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Encouragement from S.A.M.

Shalom!

Here we are in November, looking forward to the annual Thanksgiving Celebration and preparing for Hanukkah. We do have reason to believe that the first Thanksgiving was actually a Feast of Sukkot, or Tabernacles! For those newer to walking in Torah, there is often an ambivalent feeling as we try once again to navigate our way through the holiday season of Christmas. This year, Hanukkah falls at the same time. This week's comments are about handling the reactions of family and friends as we come into more of our Hebrew Heritage. You will also find information on how Joy plays a role in our relationships and our faith. Look for those people in your life who communicate their delight in you, and you will be built up! For leaders, consider this a challenge to find ways to express your joy in your fellowship members and watch them grow. We are preparing to host another teleconference on coping with the holidays-- information in a following article.

Bob had several interesting experiences this past week, both in work settings. He was greeted by a "Shalom" from a man who presumably had observed his tzit tzit, then asked if he was "orthodox?" When he replied, "No, Messianic," the formerly friendly greeter made a rude gesture and turned away without further comment. Another individual asked in-depth questions and Bob was able to speak at length about our understanding of our Hebrew Heritage. We do not always know what to expect and what opportunities we will be given to give a reason for our faith, do we? May we be ready, in season and out.

Have you learned anything in these newsletters that has helped you identify fear bonds rather than love bonds in your own fellowships? We would be delighted to talk these things over with you and help you determine the most productive responses! We are available for individual and group consultations; just call!

An Equipping Ministry

November 2005

The Joy of the Lord is Your Strength (Neh. 8:10)



Can you remember singing the song, "The Joy of the Lord is My Strength?" I remember singing with children in Sunday School years ago. As always, the Scriptures have the answers for us. Neurologists and therapists are now understanding the importance of joy in our lives.

It is now understood that a basic human need is to be "the sparkle in someone's eye."

According to *Life Model*, a child's first two years is spent in the desire to experience joy in loving relationships. When we have joy, life makes sense

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Immediate vs Gradual Change to Moedim Observance

(I have amended the original statement from "sudden" to "Immediate" because it is hoped that no change is made suddenly without prayer, study and much thought. It may appear sudden but hopefully, it is the outgrowth of what our Messiah has been doing inside already.)

Once we understand that we want to observe YHWH's appointed times, we face perhaps the largest challenge in our obedience to our Messiah. Do we "fear" God or man more? This is not a new problem! Check out John 12: 37-43.

*37*Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. ... *42*Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; *43*for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

When we honestly *shema*-- hear and obey--, we know that there is no room for hesitation once we have understood what is asked of us by our Elohim. Whether Jew or Gentile, the dilemma is the same. When we understand Who our YHWH is, could there truly be any other rational response than, as the Israelites said, "Yes, we will do all that You have said." When we stand in His Light, it is a joy and an honor to obey Him! Yet, like them, all too often we find that the walking-out of that heartfelt response in a fallen, broken world is harder than we ever imagined it would be. When the conviction of the *Ruach ha Kodesh* (the Holy Spirit) has dawned in our own hearts, and the veil to our understanding is removed, it has not yet necessarily also dawned for relatives and friends.

*7*And on this mountain He will swallow up the (A) covering which is over all peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations. Isaiah 25:7 NASB
*14*But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. *15* But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; *16* but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 2 Cor. 3: 14-16 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery--so that you will not be wise in your own estimation--that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; Romans 11: 25 (cross reference to Gen. 48: 17-19)

They expect us to honor traditions with them and view any change as suspect, especially in light of the fact that so many

and we are empowered by joy when we are in relationship. Did you ever notice how contagious joy is? When we are in a group and someone starts laughing, the joy just spreads!

When we have joy that is properly connected, just the memory of someone is enough to return us to joy. Being a grandmother, just the thought of a hug from one of my grandchildren brings joy within me. When I am struggling or concerned about something, just the thought of my Messiah restores my joy and strengthens me.

