

Issue 39 - Spring 2006

HA'SHEM



Global warning



inside:

The Church that lost it's head
The beginning of birth pangs

Editorial

We're seeing the natural environment being systematically destroyed through causes of 'global warming'. Ordinary people – young and old - across the world are becoming more alarmed as they see the planet reacting to what humankind has been doing to the environment. It's scary! At the same time foundations of justice, uprightness, morality and decency are also crumbling. As scientists are waking up governments and people of influence about 'global warming' so men and women of faith must issue a 'global warning' to the world about the perils that will engulf humanity as we race toward Messiah's coming.

In this edition of Ha'Shem we're exploring, against a biblical backdrop, the significance of current world events that are shaking foundations and setting the stage for a new world order – the coming Kingdom. Through various contributions we offer a biblical perspective of these dangerous times, and give disciples of Yahshua assurance, hope and a motivation to work with fervour as the days of His coming draws ever closer. As believers we should be busy sounding an alarm not being alarmed by what we see and hear. What you glean from this issue share with others and thereby increasing the volume of the alarm.

Alcot

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Create-a-Caption Competition

Due to the lack of response to this competition in issue 38, we regret to say there were no winners.

HA'SHEM 39:

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HA'SHEM is Hebrew for the 'THE NAME' (Yahweh)

DIVINE NAMES AND TITLES

Throughout this magazine you will see the names YAHWEH and YAHSHUA. Yahweh is the original name for the heavenly Father and Yahshua is the original name of His Son, our Saviour. Also the term ELOHIM (or its shortened form El) may be used. This literally means 'Mighty One' and is usually translated 'God' in the King James Version of the Bible.

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KINGDOM NOW

Faith Hewitt



Are you fed up with all the bad news you hear every day? Fed up because things seem only to be getting worse? You can't handle the present, and the future holds little or no hope? Is your past - filled with remorse, guilt, anger, pain - spitting out a repressed venom of hatred, fear, loneliness, bitterness onto a world system which has failed you? Is life a "living hell!" — but you're resigned to it?

And what about those so-called religious folk who bug you with their smiles and words of hope? They speak of contentment NOW! of joy NOW! of assurance NOW! Does this positive outlook on life stand as a stark mockery to your own morbid, depressed self? Does the very presence of such people in your world feel like an unwelcome irritant? How can they be so hopeful, when life is so hopeless? What makes them so different? How can it be possible that they are living in the same world as you are? Somehow they're not really a part of that world. Why do their experiences seem so far removed from your own? The answer is really quite simple. Believers in Yahshua, Yahweh's only begotten Son, are people who have changed from one kingdom to another.

At Hand

Are you aware of the existence of another Kingdom in our world?

Most people are not. Yet its gates have been wide open for nearly 2,000 years. The knowledge of the Kingdom was first brought to light by the simple words of an itinerant preacher — the son of a carpenter. “The Kingdom of Yahweh is at hand,” He declared to the crowds. To the many adherents of the son of the ‘carpenter’, this Kingdom represented all that the people had long hoped for; the overthrow of bondage and oppression, the purging of injustice, the obliteration of cruelty and greed, the end of sickness and poverty and the answer to their social, economic, and emotional needs. But the Kingdom which Yahshua declared to be at hand was not a visible, physical kingdom, but the reign of Yahweh in the hearts and lives of men, women and children. Most could not see it.

The Kingdom is still ‘at hand’ and it still speaks of social, physical and emotional prosperity. It offers all these things and much more. If the bewildered man could grasp this, his personal world would be radically changed. If politicians, statesmen, governments, rulers, understood its implications, there would be no world problems. However - as in Yahshua’s day - men’s eyes are blinded to the Kingdom.

Seeing the Kingdom!

One night a man who was very important in Israel, who knew a lot about religious matters, went to see Yahshua because He needed some answers to the questions that flooded his heart and mind. When Nicodemus stepped into Yahshua’s presence, Yahshua spoke truth to him - truth which brought Nicodemus face to face with Yahweh’s Kingdom (read John 3), “I tell you the truth, no-one can see the kingdom of [Yahweh] unless he is born again”

declared Yahshua (Jn. 3:3). “How can a man be born when he is old?” quizzed Nicodemus (v4).

Yahshua made it clear to him that the ‘birth’ of which He spoke, was not the entering into your mother’s womb a second time to be born, but a spiritual experience which transpires in the heart of anyone who dares to believe in the only begotten Son of Yahweh. This experience we often call salvation, or being “born again”. It happens when I recognise that, by Yahweh’s standards, I am not good. I have several offences filed against me, of which I am guilty and for which I deserve punishment. With that knowledge and realisation I acknowledge my own undone, critical condition, and in desperation cry out to Yahweh for mercy and forgiveness. I want to change. I want to conduct my life in a way that is pleasing to HIM. By faith, I believe and accept that Yahweh will wipe my file of offences clean, giving me a new start - a new birth. This experience, which the Bible calls repentance, opens my eyes to the Kingdom of Yahweh.

Entering the Kingdom

Having seen the Kingdom, two further experiences of birth are necessary to guarantee entry - birth by water, and birth by the Spirit. “I tell you the truth, no-one can enter the Kingdom of [Yahweh] unless he is born of water and the Spirit” (v5).

The apostle Peter, one of the first men in the New Covenant to enter the Kingdom of Yahweh, one day stood up before thousands of people to preach the good news of salvation. “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of [Yahshua the Messiah] for the forgiveness of your sins.

And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). The baptism Peter referred to, was that “birth by water” or immersion, for the complete washing away of sin. Later on, the apostle Paul referred to this baptism as a “baptism into death”.

Baptism is often compared to a burial - a funeral service for my old life with its old habits and practices, its past failures and its guilt and sin. Death ends the old and gives birth to the new. The Spirit that injected life into Yahshua’s physically dead body, so that He came alive again after being dead for 3 days, is the same Spirit who injects new life into the baptised believer, raising him from the watery grave as a new creation, a new “species”. The further infilling of the Holy Spirit empowers him to truly live as heirs of Yahweh and co-heirs with [Yahshua] (Rom. 8:15-17) — a glorious inheritance. From then on, the children of the Kingdom should live, walk, and be led by the indwelling Spirit of Yahweh.

The Kingdom Now

Yahshua left a strict command with His close followers, before leaving the earth to go back to His Father Yahweh in heaven, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned” (Mk. 16:15-16). The good news that must be declared is this - Yahweh’s Kingdom is near and can be entered NOW!

The Kingdom of Yahweh is life and peace. It is freedom from bondage and oppression. None in the Kingdom of Yahweh needs live a life of resignation and drudgery. None needs to live or fear a life bound by circumstances, past, present or future. None needs

to be captive to the prison house of mind or emotions, or victim to the torment of soul or spirit, for the King of the Kingdom, Yahshua the Messiah, the Anointed One of Yahweh is still (that means NOW!) anointed. He is chosen, commissioned, empowered, to save souls, to heal the broken-hearted, to release captives, to give recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those that are bruised and to proclaim the acceptable year of Yahweh's favour (Lk. 4:18-19). The King of the Kingdom is powerful. By accepting His rule and authority in our lives we are empowered to live above the troubles and traumas of this world. Subjects of the Kingdom rest in the knowledge that Yahweh has everything in control, that nothing will happen to them unless it is allowed by Yahweh, that nothing will or can separate them from the love of Yahweh. (Read more of your inheritance in Romans 8.)

