

Sisters for Yah

Reaping what we sow

The Bible says that time and chance happens to us all (Eccl. 9:11). But in many areas of our lives, we can certainly make choices to have a favorable outcome. For instance, if we choose a healthy diet, we are more likely to avoid the big diseases that affect large numbers of the population. This does not mean that we will escape every little cold virus that happens to be floating around.

The same goes with our everyday relationships. If we have a habit of complaining, we certainly cannot expect our family members to always be in a good mood. Misery loves company. It is amazing what a positive effect that a cheerful countenance has on the people around us. Try it sometime! Smile at people more often. Most will smile right back at you.



"We're getting back to first principles ... which means we're going to have some."

All of us have made poor decisions in the past, and more than likely you are still reaping some of the consequences that bad choices can bring. The good news is that no situation is hopeless. Yahweh is the most powerful Hope-giver! He can transform even the most difficult situations.

But not all bad things that happen to us are the result of making bad choices. There are numerous reasons we might be allowed to suffer. One might be to test our faith. Abraham was tested in one of the most difficult ways, being asked to sacrifice his son. Another reason we might fall into trials is to grow in compassion. People with perfect lives are often selfish and can't relate to suffering people. Yet, another reason we suffer is because we are called to suffer with Messiah.

Yet still, we are told to choose life. That means there is the option of also choosing the way that leads to death, which none of us wants. Make the right choice!

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Playtime tips for toddlers

A child's brain grows fastest in the first two years. Here are some top tips to help spark growth:

1. Use toys that hold a child's attention—touch, sight, and pleasant noises are the best. Little ones are born builders, which is why blocks always tops the list of educational toys. Toddlers love to see how high they can pile blocks, then have fun knocking them down and starting over.
2. You don't need a lot of money to buy fancy toys to entertain toddlers. They love simple cheap plastic food storage containers with lids. Even measuring cup sets are fun.
3. Remember you are the best "toy" for your children. Play memories will last a lifetime.
4. Make your own "toys" with household items. Toilet paper and paper towel rolls are fun. Also, plastic plates and cups can be used in made-up games. Be creative.
5. Toddlers love balls! Just make sure they are not too small to fit in their mouths. But make sure they are not too big, otherwise the toddler will have trouble gripping it.
6. Little ones are natural artists. Provide plenty of paper and crayons.
7. Be safe. Avoid toys with dangling strings longer than 8 inches.
8. Make sure toys have no sharp edges or small parts they can choke on.
9. Avoid letting toddlers play with un-inflated or popped balloons. They pose a choking hazard.
10. Throw out plastic wrapping immediately when unpacking toys.
11. Tell older children to avoid using loud toys around the baby. They may damage baby's sensitive hearing.



Be a better helpmate!

Ladies, one of the most powerful things you can do for your husband is pray for him! Miracles can happen when you make prayer a priority. Many husbands have said that their lives were transformed by the deep prayers of their wives. One wife had been praying for seven years that her husband would accept Yahweh and he eventually did!

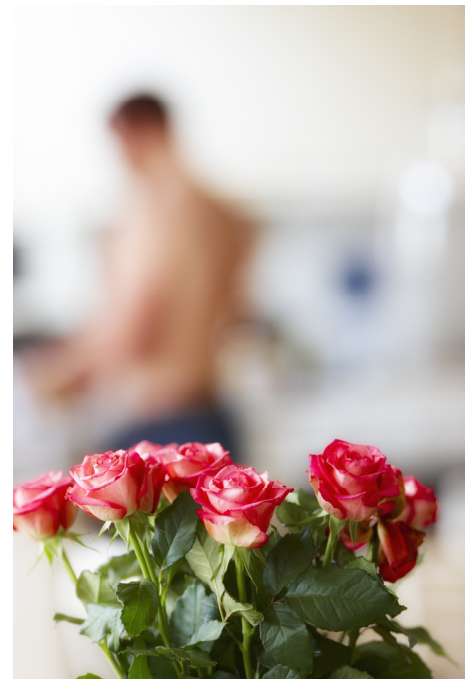
Be respectful of your husband. Respect is one of a man's greatest needs. Even the Bible says so! It tells husbands to love their wives, but tells wives to fear (respect) their husbands.

If you see your husband carrying any burdens, whether physically, spiritually, emotionally, or any others, see if you can somehow relieve any of his burdens.

Let your love overlook his faults if possible. So he may leave his socks on the floor. Is that really worth a big fight? Never make a mountain out of a molehill.

Never expect another person to be just like you. We are all different. None of us are robots. Expect differences and embrace them! The world would be boring if we were all the same, don't you think?

Resist the urge to be a "Negative Nelly." Try to find the positive in all situations. Choose to be the voice of encouragement!



Clever ideas



1. Messy junk drawers? Use an empty egg carton. It makes the perfect desk drawer organizer!
2. Do you suspect a leaky toilet? Find out for sure. Place a few drops food coloring in the tank. Don't flush. Keep an eye on the bowl for about 10 minutes. If the color changes, this means the tank has been slowly leaking. Call the plumber!

3. Get better gas mileage. The next time you fill up at the gas station, choose the lowest setting of the grooves in the pump handle. Squeezing the trigger to the highest groove saves time, but it can allow air into the tank.
4. Easy fix for stinky garbage disposal: Pour vinegar into ice cube trays and freeze. Then run 6 cubes through the disposal. The vinegar will kill odor-causing bacteria and the ice sharpens the blades.
5. Make tea candles last longer by placing them in the freezer before burning.
6. Ripen avocados in half the time by placing them in a container of uncooked rice. The dense grains will concentrate ethylene gas and promote ripening. This will also work for mangos, persimmons, bananas, papayas, and other slow-ripening fruit.
7. Make your own hot pad. Fill a clean tube sock with uncooked rice. Tie a knot at the top and microwave about a minute. It will stay warm for a half hour.
8. Sharpen your blender blades by adding a half cup of uncooked rice. Pulse for 2 minutes.

Lessons from Noah

- Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.
- Stay physically fit. Someone might ask you to do something really big when you are 600 years old.
- Ignore the critics—just do what you have to do.
- Don't build anything on low ground.
- Travel in pairs, for safety's sake.
- Two heads are better than one.
- Being fast might not be better for you. While there were cheetahs on board the ark, there were also snails.
- If you can't run and hide, just float!
- Take care of your animals as if they were the last ones on earth.
- Don't forget that we are all in the same boat.
- Remember the ark was built by amateurs, and the Titanic was built by professionals.
- Don't miss the boat.
- No matter how bleak it looks, there's always a rainbow on the other side!

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Vermont Hot Tea

Weather-wise, February can be one of the most unforgiving months. Most of us are ready for spring, but try this east coast tea to warm you up in the meantime!

3 cups apple juice or cider
3 bags orange and spice tea
2 T. maple syrup.

Bring the juice to a boil. Steep the tea bags for 5 minutes. Then press the bags between 2 spoons to extract as much flavor as possible. Discard the bags. Sweeten with the maple syrup and enjoy! Makes about 3 to 4 servings. This tea is great with biscuits or scones.



Comforting Sweet Potato Soup



2 cups thinly sliced celery
1 cup chopped onion
4 T. butter
2 pounds sweet potatoes,
peeled and cubed
6 cups chicken broth
2 bay leaves
1 t. dried basil
Salt, to taste, optional.



Melt the butter in a large stock pot. Add the veggies and sauté until softened. Add rest of ingredients and simmer gently about 15 minutes. Remove and discard the bay leaves. Serve hot with crusty rolls, biscuits, or buttered bread