When we are going through difficult transitions, it's essential that we are in authentic, joy-producing relationships. If there is no strength from joy, it may be impossible to overcome pain. The *Life Model* states on page 12 *Having enough joy strength is fundamental to a person's well being. We now know that a "joy center" exists in the right orbital prefrontal cortex of the brain (We are truly fearfully and wonderfully made!). It has executive control over the entire emotional system. When the joy center has been sufficiently developed, it regulates emotions, pain*

church leaders stand in opposition to keeping the *moedim*, the appointed times. As we noted last time, some even believe that it is legalistic to observe the Biblical feasts! Our desire to honor Elohim does not mean we want to hurt the people we care about yet they often see it that way.

- From whom do you "need permission" to honor YHWH's appointed times?

Answer this question and you will know whom you fear.

So, what to do when the Spirit within draws you to His *moedim* but the flesh holds tightly to your past? Won't they be angry with me if I do something different? Will it mean the end of our relationship, and estrangement from these, my flesh and blood, my friends? Won't my children miss out on all the wonderful family holiday memories we've had? What will people say at work, at school, at church? Perhaps if I just move softly, step by step, so as not to alarm them too much, they will take it better and not be too hard on me. I could withdraw slowly, by degrees, and perhaps they will get used to the idea and overlook our differences. Perhaps, I can find ways to honor YHWH while still meeting their expectations.

- There is a two step process involved here: inward conviction, then outward observance and behavioral change.
- The change can also take several forms: an immediate cutting away of the pagan practices known before OR gradually implementing the new while fading out the old.

. In truth, the familiarity and depth of observance can only come as He teaches us and we walk it out. Whichever path is chosen, the heart attitude needs to be focused on the joy of obedience to our Messiah rather than the dread of people's responses or what we are leaving behind. When we can move gracefully toward Him, getting to know Him better in the feasts that are a shadow of what is to come, we are a living highway of restoration to the ancient paths spoken about by Jeremiah. Rather than getting involved in verbal contentiousness, we may speak volumes by what we do.

- Either way, immediate or gradual, change will generally bring some level of conflict.

Even families that have not honored church holidays will find that those who desire to walk in Torah are somehow different. Perhaps you have heard, "You aren't as much fun as you used to

control and immunity centers; it guides us to act like ourselves; it releases neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin; and it is the only part of the brain that overrides the main drive centers-- food and sexual impulses, terror and rage.

When moving from the Christian Church to Hebraic Torah observance, the first relationship that will give us the strength to overcome our fears and disappointments is the joy we have in Y'shua. YHWH knows **everything** about me and still loves me. How important our time with our Abba Father becomes if we become especially isolated because of our faith.

We pray this encouragement from Set Apart Ministries is helping to bring some joy to your life. Just knowing others are walking the same path can bring joy-- **there are others who understand!**

Bringing joy to others will also bring joy back to us. Ever see a clerk in the store having a bad day? Just try giving them a big smile and saying, "Having a bad day, I'll pray for you." Suddenly, their whole demeanor changes and

be." For those whose families have kept the traditional holidays of Christmas and Easter, there are a variety of responses. Some keep the holidays because they deeply believe this is the way to honor our Savior. Some keep them because our family ALWAYS keeps them; more of a 'cultural custom' as George Barna, Researcher with The Barna Group, has called it. It will be your own maturity as well as the maturity of your family and friends that determines how well or poorly this transition occurs.

- Deeply felt sentiments can be as difficult to face as deeply felt faith.

In some ways, the deep sentiment may even be harder. A person of faith may at least be able to support your desire to be faithful to God, even if they don't agree! A person who is more motivated by emotion may also be more motivated by fear bonds: the kind of attachment in relationships that is based on avoidance and fear of rejection rather than on promoting the growth and well being of each individual. It is helpful to understand what type of motivation your family and friends do have. You can often tell a lot by the type of statements they make. Do they mention worries about what people think or what God would desire? Do they affirm their love and care for you, even though they disagree; or do they brandish verbal intimidation to bring you back into the fold before something dire happens? Listen for FEAR as opposed to FAITH statements as you discern.

