovah is within you." (Luke 17:21). Because He is Yehovah, all power, dominion, rule and glory belong to Him, and all creation, in finality will bow and worship at His feet. When you end this prayer, acknowledging Him as King, you honour Him and bow your knee to His rule and Lordship over every aspect and moment of your life.

Day 89 - Hinderances to answered prayer.

1 Peter 3:7 "...that your prayers be not hindered."

The prophet Daniel was a man of prayer. There are times when he received immediate answers from Yehovah but, in Daniel 10, we read of one occasion when it took three full weeks for the answer he needed to arrive. At that point, he had a vision and a voice spoke to him, saying that his prayer had been heard immediately when he prayed, but that the answer had been "withstood" by the "prince of the kingdom of Persia." In other words, the principalities and powers of darkness in the area where he lived had delayed the answer Daniel was awaiting. That is a clear indication that whenever we pray, Yehovah hears and answers, but there may be occasions when there is a delay in the physical manifestation of the answer – for a reason beyond our personal control. When that happens, we must continue to believe in Yehovah's faithfulness and stand in faith until we receive His "reply", knowing that He has heard our request and He will respond. Secondly, in 1 Peter 3, husbands are commanded to honour their wives, one of the reasons being to ensure that their "prayers (are) not hindered." That is worth spending time meditating upon - to fully understand the ramifications of treating others disrespectfully. To illustrate a third point, the story goes that a father was putting his young child to bed. Kneeling together to pray, the child said 'Dear Yeshua, thank you for Christmas time. I really love it, and for my birthday too. I am sorry for when I hit my sister on the head with the door.' Her daddy said, 'That is good. Is there anything else you want to say?' 'Oh yes,' the child replied, 'and, for next Christmas, please can I have...' Daddy interrupted, saying, 'Hang on a minute; you know you are talking to Yehovah right now, and not Santa?' The little girl said, innocently, 'Oh yes, that is OK, but Yehovah can just phone him!' While that is a humorous story, we can all, very easily, be guilty of treating Almighty Yehovah, the creator of Heaven and earth, like Santa Claus. We can, if we are not careful, think that Yehovah is standing by, like a restaurant waiter, waiting for our orders and requests, ready to fulfil our every whim and desire. When we do this, we need to understand what we are told in James 4:3, that, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."

Day 90 - Wait for, wait upon...

Psalm 37:7 “Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him.”

Isaiah 40:31 “...they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.”

Let us look at the benefits of waiting for and upon Yehovah. Before the ascension, Yeshua told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem till the Holy Spirit filled them with the power they would need to fulfil the work He was calling them to do. Had they started prematurely they would have been unprepared and ill-equipped for the calling on their lives. When we catch a vision of Yehovah’s plans for our futures, we may instinctively try to fulfil them in our own strength. But the Scriptures speak many times of the importance of waiting for Yehovah’s perfect timing to move. Army trainees, learning to march, often have a sergeant who shouts, “By the left, quick...” Sometimes they pause, interjecting, “wait for it..., MARCH!” They must wait for the right time before moving. In sports, the “starter” calls out “On your marks, get set...” Only when they say “GO!” or fire the starting pistol should the athletes start. If they move too soon, it is termed a “false start” and they have to begin the process all over again. There is no advantage gained by setting off earlier than the right, or ‘due’ time. Yehovah’s timing is always perfect, as He sees the big picture and He knows best. WAIT FOR HIM! Our scripture from Isaiah 40:31 can, of course, be read and understood in exactly the same way, waiting *for* Yehovah. But let us consider a wonderful truth contained in the term, “waiting upon” Yehovah, particularly when it comes to growing closely acquainted with our Father Yehovah and with Yeshua, our Saviour. If you have eaten in a restaurant you have probably had both poor, as well as excellent, service. Poor service is when your waiter, or server, is inattentive, off-hand and even rude. You have probably felt unappreciated, and even considered leaving without eating. No doubt you felt unwilling to give a gratuity for such poor service. However, when your waiter is attentive, pleasant, helpful and friendly, you have wanted to thank and reward them for ensuring you had a great experience. While not implying that Yehovah is like a self-centred restaurant customer, it is worthwhile asking yourself, when you spend time with your Saviour, which of these two “waiters” are you? Do you truly wait upon Him with a heart of love and adoration?

