

# Sisters for Yah

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## FOCUSING ON YAHWEH

What has been your main focus lately? Your job, marriage, or children? How about your hobbies and personal pursuits? Nothing is wrong with these things, however, they should always take a back-seat to Yahweh. The sad fact of the matter is that many people leave the faith because they lose focus on Yahweh.

It seems possible that we're actually at a disadvantage in our modern times. So many things take us away from what's really important. I have heard many elderly people reminisce about how things were when they were growing up. In my mind, it would seem that things were much harder for them without all our modern conveniences. However, that's not what I am hearing from them! Many



have said, "Times were much simpler back then. You worked hard, and you raised your family. You prayed and read your Bible. Your choices were limited. Then you woke up the next day and did the same thing you did the day before." There was

never any question what was important.

I've heard the younger generation express frustration, too, about the times we are living in. "There's too much stuff to do every day! And too many choices! I feel so overwhelmed. Why can't things be simpler?"

I can certainly understand the younger generation's perspective. Can the average person cope with the challenges of our modern age? What does Yahweh expect from His people? I believe He is most happy with us when we are satisfied in Him. Yes, we have to live in this world and take care of our responsibilities. But He wants us to feel peace, too. I've been the type of person to work hard all day, then come home too tired to clean the house. Guilt had plagued me about that for years. I wanted to be "Super Woman" and be able to do it all. Sisters, don't worry if you can't do every thing you need to do in one day! Spending time with Yahweh is the most important. If you have to choose between Yahweh and cleaning your house, please choose Yahweh! Your house will still be there to clean tomorrow. Don't let the cares of this world steal your peace!

### Inside this issue:

Focusing on Yahweh	1
Interesting trends	2
Relationship tips	3
Recipes	4

## Interesting trends

### More young people forced to live at home:

Not too long ago, it used to be that once people reached adulthood, they would get married, leave home, and set up their own households. Experts are alarmed that a shocking number of young people (40 percent!) cannot do this any more! Many come from middle class families and have a good college education. One father sadly lamented, "I sent my son to the best college I could. He graduated and has been applying for jobs everywhere! No one will hire him. He is losing hope. I feel so helpless. This type of thing never happened in my day. My son worked so hard in college. I don't want him reduced to accepting a job at some minimum wage place."

The real world can be a reality jolt, especially for this generation. Experts used to say that young people should pursue a college degree according to their interests. Now they are recommending that students look at what the world has a demand for career-wise, and try to ignore their personal preferences. Gone are the days when children can dream about what they want to be when they grow up and actually make it happen. This trend is not limited to the USA. It is happening all over the world, and very notably in Israel. Many young men and women in the Holy Land are living at home and delaying marriage until their 30's. Many Bible scholars find this interesting because traditionally Israelis have often married very young and had many children. Indeed, the practice in Genesis 2:24 shaped their lives from childhood. Parents prepared their children for the day they would get married and leave home. The idea that a man should leave his parents and cleave to his wife was simply a given. Times are certainly changing. It will be interesting to see how this will play out in the future.



### Food is not as healthy as it used to be!

Our modern farming practices are ruining our food. Some experts say that our produce has 1/8 the nutrition that it had just 40 years ago. The biggest reason this is the case is that modern farmers are not following Yahweh's instruction to let the land rest every seven years. Repeatedly farming the same ground can deplete nitrogen and reduce minerals in the food that our bodies depend on. Many people are mineral deficient and one scientist once said, "many illnesses can be traced to mineral deficiency."

So what can we do about this? The truth is, not much. But Yahweh does heal and protect His people despite what is happening to our food supply. However, we can take some responsibility by obeying Yahweh's clean food laws. The less bad stuff you put in your body, the better your chances of staying healthy.

# How to disagree without starting a war you can't win!

While it is natural to not always see eye to eye with everyone, you can minimize any possible damage to your relationships by learning to fight fair.

