

Sisters for Yah

Casting Your Cares

As you've no doubt discovered, becoming a believer does not make your problems go away. But it does give you an Advocate to Whom you can take every concern. Think about it: The early believers whom Peter addressed were facing serious persecution. They did not know whom they could trust. At any time, a friend, a neighbor, or even a family member could betray them, resulting in suffering or even death. Most of us in the western world have never been through this kind of persecution. While we may lose friends and family members, we still have the religious freedom to practice our faith (so far). This may change in the future, of course, as our world becomes more secular. Indeed, many have already lost their jobs because their employers refused to allow them time off from work to keep the true Sabbath and Holy Days.

Peter had walked with the risen Messiah. He had personally experienced the love that Yahshua had for His followers. Peter knew, also, that Yahweh was in control, capable of handling every trial. Casting our cares upon Him is a choice. It means consciously handing over our anxiety to Yahweh, and allowing Yahshua to carry the weight of our problems. At times, this is the most difficult part of

trusting Yahweh. Taught that self-reliance is good and praiseworthy, some have difficulty trusting their problems to the care of another. Some people even enjoy worrying. They feel that worrying means that they are actively involved. But worry can have a downside. It can derail our faith, and cause serious health problems. If we truly want to be free, we must choose to cast our cares into the Hands of our Father.

Peter, of course, does not make a distinction between little cares and big cares. Yahweh does not differentiate between small problems we should handle on our own and big problems we should give to Him. He asks to turn them ALL over to Him. One of our greatest errors is to assume we can deal with something on our own, only to discover that we really can't. Yahweh sees us as children, burdened by loads that surpass our strength. He stands prepared to take your load and carry it for you. Will you let Him?



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CONFESSION IS GOOD FOR US!

Most of us cringe when we read James 5:16, which tells us: *Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*



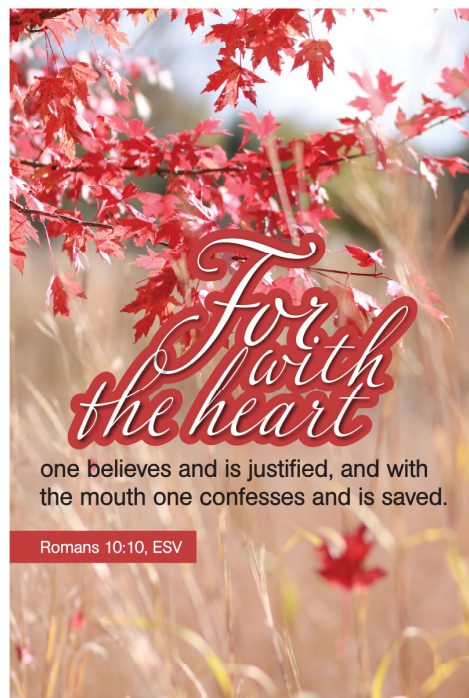
None of us want to talk about our personal shortcomings, and admit that we struggle with sin. It's awkward, uncomfortable, and embarrassing. Yet, confession can indeed unburden us, and make our relationship with Yahweh stronger. Unconfessed sin is an obstacle between us and Yahweh. When we sin against others, it's not just enough to reconcile with Yahweh, but we must also go to our fellow believers, especially if our sin has directly hurt those in our fellowship. There is a tremendous freedom that comes when we acknowledge and repent of our sins.

If confession does not come out of repentance, then is it merely admission, and not true confession. Confession is not a sign of weakness, as many might think. Confession is actually evidence of your refusal to allow sin to remain in your life. Significantly, James linked confession with prayer. It's true that your prayers will be hindered if you hold on to unconfessed sin. If we want to have a powerful prayer life, we must regularly go to Yahweh and confess our sins, no matter how small they may appear to be. Only when there are no obstacles separating us from Yahweh will our prayers be effective. We can't let pride discourage us from admitting the sinfulness of our hearts. A desire to please Yahweh will compel us to confess our sins, and rid ourselves of its oppressive burden.

BLESSED BECAUSE WE BELIEVE

I love reading Luke 1:45, which says, *"Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from Yahweh."*

In Yahweh's Kingdom, believing is a prerequisite to receiving. Mary (Miriam) was given a seemingly impossible assignment. Imagine being told that you would give birth to the Messiah. Everything was in place for Yahweh to act. Mary just had to believe Him. Once she believed, it was done! It takes an undivided heart to believe under such circumstances and a pure heart to see Elohim. (See Matthew 5:8 and Hebrews 12:14.) This has always been Yahweh's way with His people. When Mary agreed, she could not see all that had been arranged and assembled in the courts of heaven. She could not see the legions of angels prepared to protect her and her baby. She was also unaware of the future and all that she and her child would face. All she knew was that Yahweh had a plan for her and that was enough! So she responded: *Behold! The maidservant of Yahweh. Let it be according to Your Word.*



Where is your treasure?