To those who have accepted truth: believed in Yahshua and turned from their sins in repentance, washed away their sin in the watery grave of baptism, received the infilling and indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, the Kingdom of Yahweh is a living reality NOW! It is an alternative way of life NOW! It offers shelter and protection from the evils in this world NOW! It is Yahweh's answer not just for the world's problems, but for all our personal problems, NOW!

To those who have not accepted truth: isn't it time YOU changed kingdoms?



A thief in the night

Dorcas Walker



When I look at my two children growing up, I often say, "Where has the time gone?" It doesn't seem so long ago since I was a teenager, full of energy, and life was in front of me ready to be explored.

I was a determined teenager, wanting to do well at school and always open for a challenge. I attended our local congregation and looked forward to the youth meetings, which, looking back, were an integral part of my life growing up. Even though I was a faithful attendee I lacked my own experience of my Creator. I was a 'good' young person and 'toed the line' so to speak, but something was lacking!

When I was about 14 years old something happened which changed my whole life, and it was the result of watching a film. Some of you may remember the 'Mark 4' films, such as 'A Thief In The Night' & 'Sound of Distant Thunder'.

Our church was given an invitation to attend a viewing of 'A Thief in the Night'. The film tells the story of a sceptical young woman, Patty Myers who lived for herself, until her husband, and nearly all her friends, disappeared in the prophetic rapture everyone had warned her about. Everyone she had once known and loved had suddenly gone! From what I can remember the minister of one church had also been left behind, due to the fact that he had watered down the Bible message.

After watching and reflecting on this film, I was propelled into taking action about the luke-warmness of my commitment to Yahshua. I definitely didn't want to be left behind! From the age of 7½ I had grown up in the church. I had heard salvation's message on a number of occasions and knew that if the rapture had occurred at that particular time (after watching the film) I would have been left behind! For me the message that was conveyed by the movie was to wake up and not make the mistake of leaving Yahweh out of my everyday life. I asked myself the question, "Does Yahweh play a major part in my life?"

For me the whole experience was gripping: since that viewing I have heard, over the years, many negative remarks about the film. Some thought 'scare tactics' were being used to frighten young and old people to come to faith! For me, I am not too sure, but I can certainly say it made me take action: a long hard look at my life and do something about my apathy.

Recently, I watched a very up-to-date film called 'Left Behind', with my daughter and friends. It tells the same story - for me the impact was still the same. The girls asked questions, such as: Why? When? Where?

We are definitely living in the last days. As we watch news on our televisions of the famines and hurricanes which are taking place, it all points towards Yahshua's soon return.

SALT OF THE EARTH

Åsmund Knutson



... the righteousness of a few may keep a multitude from rotting and may cleanse out the impurities of a nation.

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its power, with what is it then to be salted? It is no longer of any use. It may be thrown out and be trodden under foot of men. You are the light of the world. A city situated on a mountain cannot be hidden” (Matt.5:13-14). Translated from Norwegian Bible to English by Åsmund Knutson.

Yahshua speaks to His disciples using two metaphors, salt and light. We regard these words to be relevant to us today as Yahshua’s disciples. I want us to take a fresh look at salt.

In Biblical times salt was used for preserving food, like meat and fish, from rotting. It was also used to rinse the kosher slaughtered food from the last remnant of blood, and was thus a cleansing agent. In order to get the full effect of the osmotic power of the salt, it had to be thoroughly kneaded and mixed into the food, to be present wherever it was needed.

When Abraham prayed for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to be spared by Yahweh, he made Yahweh promise that if there were as few as ten righteous souls there He would not destroy the cities (Gen.18:32). And when Elijah complained to Yahweh that he was the only one left in Israel that still stood with him, Yahweh told him that He had a remnant of 7000 that had not bent their knees to Baal (1 Kgs. 19:18 and Rom.11:4).

We see from these two incidences that the righteousness of a few may keep a multitude from rotting and may cleanse out the impurities of a nation. Your righteousness is thus more than a private thing between you and Yahweh. It is your silent and maybe invisible contribution to the multitudes around you. But it will not be of much use if you play the hermit on the hilltop. You must be where Yahweh needs you, and be in close contact with those amongst whom He has placed you.

Yet you must be intensely aware of your own attitude and motivation. Remember how Yahshua warned us about self deception, hypocritical pretensions and self righteousness (e.g. Matt. 23:13-28)? We all know that this is one of the main themes that Yahshua took up with the Pharisees. This kind of ‘righteousness’ is poisonous and destructive. In order to keep the power of the salt, we must keep near to Yahshua, who is our righteousness, and we must receive His righteousness through the Holy Spirit.

Thousands of years ago, as the great glaciers melted after the ice age, sediments were deposited into the oceans. Furthest from land floated the tiny clay minerals. As these sank to the bottom they formed a structure very much like the card houses that some of us used to build on the table when

When the righteousness of a people and of a nation slowly leaks out, people may not notice. But the catastrophe is inevitable...

we were children. Through its electrochemical potential, the salt in the sea caused these structures to form and to keep their stability throughout the following ages.

As the weight of the glaciers disappeared, the landmasses rose, and the clay deposits became the most fertile areas for agriculture here in Scandinavia. These were the districts where farms and cities were built. But under our feet a slow but irreversible process took place. The salt of the clays was dissolved in the fresh water slowly leaking through the deposits, and these became our dangerous 'quick clays', land masses that could suddenly, when triggered by the slightest changes like an excavation or loading, change from being solid ground to become liquid. I have encountered these disasters in my work as a geotechnical engineer. In a few hours farms and buildings float away in a thick sea of mud. People and cattle drown, and flood waves arise along the coasts. Nothing can stop the disaster, and all is permanently changed.

This invisible process, so unobserved and unexpected, and yet so certain and predictable in its progress over thousands of years, results in sudden catastrophe. Whoever was aware that the salt leaked out, and who would have understood the consequences? The amount of salt seems so small in



comparison to the sediments of clay that it stabilises. And yet its effect seems like magic.

Yahshua saw this happening in our world – the world of people. He saw the salt of the earth leaking away. When the righteousness of a

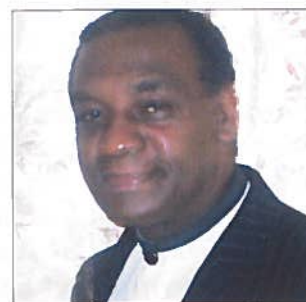
people and of a nation slowly leaks out, people may not notice. But the catastrophe is inevitable, unless we stop the process in time. Yahshua expects His disciples to be the salt of the earth; as His Church this is our purpose and work!

