

Sisters for Yah

The Sound of Silence

(By Sister Debbie Reed)

The snow fell silently last night while we were sleeping. This morning I awake to a hushed white landscape, tranquil in the absence of sound. The exquisite beauty, along with the cold, was enough to take one's breath away—a piece of perfection from Yahweh's palette. Then, the phone rang, the coffeepot buzzed, and the radio's talking heads jabbered for the news. The spell was broken as another busy day began.



I remember a time when I would come home from school, throw down my books and head for my private oasis about a mile's walk from the housing unit at Fort Riley, Kansas. There, hidden in a valley, was a small lake surrounded by woods and brimming

with wildlife. I was in awe as I watched a baby turtle peek out from under the watercress growing in a spring-fed pool or two squirrels playing tag around a tree, bushy tails flying. Sometimes I would spot a wild duck glide in for a landing amongst the cattails studding the banks of the water or a deer quietly creeping in for a drink. In all the months that I sneaked off to visit my refuge, I never saw or heard another person there. It was a magical place; a place to ponder and plan — a quiet place away from the noisy, hurried tumult that constitutes our “civilized” lives.

In a similar manner, Yahshua's forty-day sojourn in the desert was a time to get away from the world and commune with the Father. Just before He was to be sacrificed for the sins of mankind, Yahshua went alone to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray in solitude. The quiet isolation of these environments allowed Him to meditate on a level that was not possible in the babel and activity of human society.

Is the high-powered influx of sounds and information in our modern lifestyle really good for us? Research by scientists from the University of San Diego indicates that “information overload” may have a detrimental effect on our brains.

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They contend that through e-mail, the internet, radio, television, and other media, people are deluged with approximately 100,500 words a day. We are so busy processing information from all directions we are losing the tendency to think and feel deeply. They further claim that since much of what we are exposed to is superficial, not only are we sacrificing depth and feeling but we are also becoming cut off and disconnected from other people in the process.

Is there a correlation between instant transmission of endless data, our harried lives and the huge upsurge in mental illnesses? Is our desire for more worldly knowledge and faster communication really improving our lives, or are we distancing ourselves from our Creator and each other? Are we becoming like rats in a cage, “running to and fro,” as Scriptures warn us will happen in the last days? Is the prince of the power of the air controlling and confounding our lives?

While we can't turn back the clock to a time when life was simpler — when globalization was not a part of our language and television, computers and cell phones were unheard of — there are things we can do to find serenity and calm amidst the storm raging around us.

If you can't bring yourself to get rid of the television, as some have done, limit your viewing to only special times and quality programs. Better yet, read a good book — even better, read the Scriptures. Get outside in the fresh air and walk, taking in the soothing balm of the natural world,



even if only the sky is visible from your surrounding. Turn off your cell phone during part of the day. If it's important, the caller will leave a message. Limit your intake of the daily news. Once you have digested the headlines, all the rest is repetition, filler, or fluff. Leave the virtual world of the computer for awhile to reconnect with neighbors, friends, and relatives. We tend to forget that these are the people who make our lives joyful and worthwhile and they won't always be around. Keep the Sabbath by abstaining from work, or even talking about work to be done or problems to be solved. The Seventh Day

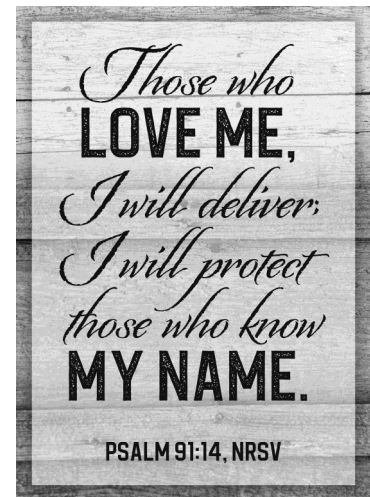
was given to us for rest from our trials and worries. Take time to pray each day. Go to a room, shut the door on everything and talk to the Father.

Peace I leave with you: My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid, John 14:22.

