



## He Gives us Bread for Each Day...are we taking it? Our Experience in Set Apart Ministries

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A Believer in Messiah Yeshua is part of His family and part of His army. Those who are serious in their desire to grow in faith and the knowledge of our Messiah generally understand that one of the spiritual disciplines involved to do so is regular study of the Word. Yet in the press of daily living it is often the activity people admit is lost. There ARE pressing circumstances in life and people are often quick to conclude that "God will understand." Things we see as "good" or "bad" come to Believers and unbelievers alike, despite "prosperity gospel" teachings..

Study of the Word: How important is it really? A luxury or a necessity? As we see more evidence that American's have less regard or knowledge of the Word and the powers of darkness seem more bold, what kind of impact will this have on us?

As is so often true, Oswald Chambers has provided thoughts that challenge and shed light on what we experience today as we serve Messiah Yeshua.

*It is only the loyal soul who believes that God engineers circumstances. We take such liberty with our circumstances, we do not believe God engineers them, although we say we do; we treat the things that happen as if they were engineered by men. To be faithful in every circumstance means that we have only one loyalty, and that is to our Lord. Suddenly God breaks up a particular set of circumstances, and the realization comes that we have been disloyal to Him by not recognizing that he had ordered them; we never saw what he was after, and that particular thing will never be repeated all the days of our life. The test of loyalty always comes just there. If we learn to worship God in the trying circumstances, He will alter them in two seconds when He chooses.*

*Loyalty to Jesus Christ is the thing that we "stick at" today. We will be loyal to work, to service, to anything, but do not ask us to be loyal to Jesus Christ. Many Christians are intensely impatient of talking about loyalty to Jesus. Our Lord is dethroned more emphatically by Christian workers than by the world. God is made a machine for blessing men, and Jesus Christ is made a Worker among workers.*

My Utmost for His Highest.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Model, Wilder, James, PhD, et all, Shepherd's House, Pasadena California.

In Chambers time, it was world war that caused men to faint. Today, there is fear of worldwide war again but also much talk that we are near to Messiah's return. Even those without Bible training are tossing around the year 2012 with varying degrees of anxiety. Though we do not know the year, we certainly can see the season as we watch prophetic events daily. We are heading into darker days than we have known before; than any generation on earth has ever known. How soon--This month? Next month? Two years from NOW?

Challenges grow deeper as darkness increases. Many believers are aware of Scriptural teaching about the separation of the sheep and the goats and have determined they want to be among the sheep! But even more separation is coming. Ezekiel described the separation of the sheep from the sheep, too. (Ezekiel 34) The type of sheep is also important.

Some are aware of the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25); five wise ones who were ready when Messiah returned and went into the wedding chamber with Him and the five foolish ones who KNEW something about His coming but were not prepared and so missed out. Some are content with the idea that they will just "make it in the door" of heaven and so do not pursue understanding of our God with much passion. Others strive deeply at great cost to know Him with intense desire to be among the five wise virgins. We understand that the five wise ones likely represent the Bride of Messiah. The others may very well be with Him in the life to come but not in the same intimacy. We are establishing our relationship and place with Him NOW.

**In any case, we are in our training time; boot camp for the Bride.**

**As we train, we will perform.**

Our Set Apart Ministries family has long spoken of our recognition that we are being prepared to play a role in teaching about maturity and the return to the ancient paths of YHWH, particularly to the House of Ephraim. We are a group of very committed people, which has been confirmed by visitors observations, praise Yeshua!

We have seen some people come and go and have understood that everyone is not called to stand together with us; our prayer being that He will bring those He wants here and keep away those He does not want here, as He leads them to the place He desires them to be.

Standing together involves recognition that the life of a Believer is not always easy; in fact, one should question if it is too easy! Commitment to the Person of Yeshua Messiah and His teachings is the hallmark of a follower. He did not hesitate to challenge His followers when He was on earth nor do we understand Him to do less now. To determine what is believed and to make life choices based on that belief is one way to understand what it means to "stand."

We understood in prayer long ago that standing would be hard and painful, and that some would be "taken out" though we have not known exactly what kind of "taking out" was meant. Truthfully, there is probably more than one meaning here. There remains illness and stress among us, though a deep current of joy and expectation is also present. We stand in Messiah's protection and address concerns of spiritual warfare—cursing, hexing, vexing, gaming, rebellion, and duplicity—on a regular basis. Yet some struggles remain. No few words could even fully represent the depth of some of them. We're growing and we don't (always) like it.

We have spent countless hours on relationship building, and discussion of being in fellowship with one another through echad with Messiah; not just "social-ship." We are not a uniformity: it would be hard to find a group of people more different in background, tastes and interests yet we have unity in our desire to please Messiah. Like Roman foot soldiers traveling together in formation, shielding one another on all sides and above as one unit, so we grow into Him together in covenant relationship, "turtled up!"

We have grown in our ability to stay focused in prayer and worship long enough to reach quiet deeper places of intimacy with Him at such times. HalleluYah! We have grown in our ability to "pray, stay and not run away" and to face, discuss and resolve conflicts among us...almost in real time, without much delay, too. Thank you Yeshua!

We have stood in awe and amazement as we have seen how He has coordinated our studies and led us along a path to build a foundation of knowledge and intimacy with Him. This is true for our Life Model work and groups, as well as for our Torah studies on Shabbat. They so often dovetail and support one another it can only be His direction. None of us is smart enough to make that happen!

**And now...**

**...Challenges grow deeper as darkness increases**

### **As we train, we will perform.**

Right now, we have two wonderful studies we are pursuing: Tony Robinson's thematic analysis of Torah and Holissa Alewine's Creation Gospel. Once again, these topics weave in and out together expanding our understanding in ways we knew but didn't KNOW before like this!