What you value most is your treasure. Where people spend their time and money is their treasure. Whatever dominates a conversation often shows what a person's treasure is. And, moreover, where our treasure is, there our hearts will be also (Luke 12:34). Most believers are quick to claim that Yahweh is their first priority. Yet, often our actions reveal that our treasure is not Yahweh, but the things of this world. Many find it very difficult to discuss their relationship with Yahweh, but can chatter easily about their adventures and hobbies.

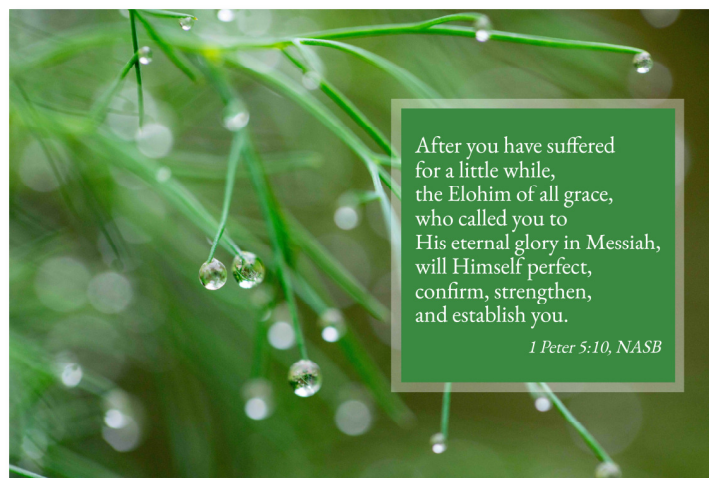
There is nothing wrong with adventures and hobbies, but Yahweh must always come first. I remember one man who admitted he had the hardest time waking up to spend time with Yahweh in prayer and Bible study every morning before work, but he would willingly get up at dawn to go hiking with his buddy, even setting his alarm clock for 5 AM. Others find it hard to tithe to Yahweh, but then readily spend all their money on expensive clothing. A sister in the faith and I experienced this at the Feast of Tabernacles one year while talking to another lady. The topic of conversation went to tithing. This particular lady said, "I wish I could tithe, but I just don't have the money." Immediately after that, she showed us an expensive leather purse that she had recently purchased! I, and the other lady, were flabbergasted. I was also embarrassed that a baptized believer could be so blind to her situation. I don't claim to be perfect, but obviously, something was wrong with the situation.

It would do all of us well to examine where our treasure truly is. Reflect on what you most enjoy thinking about and discussing. And where do you spend your available time and money? Ask Yahweh to reveal areas that you need to work on.

PAINFUL REMINDERS

Yahweh has many ways to deter us from sin. One is to provide reminders for us to never take disobedience to Him lightly. Before his conversion, Paul assumed that he was righteous before Elohim. But, in reality, Paul was so disoriented that he arrested and watched Believers be executed, thinking he was pleasing Yahweh! How blind he was. Paul's heart was so hardened that he watched Stephen brutally murdered for his faith.

There are two occurrences of stoning mentioned in the New Testament—Stephen's and Paul's. Was it coincidence that Yahweh allowed Paul to be stoned as Stephen had been? Perhaps Yahweh left Paul with a reminder of what his arrogance had led him to do. Yahweh forgave Paul of his sins, but his pride had blinded Paul to Yahweh, and maybe pride could do it again. Paul was given a "thorn in the flesh" from which he never recovered. While we may not know for sure what his particular "thorn" was, we do know this: Paul's thorn in the flesh was a constant reminder to him of his past. Yahweh deals with us uniquely. He draws upon our experiences to teach us about Himself. And yes, sometimes He may provide stark reminders of the ugliness and consequences of sin.



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Breakfast Quiche

8 ounces turkey sausage, chopped
1 9-inch pie crust, unbaked
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
4 large eggs
1 pint heavy whipping cream
1/8 to 1/4 t. ground nutmeg

Brown the sausages in a skillet. Place in the pie shell. Sprinkle with cheese. In a bowl, beat the eggs, and mix in the cream and nutmeg. Pour over the cheese. Bake at 350° until cooked through, about 55 to 60 minutes. Slice into 8 wedges. Great with a side of fruit for breakfast.



Lemon Quick Bread

2 large eggs, room temperature
2/3 cup sugar
1/2 cup cooking oil
1/3 cup milk
1 T. grated lemon zest (the outermost yellow peel)
3 T. lemon juice
1 cup flour
1 t. baking powder
1/4 t. salt
Powdered sugar (confectioners sugar), for dusting over the top.



1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Line a greased 8-inch round pan with parchment paper.
3. Beat all the ingredients together and pour into pan.
4. Bake about 30 to 35 minute, until center is set.
5. Cool for 15 minutes. Slice into 8 wedges.
6. Dust with powdered sugar.