What we believe

- That there is one true and holy God, Yahweh Elohim who eternally exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Gen. 1:1,26,27; 3:22; Ps. 90:2; Matt. 28:19
- That the Bible is the inspired and infallible word of Yahweh. 2 Tim. 3:16
- That sin came into the world as a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience, and consequently 'all have sinned' and are in need of salvation. Gen. 2:17; 3:1-24; Rom. 5:12; 3:23
- That Yahweh sent his Son to pay the full penalty for sin and to rescue humankind from eternal punishment. John 1:29; 3:16; Rom. 5:6-8; 2 Cor. 5:21
- That the personal name of the God of Israel, our Heavenly Father, is Yahweh and the name of his Son, our Saviour, is Yahshua. Ex. 3:14-15; Matt. 1:21; John 5:43
- That Yahshua, the Son of Yahweh, was born of a virgin; lived a sinless life; died a cruel death; was raised to life and ascended to heaven where he reigns with his Father. Matt. 1:18-23; 16:16; Heb. 4:14-15; Matt. 28:1-9; Acts 1:9-22
- That those who repent of their sin and believe on Yahshua are made heirs with him of eternal life. Rom. 8:15-17
- That after repentance and faith one must be baptised (immersed in water), in the name of Yahshua, for the remission of sins. Acts 2:38
- That believers should be baptised into the Holy Spirit, which is the promise of the Father. Acts 2:28-39
- In the demonstration of the gifts of the Holy Spirit as outlined in 1 Cor. 12:1-11, and that these gifts play an essential part in the development of Yahshua's Congregation today.
- That the Church is the Body of Messiah and that Yahweh imparts gifts of ministry and service to individuals for the growth and health of the Body. Eph. 4:11-14; Rom. 12:4-8
- That Yahshua will return to the earth for a millennial reign and will finally establish an eternal heavenly kingdom with those who have accepted his salvation. Acts 1:9-12; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Heb. 1:8; Rev. 21:1-7
- That the celebrations of Leviticus 23 were continued in the New Covenant era and are to be observed today – this includes the 7th day Sabbath.
- That the Church of the New Covenant dispensation has not replaced Israel, but that together they are a part of Yahweh's great plan and purpose, comprising The Body of Messiah.
- In the restoring of the land of Israel to its former glory and productivity; in the regathering of the 12 Tribes of Israel to their inheritance; that all this will take place in the Last Days. Jer. 3:18; Lk. 21:24

THE BEGINNING OF BIRTH PANGS

Lynval Henry



World Events

S. R. Shearer, a writer of the Antipas Papers states, "Do not underestimate people's ability to adapt to worsening conditions." It would be a blind soul indeed who is totally unaware of the worsening conditions in our world today. In almost every area of life things seem to be coming apart. There are tribal wars, international conflicts and the threat of nuclear wars; there are famines that decimate millions in poverty stricken areas; earthquakes with their possible after-effects of tidal waves.

Diseases such as Aids, are wiping out whole villages in Africa, and have become the scourge of the western countries. There are volcanic eruptions and wildfires that destroy thousands of acres of forests, not to mention the homes of hundreds of people; global warming and the resultant floods in unusual places; hurricanes of unprecedented magnitude and frequency that leave thousands homeless and a trail of shattered lives. To add to all this there is terrorism and suicide bombers and spiralling crime. These are just some of the occurrences that should make us all stop and think, "What is happening to our world?" The catastrophe of December 2004 affecting Indonesia, Thailand, India and other parts of Asia that came about from an earthquake-producing Tsunami was a major

The word of Yahshua that "All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matt. 24:8 KJV) foretells that we may expect more events and catastrophes of similar and worsening nature, growing to unprecedented levels of destruction.

jolt to our world, because of the sheer enormity of the number of lives and amount of property that was lost. Even as I write these words the gulf states of the USA are presently reeling from the effects of hurricane Katrina that is being called “the worse hurricane in living memory” because of its toll on human lives and the sheer immensity of the destruction of property both private and public. In one newscast of world events, I am hearing about one jolting earthquake, two approaching typhoons and the aftermath of a monstrous hurricane. Terms such as “beyond human imagination” and “one of the worse natural disasters in our nations history” crops up as shocked journalists report what is unfolding before their very eyes. The word of Yahshua that “All these are the beginning of sorrows” (Matt. 24:8 KJV) foretells that we may expect more events and catastrophes of similar and worsening nature, growing to unprecedented levels of destruction.

The Handwriting is on the Wall

Some may say that these things have always been around, but in the last few years there has been a definite rise in the frequency and intensity of so-called natural disasters. The observation of these things is not limited only to the

religious minded, but perceptive people of this world see them, too. Their explanations, however, tend to be more scientifically based, being put down simply to cause and effect. From the perspective of one who believes in the unerring accuracy of the written Scriptures, the handwriting is on the wall.

On that fateful night, during Belshazzar’s feast (Dan. 5) when the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote on the wall, what was written, was clear enough for all to see, but the interpretation of the writing, or what the message really meant, needed someone with spiritual insight, who though living in a Babylonian system was not of it. So today, even though the events of our times can be explained by those of learning, the Elohim of history foretold it all long ago and there needs to be some ‘Daniels’ who will interpret things from the Divine perspective.

Something came to my mind a few months ago as I read Yahshua’s prophecy in Matthew 24. I was arrested by His words in verse 33. “...when you see all these things...” I realised that if all the things that He had prophesied were to be seen, known and realised in any generation then that generation would have to have a means of communication that would make them aware of the various happenings around

the world. In other words when Yahshua said, “And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars...” etc. and then goes on to list many catastrophic events, it could only be possible for all these things to be known as they occur, in our day, because of our advanced means of communication. We can, on any given day, learn what is happening in every part of our world because of our satellites, televisions, internet and other means of communication. Unlike generations before us, we can see the entirety of His words unfolding in live and living colour, and we don’t have to guess what is transpiring on the other side of the globe - we know, thus showing us that His prophecy is for our time.

Time to Awake

It is not enough though to be aware of what is happening in our world. The unfolding of events should help to galvanise us to meaningful activity. We are called to be more than armchair spectators, but rather participants in the end-time purpose of Yahweh.

“And that, knowing the time, that now **it is** high time to awake out of sleep: for now **is** our salvation nearer than when we believed” (Rom. 13:11 KJV emphasis is mine). In the midst of all that is happening in our world, we can be like Jonah, who had gone down to the lowest part of the ship and was fast asleep. So we can close our eyes, hoping to ride out the present storm of unfolding world events, while there is a desperate need as men’s hearts fail them for fear (Lk. 21:26). It is high time to wake up, to be aware, and to offer to perishing souls the way of escape. “...he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son” (Prov. 10:5).

The story related in Acts 20:7-12 about Eutychus has a spiritual message for us all today. It is





a story of a young man who falls asleep at midnight amidst the gathered saints. His sleep leads to death, and as his name Eutychus means 'fortunate' he was fortunately revived by the embrace of Saul.

We are approaching the midnight of this world, when the word of Yahweh has to take precedence in our lives. It is going to prove to be the most valuable asset that we have. Before this journey is over, some of us may lose material possessions, whether through disaster or tribulation. We may lose brothers, sisters or friends, as Yahshua prophesied, but the abiding word of Yahweh will be our stay as we endure to the end.