The Father Draws us

In John 6:35, we read this: *And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."*

Throughout Yahshua's ministry, He never seemed intimidated by the crowds. Instead, He looked into the multitudes and focused on those whom His Father was sending to Him. Because of sin, no one naturally seeks Yahweh. In fact, many people either ignore Him or hide from Him! However, the Father does draw those He is calling in this life! And Yahweh does reveal things to those with whom He is working. (See Matthew 16:17.) If you feel a strong desire to know Yahweh, this is an indication that He is indeed calling you. As you read the Scriptures and pray, trust that Yah will reveal more about Himself.



The Seventh Year Sabbatical

(By Sister Debbie Reed)

Speak to the Israelites and say to them, "When you enter the land I am going to give you, the land itself must observe a Sabbath to Yahweh. For six years sow your fields, and for six years prune your vineyards and gather their crops. But in the seventh year the land is to have a Sabbath of rest, a Sabbath to Yahweh. Do not sow your fields or vineyards," Leviticus 25:2-4.

The number seven has always been Yahweh's signature and a special sign for us. Seven represents completeness and perfection and appears many times in Yahweh's Creation and in His Word. There are seven days in a week, seven colors in a rainbow; seven notes on the musical scale; the earth has seven continents, and every seven years each cell in the human body has completely been replaced. In Scripture, the number 7 is mentioned 735 times. There were seven days of creation; seven each of the clean animals brought into Noah's ark; seven stems on the tabernacle's lampstand; seven things Yahweh hates, and seven assemblies addressed in the Book of Revelation.



In addition to observing the Seventh Day Sabbath each week, there are also seven yearly *Moedim*, or Appointed Times, that we are commanded to observe: Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles the Eighth Day, and every seven years we are to observe a Sabbatical where we are to let the land rest.

Although the Biblical new year begins in the spring month of Abib, the Sabbatical year always begins in the autumn on the Day of Atonement and it began this year on October 6th. As much as I look forward to spring and working in my garden, the seventh year is a welcomed relief from the routine of planting, weeding, harvesting, and preserving. The soil also needs an intermission and recuperation to stay productive. So, enjoy the peace, tranquility and respite as we enter into Yahweh's Sabbatical year.

Whoever is Least?

In Matthew 11:11, we read, *Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Immerser; but he who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he.*

John the Immerser's role was to decrease in prominence while Yahshua's ministry increased. (See John 3:30.) John allowed his disciples to leave him in order to follow Yahshua. John's ministry was abbreviated, owing to being wrongfully imprisoned and executed on the whim of a cruel monarch. Yet Yahshua made an interesting statement that no one who had come before John would be any greater in the Kingdom. Think of those who had gone before! Moses parted the Red Sea; Elijah raised the dead and brought down fire from heaven, and Isaiah had written an important book of Scripture. Incredibly, Yahshua said that WE have the opportunity to do even greater things. So our mandate is the same as John's: We must lift up Yahshua while denying ourselves. Oh that we would do so, with the same fervor as John the Immerser!



MATTHEW 11:11, NRSV

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Pineapple Pistachio Pudding

- 1 small box pistachio pudding mix
- 8 ounce can of crushed pineapple, with juice
- 1 cup kosher miniature marshmallows
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 4 ounces frozen whipped topping, thawed

Mix it all in a bowl. Place in fridge and chill for about two hours. Recipe can easily be doubled if you are taking to a potluck for a large crowd.



Chickpea Noodle Soup

- 2 T. cooking oil
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 2 stalks celery, finely sliced
- 4 small carrots, diced
- 1/4 t. salt (or more, to taste)
- 1/2 t. dried turmeric
- 1/2 t. curry powder
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 can chickpeas, drained
- 2 cups dry pasta, any shape
- 2 t. dry parsley
- 8 cups vegetable or chicken broth
- Black pepper, to taste.



In a large stockpot, put the oil and veggies and cook about 5 minutes, till veggies start to soften. Add all the rest of the ingredients and simmer gently about 10 minutes until noodles are soft. Remove and discard bay leaf.

Inflammation-fighting tea

Simmer two cups water, 1/2 t. turmeric, 1/2 t. chopped fresh ginger, and 1/2 t. cinnamon for 10 minutes. Add 1 T. honey and serve with a lemon wedge.