- Cognitive, that is verbal or academic, ideas which are understood by the left hemisphere of the brain need the integration of the right hemisphere's ability to size up non verbal factors in order to be most fully understood.

It is not necessary to understand all the neurobiology of the actual function in order to appreciate it. How we say things or actually show by how we live often has far greater teaching potential than what we say. In an earlier letter, we spoke of the issue of **reactivity** when dealing with difficulties. We may need to assess our own maturity to know our weak areas and vulnerabilities in order to find restoration. When we understand that people who did not have an opportunity to develop secure attachment bonds with their parents will generally have deficits in how well they can respond to conflictual issues in later life we can learn to be less reactive ourselves. We need to remember that more information is cycling between two people, directly from right brain to right brain via the left eyes, than is contained in the content. When we remain calm and confident in

they once again find joy. Our teleconference groups are also a wonderful opportunity to give and receive joy from other believers around the country and the world!

One of the times I feel great joy is when my "almost 4-year old" granddaughter comes running, giggling and squealing, "Nana!" I feel like I must be the best Nana around. And, what joy the prodigal son must have felt when his father came running up to him welcoming him home with a hug. Take time to discover what brings you joy and what brings your loved ones joy.

From the time a baby is born and is able to make eye contact, he is always looking for the joy in his mother's eyes. Joy will give us the stability to overcome the tough times of our lives--memories of fun times with parents or children, or how about a time of intense worship when you **knew** YHWH was near and felt loved and protected. Joy is what brings healthy bonding and sets the foundation for further growth and maturity in our lives.

True, eternal joy will come from our relationship with our Abba Father. When Shaul (Paul)

what we are presenting, we speak much more than the words we choose. We offer a person who may be having trouble remaining calm the opportunity for their physical brain to learn this new way to regulate emotions, even in the face of difficult information! In His wisdom, our Creator designed us so that any deficits from childhood CAN be overcome in the context of relationships that are affirming and real. (One readable resource: [The Developing Mind, by Daniel J. Siegel, M.D.](#))

- We also need to know how to be patient with ourselves as we learn this vast heritage of ours which our Jewish brothers and sisters were taught in the very form of their lives, just as we had learned the other lifestyles, calendars and holidays as part of the fabric of our lives.

As Sha'ul (Paul) said, he who is a true Jew is one inwardly; spiritually, not literal. Yet those who faithfully preserved the Torah DO have an advantage in knowing the Righteous Teachings of our Elohim. Torah observance for the grafted-in ones will come line upon line, precept upon precept. *Romans 3 & 11*

- His grace is for when we FALL short of His standard for us, not when we AIM short.

We cannot earn salvation by our obedience to His commandments; rather we demonstrate our love for Him through our obedience. The *moedim* were provided as a Torah picture for us to live and walk in to better understand our Savior and to be better prepared to recognize Him on His return. Will you be ready when our King arrives? May it be so!

8For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. Ephesians 2: 8-9 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1: 9 1 In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and peoples will stream to it. 2 Many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 3 He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. 4 Every man will sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken. 5 All the nations may walk in the name of their gods; we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

Micah 4: 1-5

Who We Are

was imprisoned and wrote the epistle to the Philippians, he had joy despite his circumstances. Phil. 1:4 *...always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all...*" Phil 1:18b *...whether in pretense or in truth, Messiah is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice, yes, and I will rejoice.*" Phil. 2:1 & 2 *"If therefore there is any encouragement in Messiah, if there is any consolation of life.....make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose."* Romans 14:17 *"...for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"* (Ruach HaKodesh).

If our joy is not in our Abba Father, it will be almost impossible to stand on our foundation of Torah. The Joy of the Lord is truly our strength! What can you do today to strengthen your joy in YHWH and what can you do to help strengthen the joy in others?