Lawlessness abounds. This does

not refer to the anarchy caused by those who break the law of the land, but to the anarchy caused by those who no longer hold the law of Yahweh as important, and are therefore inclined to live lawless lives. Because of this lawlessness, "...the love of most will grow cold" (Matt. 24:12). Sleep will overcome some as it did Eutychus. I wonder if the fact that Eutychus was sitting in the window contributed to him falling asleep, then falling to his death. In the window seat he could so easily get distracted with what was going on outside, while trying to concentrate on what Saul was saying on the inside. There are so many distractions in our world that if we don't fix our minds on Yahshua and focus our thoughts on what is

really important, we will, through our fluctuating interest, fall asleep - a sleep which could prove fatal. In contrast there needs to be those whose lamps of living testimony are burning in the upper room - the upper room that speaks not only of where the Assembly began in the Spirit but where it must continue in the word. As the times become more precarious, so these persons will become more watchful and continue to be more established in the truth; far from being overcome by sleep they are watching, working, even in the midnight hour of this world. Providentially Eutychus was revived. Some may not find this revival and may fall away into a lasting apostasy.

The Message of Hope

“For this world in its present form is passing away” (1 Cor. 7:31). There is good news amidst all the bad news we hear from day to day. Yahweh has a plan to bring to this world an era of lasting peace, a time when wars and terrorism will cease, when famines will be unknown. This will come about after the coming of Yahshua, whom Yahweh plans to install as the King of Kings, and Ruler of Rulers. Under His watch the way of peace will be learned, and nations will be brought forcibly to submit to His rule, and experience the long withheld blessing of the kingdom of heaven. Yahshua taught us to pray “Thy kingdom come... on earth as it

is in heaven”. This is going to be fulfilled literally. Yahweh’s kingdom, His rule and authority will indeed be coming to planet earth through the One whom He has appointed. Isaiah, the prophet, foresaw this time and foretold, in Chapter 11 of his book, of One upon whom the Spirit of Yahweh, of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might and knowledge will rest. Such a One will judge this world in righteousness, bringing equity to the poor, and a deserved punishment to the wicked. Isaiah then describes a time of such peace that even the disposition of wild animals will be changed to one of peaceful co-existence.

Yes, this world system is passing away, and right now everything that man has built, whether materially or institutionally,

is going to be shaken. It is all weighed in the balance and found wanting. “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship [Elohim] acceptably with reverence and awe” (Heb. 12:28).

Our work at this time is to declare this message of hope to a despairing world: that through faith in Yahshua we can become partakers of His kingdom; that amidst the darkness that is enveloping our world there is a beacon of hope; that though conditions will rapidly deteriorate all around us, at the critical moment there is going to be an intervention from above.

Let us live our lives as those who are expecting the soon return of their Master and let Him find faith in the earth at His return.

Created to be somebody: A voice for Generation X

Micah Lee Green



MY STORY

I’ve always felt like I have a special purpose to fulfil, one that will be renowned. For probably as long as I’ve felt like this I’ve always hoped that I was ‘special’ and that I would do something of significance. As a young child I was fascinated with heroes and the idea of being a hero. Performing seemingly impossible acts and being loved was something my heart desired. As I neared my teenage years this view became a little polluted by cynicism and I let go of the innocence of wanting to be a hero because people considered it to be childish, which I regret as Yahweh had obviously placed this in my heart. Many of my teenage years were spent reading comics such as X-Man, X-Men 2099, Spiderman 2099, Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles, Batman and others. I’d draw inspiration from them but I would also enter into escapism if I’m honest with

myself. I was also influenced by a computer game called ‘Streetfighter 2’ and some of the stories that were written about the game characters were absorbing. In those days I really believed that anything was possible.

I’m reminiscing about my teenage years because they were extremely significant in shaping what I am today. I’m still coming to terms with some of the things that Yahweh was allowing me to experience in the years before I yielded to Yahshua. A part of this process is remembering where I constructed my ideas about heroes.

In some ways I expect I’d be seen as a bit of a nerd. I liked comic books, I liked Star Trek Next Generation (I’m still a ‘Trekkie’ in many ways) and I did well at school. I was also

quite shy and didn't really open up to people as I kept a lot of myself locked away (although on the flip side I was fully able to take care of myself when it came to fist-fighting). This began to change when I started to develop a taste for music. I listened to Michael Jackson up to about the age of 10/11 but after that I never really had a deep and personal relationship with music until I reached 16 years of age and I found that I had real love for rap music. My favourite group was the Wu Tang Clan and my favourite rapper was a guy called Method Man who was from the same group. I knew all their songs off by heart and I could rap one rapper's verse in the style of another member of the group. The more I listened to them, as well as many other rappers on the Tim Westwood Show (a Radio One DJ's show), I began to sense that I could rap myself if I put my mind to it. I told my friend that I was going to start to rap, but in doing so, it would make sense, it would be 'conscious'. I could feel a 'voice' growing inside me.

Now, nine years later, I'm still passionate about rapping. Instead of being 'conscious', I want to go a step further and rap in the prophetic power of the Holy Spirit. All the qualities that I saw in the comic book heroes and some of the abilities are available in Yahshua and more besides. For example, the character X-Man was a lonely young mutant* with vast amounts of power. He had come from a world that was dark (just like how we expect the world to be during the great tribulation) and was raised for war. He was created through genetic science, designed and constructed to destroy another mutant, named Apocalypse, but not built to last. He was built for a specific purpose and I like this idea. His power raged unchecked and was a danger to himself and for some reason that idea sits well with me. It encourages me to go full out and not hold back in my life with Yahshua. When I was contemplating whether to rap or not, I was always reminded of a line from a song by Wu Tang and it went like this: "I gotta get up and be somebody!" I remember this line because it did and still does, inspire me.

To those who feel they can even remotely relate to some of the above, here are a few things to think about. The first is that you are a created being made to worship the Creator with righteous fear, and the power of life in you comes from Yahweh Himself. The power in you is not to be worshipped, so don't become infatuated with it. Don't let Satan twist your perception of your power. The power is given to serve other people by glorifying Yahweh and His



Son; it is not to glorify yourself. Don't become proud because Yahweh resists the proud. Walk in the Spirit because your life depends on it. Keep talking to Yahweh all the time through prayer, writing, drawing, thinking, dancing or any other way you communicate with Him and Yahshua. When you walk in the Holy Spirit you walk in the love of the Father and cannot live a life of sin. Always remember that you have a merciful Father who loves you and a Messiah who intercedes for you and values you even if you don't value yourself. They want the best for you, so trust them. Find stable men and women of Yahweh whom you can speak to and who will release your personal childhood dreams within the sphere of the Spirit.

No man is an island and therefore we need people to support and guide us, since Yahweh has a reason for placing desires within us from such a young age. He wants to purify them so we can be more like Him. We can only find ourselves by denying ourselves and we have to be rugged like the cross that Yahshua bore and be selfless like Him. Then He can trust us enough to release His desire in us knowing we are mature enough to manage this awesome heavenly power He has placed in earthen vessels. By being nobody we become somebody because Yahshua becomes our fingerprint. Our identity is found in Him and He is found in us.

*Mutant= From the Marvel comic book, the term 'mutant' is a genetically gifted individual with special powers and abilities. These powers are a result of genetic mutation (change).

LAODICEA - THE CHURCH THAT LOST IT'S HEAD

Richard Willetts

"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:19).