1. **Try to avoid putting people down with sarcasm.** In the heat of battle, it's tempting to deliver a verbal assault that you know would push their buttons. Saying things like, "You're such a big baby. Grow up!" or, "If you were a real man, you could handle this!" can ruin a person's self esteem and cause resentment that won't ever go away. Think before you destroy trust and intimacy.
2. **It's better to criticize behavior rather than character.** Behavior is temporary, which people can change, but character is who we are. It is much better to say, "Is there any way we can work together to keep the house clean?" rather than, "You're such a spoiled selfish slob!"
3. **Try to use "I" statements rather than "You" statements.** Here are some examples: "You're always late and it's driving me crazy." Try this instead, "I feel embarrassed when we arrive late to events." Here's another one: "You're always so moody. You're ruining our relationship!" Here's a better way: "I feel helpless when I can't predict your moods. I don't know how to approach you, and I feel like it's eroding the intimacy in our relationship."
4. **Avoid bringing up old history!** Always stick with the issue at hand. Don't resurrect old arguments; let them stay dead. Nothing good can come of bringing up hard feelings from decades ago. Women have particularly long memories. I've heard husbands say, "I can't believe she's been holding on to that for twenty years!" It's true we all have old grievances, but we need to ask Yahweh to completely heal us from any pain or bitterness that we might still feel from long ago. Moving forward is hard if you keep rehashing the past. As the old saying goes, "Let sleeping dogs lie."
5. **Never use threats.** It is very damaging to say, "If you keep leaving your socks on the floor, I'm packing up and moving out!" The basic message here is: you're a rotten person and I'm going to punish you. Ultimatums never work. It will only cause the other person to push back. Don't risk your relationship by making threats.
6. **Share your feelings, but don't attack with them.** It's perfectly acceptable to say, "I feel disrespected when you make jokes at my expense when we're out with friends." This is much better than saying, "I regret marrying you. You're such a jerk!"
7. **Keep your body language open and receptive.** Our body language can convey what we're feeling. Your spouse will not feel comfortable sharing with you if you display hostile or sarcastic behavior such as rolling your eyes, folding your arms, or balling your fists. Instead, try to be relaxed (even if you are not feeling such) and make warm eye contact and nod when your spouse says something to show you're listening.
8. **Most of all, involve Yahweh in all your relationships!** You may even consider praying for guidance before you decide to engage in any discussions or arguments.



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## Overnight Oatmeal for a Crowd

Got guests arriving? Try this for a hot and hearty bowl of healthy oatmeal:

In a large bowl, combine 8 cups water, 2 cups old fashioned oats, 1/3 cup dried cranberries, 1/3 cup dried apricots (diced), and 1/4 t. salt. Let sit overnight. In the morning, just pour into a large saucepan and heat. Provide milk and sweetener and allow your guests to help themselves.



## Fuss-free Ravioli Lasagna Casserole

This is as easy as it gets! This serves about 8. Kids love it!



- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/2 of a red onion
- 1 jar marinara sauce (24 ounces)
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 cups ricotta
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1/4 cup parmesan, shredded or grated
- 1 t. garlic powder
- 24 ounce bag frozen cheese ravioli
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella
- 4 t. dried parsley (or 1/4 fresh sprig)
- Tossed salad, to serve (optional)
- Garlic bread, to serve (optional)

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Cook and drain the ground beef, red onion, and garlic cloves. Mix in the marinara sauce. In a bowl, mix the ricotta with the garlic powder, egg, and parmesan. Grease a large casserole pan. Spread a little marinara on the bottom. Place the ravioli in a single layer. Cover with the ricotta mixture. Top with the rest of the marinara. Then sprinkle the mozzarella on top. Finish by sprinkling the parsley over the mozzarella. Heat in oven until hot and bubbly and heated through, about 35 to 40 minutes. Make sure the middle is hot, as raw egg is used. Serve with garlic bread and tossed salad if desired.