Quick Links...

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[First Year Torah](#)

[Observance Survey](#)

Founder of Set Apart Ministries and Personal

Life Coach: Barbara L. Klika, BS, MSW Barb has been a clinical social worker in practice since 1983 with an abiding interest in working with attachment/bonding and maturity issues for individuals, couples and groups. She has been a congregational leader for over 20 years in several areas, including Bible study and vocal and handbell choir direction. She is also a certified Bethel Bible Study teacher who has participated in serious study of the Word since 1993 through such organizations as Precepts Ministries and First Fruits of Zion. She has completed basic coaching training through MentorCoach, Inc. and will be continuing work toward an additional Masters degree in coaching. Barb has provided the clinical leadership in pursuing the Life Model group and individual teaching and processing emotional and maturity issues for the past 3 years. She offers her gifts of exhortation, discernment, intercession and prophecy to the Body of Messiah, both locally and in our extended community via telephone and the internet.

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Board Member and Personal Life Coach: Marilyn Guffey. Marilyn had been a congregational leader in her home church for over 20 years, providing Bible study, worship opportunities and lay counseling for women in transition for most of that time. She has completed her basic coaching training through MentorCoach, Inc. Marilyn has been the co leader in the provision of group and individual teaching and relationship development through the Life Model for the past 3 years. Marilyn is a serious student of the Word and has participated in and provided many Bible study opportunities, most recently with First Fruits of Zion and numerous additional Messianic Torah study materials. She thrives on offering her gifts of mercy, discernment, encouragement, intercession, and helps and has a strong desire to support the Body of Messiah in growing in maturity and faith, both locally and in our extended community via telephone and the internet.

Board Member (VP) and support person: Janell Schroeder, BBA works professionally as a computer reports specialist for a very large transportation company. She has been instrumental in the founding of Set Apart Ministries, functioning as a support person for people going through trauma recovery. She has attended numerous training experiences in this area and has participated in the Life Model program since it's beginning. Janell is a certified Bethel Bible Study teacher as well as a certified Precepts Bible Study teacher. She has also been in leadership in her previous congregation as a member of church council and in Adult and Child Education. She is currently working on her Bachelors Degree in Messianic Studies and plans to complete a Masters Degree through the Messianic Bible Institute Yeshiva. She brings her spiritual gifts of teaching and helps to our home Set Apart Ministries community.

Board Member, Secretary Treasurer: Robert Klika, BS Bob currently works professionally as a supervisor in the area of milk sanitation for the Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture. Bob has been a leader in previous congregations through service on church council as well as in men's ministries. He provides leadership in several areas of our home community, particularly in the areas of practical arrangements for gatherings, youth ministry and fun nights, and corporate prayer as well as keeping accounts and necessary organizational paper work. He completed his high school education in a Roman Catholic Seminary and has participated in Bible study since then through several studies, including the Bethel Bible Study series and Messianic Torah for the past 4 years through First Fruits of Zion and many additional supplemental materials. He offers his gifts of helps and administration in our home Set Apart Ministries community.

Teleconference Announcement

What do we do for the Holidays?

It's time once again to sign up for a teleconference in which people from around the country get together all at once by phone. It's fun and easy; a wonderful way to develop a network of support for those who feel geographically isolated in their Torah walk. We will plan to meet on: at: for a one hour discussion on Decision Making During the Traditional Christian Holidays for Those New to a Torah Walk ("New" can mean your first year or even several years in if one is still struggling with how to manage it all)

To register, please contact us by our email or telephone as provided. We will let you know the telephone number and code to enter in to our discussion. We will give you guidelines for the procedures for this kind of call. We also use some visual cues and other ideas to help people connect in this way. It is amazing how much community can develop without physical contact. We have found this to be the case during our coaching training, which was all by teleconference with people from around the country. Now we want to use this vehicle to encourage and support the Body of Messiah wherever they may be found during this "calling out" window of time.

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