The above scripture is one with which many of us are familiar. I recall a beautiful and famous 19th Century picture depicting Yahshua outside the door of a house knocking and waiting. For many this image represents our Saviour's quest for the lost soul; he who needs to open up his life to Yahshua and the Holy Spirit for the first time and so be saved and enjoy sweet fellowship with Him.

Like many others I have led people to Yahshua using this passage.

Whilst a legitimate use of this scripture, this is not really the heart of what Yahshua is saying - for He is not speaking to one who has yet to meet Him, far from it! Yahshua's comments are addressed to an established church, made up of people who have already responded to the gospel and now consider themselves true servants of Yahweh. We know from the Scriptures that Yahshua is the head of the Church, and yet in this picture we see Him on the outside trying to get in. This raises an important question in my mind - how can a church lose her head in such a way? What is her condition and what is the remedy? More importantly, is there anything we



"... you do not realise that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked" Rev. 3:17



“You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing’.”

can learn from the mistakes this church seems to have made.

The Sickness of Laodicea

“You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing’. But you do not realise that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked” (Rev. 3:17).

The city of Laodicea is situated in modern day Turkey and called Parmukkale today. It is only 11 miles from Colosse, where a 1st Century church was also based and to whom Paul addressed one of the New Testament letters. At this time, Laodicea had become a more prominent city in the area than Colosse. It was widely known for its banking establishments, textile industry and its medical school that produced a famous eye salve, and was thus the wealthiest city in the region of Phrygia. Its major weakness was a lack of water supply. What is interesting is that all these characteristics seem to be reflected in the letter - this church seemed to be relying not on Yahweh but on the wealth and

prominence of individuals within it who had been benefiting from Laodicea’s booming economy. Yahshua’s diagnosis of the church was totally contrary to how it saw itself. He counselled the church to “...buy from me gold refined in the fire, so that you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so that you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so that you can see” (Rev. 3:18).

Yahshua accused this church of being “...lukewarm - neither hot nor cold...” and further warned, “...I am about to spit you out of my mouth” (Rev. 3:16).

This analogy of being neither hot nor cold may well refer to the ‘hot’ springs of nearby Heirapolis which were considered to have medicinal properties. The heart of the matter is that the church at Laodicea was providing neither healing for the spiritually sick nor refreshment for the spiritually weary - in short it had deviated from its true purpose. It was a church that had ceased to be outward-looking - instead of blessing its surrounding

community, it had allowed itself to be driven and motivated by the values of the age. It focussed more on feeding itself than on feeding the hungry. It had ceased to be a mission church galvanised to reach the unsaved and needy people on its doorstep - its focus was, instead, on maintaining what it was and had.

I am reminded of the words of the prophet Jeremiah: “They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. ‘Peace, peace,’ they say, when there is no peace.” “Since my people are crushed, I am crushed; I mourn, and horror grips me. Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people?” (Jer. 8:11, 21-22).

Yahshua came to seek and save what was lost, to heal the sick, to feed the hungry, to bind up the broken-hearted and to free those in spiritual and emotional torment, but the Laodicean church was no longer following in His footsteps. They were too busy enjoying their own lives and congratulating

themselves on past achievements.

In failing the people of Laodicea, they were, in effect, failing and rejecting Yahshua "...whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me" (Matt. 25:45).

Take the Medicine

The good news for Laodicea was that Yahshua was not consigning them to the dustbin of history - on the contrary He turned up in person, knocking on their door, giving them an opportunity, perhaps for the last time, to once again put Him and His priorities at the top of their agenda. Part of that process of realignment was to see their condition as Yahshua saw it. Like the unfruitful fig tree that Yahshua cursed, they were nothing but leaves - they were failing on both the great commission (to go into all the world and preach the gospel) and the great commandment (to love one another i.e. meet the need) - they were wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. They needed to repent, to change their ways and to get back on track.

Yahshua loved these folk, He didn't want them to fail, that's why He was there, "Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline" (Rev. 3:19).

His words to Laodicea end in encouragement - "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne..." (Rev. 3:21). In serving Yahshua first and putting His priorities above our own, we will ultimately rule and reign with Him - the path to true greatness and victory is always the path of humility and service.

Learning from Mistakes

I recently heard a modern-day parable that spoke profoundly to me. In Sweden part of the



You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

preparation for Christmas is to keep young goslings in captivity and fatten them up for Christmas by constantly feeding them. As the days go by, these goslings turn into geese of a very fat and immobile variety. Around Autumn time, their wild and free cousins take to the air in order to escape to warmer climes. As these

wild geese fly overhead, they have a profound effect on the captive birds on the ground - for a while deep calls to deep and these fat birds, suddenly getting a sense of their true nature and calling, begin to run around and flap violently, supposing that they too ought to be joining their wild brothers in flight. Unfortunately they have become

too unfit to join them. This frantic activity continues until the wild geese have finally flown over and one by one the captive geese stop running around and revert once more to their incessant pecking of tasty food from off the floor. By Christmas they are all gone - tasty birds on the festival table! The birds on the ground represent many in the Church today. We come to church to be fed and blessed, and fed and blessed we are, but we are missing something vital - there is so much more to the Christian life than this.

Many of us pray for revival in our own lives, in the life of the Church, and in the wider community, and so we should, yet the answer is not in the praying alone, it is in the doing of the work that Yahweh has called us to do - we must pray first and then do. Yahweh spoke to me many years ago and said, "If you want to find Yahweh, you will find Him in His work." What is the work of Yahweh, then, that will bring His blessing on our own lives and the wider community? Listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter - when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?" (Isa. 58:6-7).

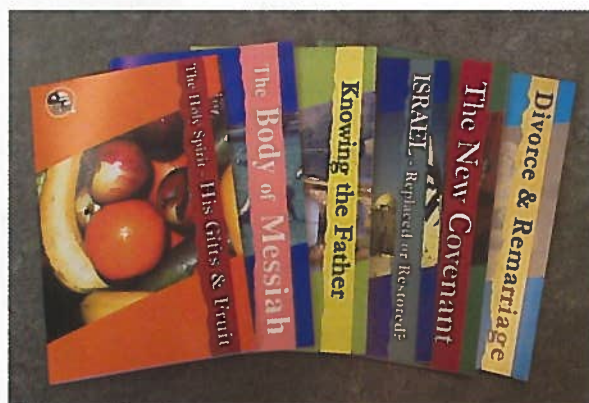
Surely all this is Yahweh's work - getting out and meeting the needs of people around us and sharing the good news of Yahshua with a lost and hurting world. Look what happens when we do: "Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of [Yahweh] will

be your rearguard. Then you will call, and [Yahweh] will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: 'Here am I'. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. [Yahweh] will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings" (Isa. 58: 8-12).

If we truly want to live a victorious life, if we truly wish to soar in the heights, then we need to get involved with the work of Yahweh both in the church and in the community - it was the deeds or lack of them that created the spiritual poverty of the Laodicean Church. Let's get Yahshua back as the head of the Church and let's make His priorities our priorities and let's see Yahweh move in His awesome power.



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Are you a believer in whom is no guile?