It seems this is bringing another area of growth into focus: our intent to maintain an interactive style of Torah study.

This has been determined in mutual consent among us for many years. In order for this to happen, all members of community need to pursue their own study weekly and bring in what the Ruach has shown them for the week. Most people have clearly been in the material and it has been so exciting when insights blossom right during the discussion time! This has been one of the more challenging times of our community study as the depth of the material and the presentation style presents more of a "right brain" intuitive process than the customary logical progression. Welcomed by some and puzzling to others!

Yet the stress of maintaining an active preparation has become an issue, especially with two double portions in a row. MANY are experiencing stressors and difficulties totally unexpected and out of their control. Some experience ongoing circumstances that they cannot personally change yet must cope in the midst of them. What happens to loyalty to Yeshua and commitment to study then?

What do we know about study of the Word and our boot camp training? **As we train, we will perform.**

Yeshua is the Living Word and the Bread of Life.

Torah is described as the Word and Life.

Study of the Word is compared to eating bread.

Just as we grow stronger in knowledge, depth and ability to apply the Word through study, so do we grow strong through eating appropriate foods in a timely manner.

**When is it most difficult to eat well balanced meals on a regular basis?**

- When time challenges or stress make it difficult to plan and prepare.
- lack of finances

### **What is the outcome of failing to eat well?**

- Physical weakness, illness, and decline. And if it goes on long enough, death.

### **When is it most necessary to eat well?**

- Prevention of illness AND during times of stress, illness.
- Neglect of personal care

**HALT**—Wisdom from AA included this little acronym Don't let yourself get too:

**Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired.** Any of these states getting out of control leaves us vulnerable to any number of stressors; and opens the door for spiritual stressors as well.

- While preparing for some kind of action, exercise, battle.
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### **When is it most difficult to study?**

- Usually when circumstances around us grow more confusing or time consuming.
- Urgency, not always importance, of things/people making demands of us.
- HALT Neglect of personal care.

### **What is the outcome of failing to study?**

- Spiritual / Faith weakness and decline
- Decreasing discernment
- No/slow growth
- More easily deceived
- Decreased relationship with Messiah
- Desensitization: "numbed out" to importance of study
- Falling out of discipline seems to make attempt to return more difficult.

### **When do we most need to study?**

- In times of crisis, confusion and weakness, loss of conviction of His Truth.
- When we least "feel like it"
- When everything else SEEMS more important.
- While preparing for some kind of action, exercise, battle.

### **Double binds!!**

**We most need to study when it is most difficult to do so.**

**We fully expect circumstances to get more difficult.**

- How do we maintain study when stress and pressure affect people even now before we have come to the darker times expected?
- How do we determine when pressures really are such that study is not possible vs. determination that study and perseverance are needed?
- Does this mean all spiritual disciplines go "out the window" or is there a way to work around such pressure?

What are our choices when we recognize both the need to study and the cost to do so? Here is where recognition of maturity issues as well as the difference between fear and love bonds comes in. If you aren't familiar with these terms, check out [\*\*The Life Model: Living from the Heart Jesus Gave You\*\*](#).<sup>2</sup> A chart explaining these terms is available in the article about [\*\*love and fear bonds in faith\*\*](#) on our website. which you can see at:

### **Performance/Fear based responses**

- Read and study out of obligation and guilt without comprehension or heart Net gain? Practically zero.... (This is **not** the same thing as studying because you know it Is what He expects of us and you determine to do so despite lack of "warm fuzzies.")
- Plead inability to do it well therefore won't do it at all until.... some future better time.

Net gain? zero...

### **Love Based responses**

- Loyalty to Yeshua in the face of what ever circumstances challenge.

Net gain: JOY! Strength!

- Setting priorities with Yeshua at the top of the list
- Knowing when to relax and not stress over it, and when to "push/discipline" oneself

### **Maturity issues involved in resolving this double bind?**

- Determination of the will to do what is "best"
- Perseverance to do hard things.
- Modify perfectionist tendencies: do some study even if can't do as much as desired.
- Knowing when to ask for help—from other people, and from Him.

As we mature in faith, we learn that He is *for* us. When we find ourselves struggling, even if it is with a lack of motivation to study, confession of the struggle to Him will enlist His intervention and often bring about a change of heart.

If we are thrown about by our life's circumstances now, when on a scale of 1-10 they could be rated perhaps at a 4 or a 5, what will we do when they become cataclysmic as described in Revelation?

**Many years ago under difficult circumstances, I understood that our Messiah's grace is for when we FALL short of His standards, not if we AIM short of them.**

May we be in training now and seek Him while He may be found. We know how difficult it is to learn new things let alone develop trust when we are in crisis. How much more would it be difficult to wait to develop loyalty to Yeshua first in the midst of worldwide calamity?

Why would we choose to allow ourselves to grow weak by not feasting on His Word, the Bread of Life while we have a choice?

How often He teaches us through our struggles and difficulties; allowing them as opportunities to grow our faith and confidence in Him no matter what our common sense tells us. In fact, it is through struggle and persecution because we bear His Name and for His Name's sake, that we become more like Him in His sufferings.

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<sup>2</sup> [The Life Model](#), Wilder, James, PhD, et all, Shepherd's House, Pasadena, California

May we not "wish away" the very circumstances He employs to refine us, but remain loyal and faithful to Him in the midst of them.

Just as He prepares a table for us...right in the presence of our enemies! (Psalm 23)

**As we train, we will perform.**

**Yeshua! Please engineer our circumstances and cause us to understand what You are teaching us in the midst of them. We want to be pleasing to You more than anything. Teach us to hunger and thirst for Your Word and to wisely number our days.**

**Who in heaven do we have but You?**