Mark Vlad



Even before meeting Nathaniel (Jn. 1:47) Yahshua recognized something in him that was unique amongst the Israelites. Unique in today's modern culture as well. Here was a person in whom there was no guile. Guile is defined by Vines expository dictionary as "being without deceit, nothing false".

In a culture where those who had were trying to get more and would appear to be anything to get it, Yahshua was refreshed to find someone who was free of deceit and falsity.

I wonder if Yahshua, seeing you or me approaching, would He be able to say the same thing of us? Were He to look into our hearts (He does) would He find it free of deceit or falsity? Of course most of us are already thinking that we are free of deceit or falsity. After all, we have been believers for a number of years and have walked with Yahshua through many things. Let's not forget, the disciples spent night and day with the Saviour for three years and after all that they heard and observed they still disassociated from Him and could not be found guileless.

In our day and age another word for being guileless is authenticity - genuine, being the real thing. Let's talk about that for a moment. We attend services regularly, we're faithful to the truths we know, and we spend time in the Word and prayer. So how can one not be genuine?

Of paramount importance to Yahweh is a love for the truth (2 Thess. 2:10-12). Those who will

abide in His tabernacle are those who "...speaketh the truth in his heart" (Ps.15:2 KJV). It often becomes much easier to speak the truth to our brothers and sisters than it does to our own hearts! However, speaking the truth in our hearts is the bulwark of authenticity and the foundation of all relationships.

Being genuine, or authentic, goes right to the heart of relationships. First is our relationship with Yahweh through Yahshua. The second, our relationship with our brothers and sisters, has great impact on the first. The problem for many is that they have felt that they are in a right relationship with Yahweh because of their adherence to truth or the teachings of the apostles. The problem is that if I have problems in my relationship with my brother or sister then there is a problem in my relationship with Yahweh. 1 John 4:20 states that if my relationship with those among whom I fellowship is not good then my relationship with Yahweh is in need of repair. From Yahweh's vantage point the two relationships are inseparable.

So how about it? How is your relationship with Yahweh? Good? Then praise Yahweh! However, the watershed for determining the quality of my relationship with Yahweh is the present quality of my relationship with my brothers and sisters. This determination can be very deceiving, since we all tend to see our relationships in the light of our doctrines and adherence to them. While this is important it is not the determining factor in being in a right relationship with Yahweh. How does one determine the quality of our relationships among the saints? Do you judge someone because they don't worship like you or observe Sabbath like you think it should

be observed? Are there brothers or sisters with whom you have had disagreements who are seldom invited to your home for a fellowship meal? How you react determines not only your relationship with that brother or sister but reveals the flaws in your relationship with Yahweh.

When Cain murdered his brother Abel, Yahweh inquired of Cain about his brother's well being. It wasn't just because they were brothers; it was about relationship and the responsibility within the framework of relationship. Yahweh held Cain accountable for three things. The most obvious was the murder of his brother. Secondly, he was held accountable for his lack of responsibility in that relationship and, lastly, he was held accountable for his lack of authenticity in his relationships. Had Cain been more authentic in his relationship with Yahweh and his brother his life would have turned out tremendously different.

When Yahweh said "...speaketh the truth in his

heart" (Ps. 15:2 KJV) he was talking about being genuine with yourself, with Yahweh and with one another. A true, genuine relationship is understood in light of 1 Corinthians 13:1-8. Take time to review this passage. You have probably read it a hundred times or more. However, read it through using the filter of authenticity. This passage of scripture represents Yahweh's love toward us. It is also the standard by which we can measure our love and genuineness toward our fellow believers for whom Messiah died.

If Yahshua saw you walking toward Him would he say of you, "Look, a true believer in whom there is nothing but genuineness?" In fact, you are walking towards Him! He is looking into your heart! So if you want to be in a right relationship with Yahweh be sure that you are in a right relationship with your brothers and sisters. There is no limit to what Yahweh's people can accomplish when they are authentic with Yahweh, with themselves, and with each other.

MISSION

THE HEARTBEAT OF YAHSHUA

Beverly Nembhard



"...I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matt. 25:40). As I was considering these words of Yahshua to His disciples, I realised that all believers have a responsibility in words and deeds towards their fellowmen. I believe that 'Mission' is the heart-beat of Yahshua; the essence of Christianity. Mission is about sacrifice, about giving; it is about embarking on a journey which necessitates men and women coming out of their comfort zone!

For many years I have been challenged to get involved in this area both locally and internationally. While serving in the West Midlands, it was

impressed on my heart "to serve the community" in which I lived. I began by visiting neighbours and friends and offering support in shopping, caring for the sick and generally showing love to those around me. This was the beginning of a journey that has taken me overseas.

The world population is increasing daily; in the West we are very blessed to have food to eat and clothes to wear. We have a fairly good education system with schools that are well equipped with the latest technology; hospitals equipped to save lives; the majority of the population can get free medical care, whilst in many countries people die because of the lack of these things!

Recently our nation was moved by appalling images of starving people waiting to die; we saw people eating rotten flesh to survive. It is said, "The famine in Niger is growing worse each day with an estimated 2.5 to 3.6 million people, 800,000 of whom are children, in need of critical food-aid. ...malnutrition is claiming the lives of children under five years of age at an alarming rate." According to staff members from World Vision, "up to 10 percent of children could die from hunger." (Cindy Lee, Christian Today Correspondent).

As I watch these alarming images on our TV screens a sense of helplessness sweeps over me. What can I do? How

can I help? Mission is one means of bringing hope to the destitute, the despised and the hungry. Mission is more than preaching and praying, it is Yahshua's love being demonstrated in communities of people around the world.

Recently I spent four months in Kenya, where I interacted with indigenous people who desire to know Yahshua in a deep and personal way. I had the opportunity of sharing in their difficulties and hardships. I shared their way of life; lived in their villages and ate their food. I embraced children suffering with AIDS and other illnesses.

For me Mission is about demonstrating the characteristics of Yahshua: showing love, compassion, kindness and mercy towards fellow human beings, especially those who are underprivileged, deprived; victims of poverty, bribery and injustice. Mission is about extending a hand to help. It is getting involved in teaching needy people and equipping them to serve their own.

Mission is more than giving my finances: it is about commitment. While the apostle Paul was at Troas he received a



vision of a man from Macedonia pleading with him to "come over ... and help us" (Acts 16:9). He immediately obeyed and went. Mission involves movement. And because Paul was committed to the task he was able to go through hardship

and suffering for the sake of the gospel. Today we have to be willing to give ourselves to the task of Mission – whatever it takes.



On the walls of history hang many portraits of great men and women who have served their generation on the mission field. William Carey and Mother Teresa who both served in India; J Hudson Taylor – China; Mary Slessor – Africa, to name just a few! They were committed; they have done their work. Now in this era when men's hearts are failing because of fear; where disaster after disaster sends shock waves through our societies;

where famines and earthquakes are claiming lives daily - what will we do? We can come to the aid of our fellow human beings locally, nationally and internationally – it begins with being with them.

'Mission' is not only about working overseas – there are needy people in our own lands. Your world is where you are. There are souls to be saved; the naked to be clothed; the hungry to be fed; the unloved to be loved, and the destitute that need a home. I have seen people on the streets of England and Kenya alike,

people with the same needs.

When Yahshua saw the multitudes, "...He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the [Master] of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest" (Matt. 9:36-38 KJV).

Charles Finney said, "[Yahshua] saw multitudes before Him, mostly in great ignorance of [Yahweh] and salvation; and His deeply compassionate heart was moved..., [Yahshua] committed His soul to the great labour of saving men; for this He laboured and toiled; for this His heart agonized; for this His life was ready to be offered; therefore He could do no less than require the same of His people" (Prayer and Labor for the Gathering of the Great Harvest - Charles Finney - edited 07/15/2004).

I encourage you, followers of Yahshua, to "go and make disciples of all people" – this is the heart beat of Yahshua, let's make it our own, also.

Mission is more than preaching and praying, it is Yahshua's love being demonstrated in communities of people around the world.

STAY AT YOUR POST

John Thornton



The word 'occupy' means to 'take possession of', 'reside in', 'take up or fill', 'keep busy or engaged'. The Greek word used here means literally 'to busy oneself'.

In a world where the only certainty is that of change, it behoves those who have been called by the Master to pay greater attention to the things of Yahweh; His election, His plan and purpose, the works He has commissioned, the signs of the times, and to "work out their Salvation with fear and trembling". There is a shift in the spiritual environment in which we find ourselves, and with the thoughts of Yahshua ringing in our ears that "the love of many will grow cold", it is essential that we, who have not grown weary in

well doing, stay at our post!

It is not the time to stand on the side lines offering applause or criticism for what we see or hear or for what is done by those engaging with the commission, but it is time to surrender our hearts and offer our service that collectively we might see His will done on earth, as it is in heaven.

In the parable of the ten pounds that Yahshua told, the command issued still has potency for every believer to, "Occupy till I come" (Lk. 19:11-27 KJV).

The word 'occupy' means to

'take possession of', 'reside in', 'take up or fill', 'keep busy or engaged'. The Greek word used here means literally 'to busy oneself'. The apostles had dreamt of sitting on Yahshua's left and right in His Kingdom. They had argued about who would be greatest. Yahshua soon replaced their aspiring thoughts with serious ones! He called them to be men of business.

Sermons have been preached around this subject, and many applications made, but one thing is sure, no spiritual business can be accomplished without the work of the Holy Spirit, who equips us and empowers us for service in the Kingdom. Acts 1:8 states, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses..." Those who are called into the Master's service are always furnished with the necessary gifts to enable them to do His will. From those He gives power to, He expects service.

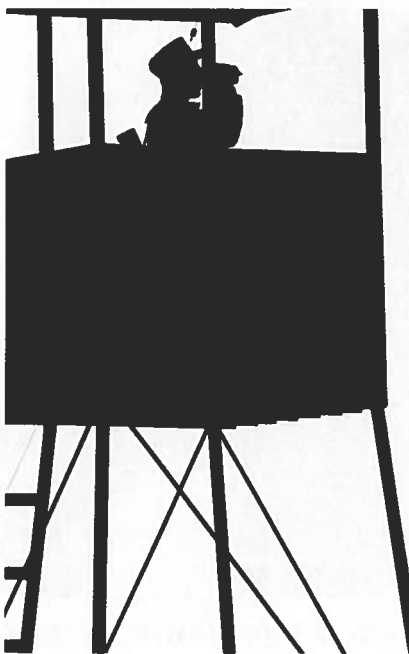
It seems relatively easy to become concerned about the lifestyle, actions and service of others in the Kingdom, when beneath our noses there is little to show for our own endeavours. We must continue to 'mind our business' till He comes. We must stop being so concerned about the business of someone else that we neglect our own.

From the parable we know that the servants are called to the nobleman to show what use they had made of the gift they had received; what service they had done and what they had gained. The first two servants received commendation for their faithfulness and service, and were each rewarded in proportion to the increase made. However, the same could not be said of the third servant "...here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a

napkin". He thought he could pass the test because he returned what had been given. Sadly, there was no commendation offered to the one who ran no risks.

This attitude reflects the carelessness of those who have gifts but never intend or endeavour to use them. To such people it doesn't seem to matter whether the interests of Yahshua's Kingdom sink or swim. It doesn't seem to matter whether the Church goes backwards or forwards. This whole dialogue between the Master and the third servant did no more than indicate the servant's indifference towards the interests of the Master.

In an age where many voices are vying for our attention, we must maintain an open ear to the voice of our Master Yahshua. As believers, we must be able to differentiate between what His will is for our lives, and the craftiness of the enemy who whispers that every opportunity and experience serves for the common good, when all the time our hearts are becoming pre-occupied with everything, other than the interests of the Master. The enemy has always been a crafty manipulator and never has it been truer than



today, when we see many being drawn away by their weaknesses and the need to 'experience life' and to 'live life to the full'.

Of course, temptations have always been present in the Church. We get an indication of this through the writings of the apostle John when he speaks to the church in Thyatira, "But that which ye have already hold fast till I come" (Rev. 2:25 KJV), and to the church at Sardis, "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent" (Rev. 3:3 KJV).

There is a difference between 'holding' and 'holding fast'. To 'hold fast' suggests a more determined disposition. During what times might believers need to 'hold fast'? During times of danger, insecurity, fear, when the fabric of our beliefs is being challenged and threatened by external influences, during times of severe trial and tribulation. The word 'tribulation', means 'a state of suffering, or distress, great affliction'. It takes a particular inner quality to hold fast when everything around us seems to be crumbling. Watchman Nee said, "To hold onto the plough while wiping our tears, that is Christianity."

Where does our tribulation come from? I would suggest it comes from those in the world and those in the Church. It is true that there are many evil people in our world. Equally, there are many good people who do extremely good things, yet, are not believers in the Creator. Their very lifestyle and success may promote envy, but they ignore Yahweh's claims, the presence of sin in their lives, and their need for a Saviour. There are also those in the churches who hold only to a 'form' of righteousness, but deny the power of it. Paul says, 'turn away'! from such people!

Today there is widespread apathy towards Yahweh, not only in the world, but even in the Church. Apathy is 'a lack of interest or desire', a 'passionless existence'. Yahweh, speaking to the house of Israel through the prophet Ezekiel said, "...ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things...!" (Ezek. 44:8 KJV). Apathy leads to a slackening of passion towards the 'holy things'. We must ask ourselves, what holy things have been entrusted to us, and, to what must we hold fast?

Hebrews 4:14 (KJV) states clearly, "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, [Yahshua] the Son of [Yahweh], let us hold fast our profession." In a world of multiple religions the basic profession of our faith must be firmly held to: namely, that Yahshua is the Son of Yahweh, that He came to this earth having pre-existed with His Father, to die a pre-determined death for the sins of the whole world, that through that one act we, too, by a profession of faith in Him and

what He came to do can, also, some day, pass into the heavenlies.

Paul exhorts us, "Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in [Yahshua the Messiah]. Guard through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you" (2 Tim. 1:13-14 NAS). One of the jobs of the Holy Spirit, is to lead believers into all truth. We have seen and enjoyed the treasure of truth, yet more is to be revealed if we learn to guard that treasure already received, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. The principles on which we build and maintain our spiritual lives are in danger of being eroded with an onslaught of New Age principles, which openly claim that each religion or faith ultimately leads to Yahweh. There is only one way, truth and life that ultimately lead to eternal union with our Creator, and that is Yahshua, the Son. It is true that in a time when lawlessness will abound, there will be a falling away, even within our own

fellowships. Never has it been, or will it be, more important for believers to live and stand by the undiluted Word of Yahweh that can be found in the Scriptures. All of us will ultimately be called to give an account to the Father for what we have done with what has been entrusted to us.

There is a commission on our lives; there is service to be undertaken; there is a holy war to wage! Brother, sister, stand at your post and guard that which you have. The time is not long now! Yahshua still cries to His beloved, "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11 KJV).



Apathy is 'a lack of interest or desire', a 'passionless existence'.

THE POWER OF EVERY BODY

Leah-Melody Bate



Take a look at the city where you live, I mean a real look, and I can guarantee that behind the trendy bars, high-tech office blocks, expensive shopping areas and picturesque parks and gardens, there will be desperate, isolated, lonely people. What am I doing about it in these last days?

Like Martin Luther King Jnr, I have a dream for our country. I dream that the homeless and destitute will be fed and housed; that alcoholics and drug addicts will be set free from their addictions; that violent crime in our cities will be stamped out; that children will be taught and cared for in a loving and safe environment; that young people will find direction and stability; that families will be supported and strengthened; that the elderly will be cared for with the dignity they deserve. I have a dream that our churches will be bursting at the seams with men and women, boys and girls; that people will be desperate to be equipped for service; that effective house fellowships will spring up all over our cities; that dynamic prayer will be offered up which will consistently wage war against the powers and principalities that are set against us...and so it goes on. And I ask myself this question, What could stop a church like that?

I firmly believe Yahshua's working through the local church is the hope of the world - and until our local churches are functioning effectively, I will never see my dream fulfilled.

For some people life is all about being successful and this gives meaning to their lives. They may only be interested in securing a successful career, good relationships, family life, a beautiful house, the latest fashion and having a powerful car parked in their driveway. For other people a meaningful life may be working with the poor and needy, taking care of those who are sick, or retreating from the world altogether and becoming a spiritual recluse.

For me, the most important thing in my life is the call of Yahweh – and what that will mean to my future. It may well include any of the above, but it's imperative that I find out what it is! Whatever the call means to me it will definitely include serving others. Ephesians 2:10 reads, "He creates each of us by [Yahshua the Messiah] to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing." (Eph. 2:10 Message Bible). These are the 'ordained works' - those things which Yahweh took time to prepare for me, and it is my sacred duty to discover what they are...and do them. How can I possibly find out what those 'ordained works' are? And should I be doing them by myself - isolated from the rest of the world – or should I be involved with my local church family – being 'part of everybody'? There is such power in this – it's the Power of Everybody! This is a state of doing and signifies action!

Getting into the Game

The work of the local church isn't for spectators, it's for participants. I've never been particularly sporty but I love swimming, snorkelling and table tennis. Being a spectator frustrates me and I love to get in on the action! This also goes for life in our local churches. We can come to church, sit in our favourite seat, enjoy the service, chat with our friends and go home – a nice, safe experience. Or we can throw ourselves into the game by rolling up our sleeves and joining a team of like-minded people and helping to build the local church by reaching out into the community. This is one of the ways we can discover our 'ordained works' – getting involved will help us to find what lights us up on the inside. The thing that lights you up is your passion. There is nothing like discovering your passion for service and finding your 'niche', working in that area alongside others,

and giving 100% to it. This is truly the power of everybody – servants working together in the vision of the local church.

Playing the Game

Are you sitting on the sidelines and not getting into the game? Are you serving in any area of your local church? If you have found your 'niche' and are giving yourself to it, this will impact not only your local church, but also your local community. Acts 2:42-47 tells us that the local church met constantly and shared everything they had; they worshipped together every day; they shared their homes and meals with great joy and generosity; all the while praising Yahweh, and Yahweh added to them daily those who were being saved! Don't you want to belong to a church like that? Don't you want to work together with your brothers and sisters and contribute to the growth and health of your local church? If we get into the game and play it...everybody wins!

Everybody wins

So who wins? The community wins because their needs are being met; I win because I feel challenged, inspired, anointed and fulfilled, and the church wins because it is reproducing itself. Yes...what could stop a church like that?

America's most famous baseball player, Babe Ruth, said:

The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime.

If a man is called to be a streetsweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven played music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great streetsweeper who did his job well.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Next time you see geese heading south for the winter, flying along in V formation, you might be interested in knowing what science has discovered about why they fly that way. It has been learned that as each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in a V formation, the whole flock adds at least 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front.

When the lead goose gets tired, he rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point. The geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Finally, when a goose gets sick, or is wounded by a shot and falls out, two geese fall out of formation and follow him down to help and protect him. They stay with it until it is either able to fly, or until it is dead, and then they launch out on their own or with another formation to catch up with their original group.

For a history of the Congregation, beliefs, news items, downloadable articles and more visit The Congregation of Yahweh website at www.CongYah.co.uk



In just a little while

The Story behind the Song

Ruth Esmee Sherrington-Powis

**In just a little while
The trumpet shall sound
The trumpet shall sound in heaven
And those who await
The coming of the king
Shall lift up their eyes
And look to the skies
For their redemption draweth nigh.**

**Then He shall come, He'll come back for His own
Yes He shall come, He'll come back for His own
And we shall gather, gather round the throne
When He comes back for His own.**

What a time that will be when Yahshua, the King of Kings, takes His eternal place on the throne. We can only begin to imagine what life will be like when His time comes to rule and reign on the earth and yet our hearts beat with anticipation when we think of His coming. The thought makes life here on earth seem like a shadow of an existence and puts the trials and troubles we face into perspective in the light of a glorious future.

The second part of this song was born out of "King of Kings," a presentation of music and Scripture that I compiled in 1994.

The musical consisted of three parts:

- 1) The Birth of a King
- 2) The Rejection of a Kingdom
- 3) The Triumphant Kingdom

The two songs that preceded it depicted the doubt that must have clouded the minds of Yahshua's friends and followers as He lived among them and went through His final hours before being taken from them, but also a hope beyond the grave, looking to the second coming of Yahshua.

Is this a King?

*Is this a king with dust upon His feet?
Is this a king with sinners in the street?
Is this a king who wears no crown and owns no royal gown?
Is this a king? Is this a king?*

*Is this a king, rejected and despised?
Is this a king with sorrow in His eyes?
Is this a king with no abode, who walks a lonely road?
Is this a king, is this a king?
Is this a king who hangs upon a cross?
Is this a king who suffers pain and loss?
Is this a king who had no throne or palace of his own?
Is this a king, is this a king?*

*Is this a king whose friends have disappeared?
Is this a king whose end is as we feared?
Is this a king, now dead and gone, while life still carries on?
Is this a king, is this a king?*

Beyond Calvary

*O can't you see beyond the pain of Calvary
That there's a life to gain for all eternity,
And though they come, they come to take Him away,
He will arise, arise upon the third day...
For the grave won't keep Him in,
He is victor over sin,
He will rise and then ascend
Into the skies until the end,
Until the end...*

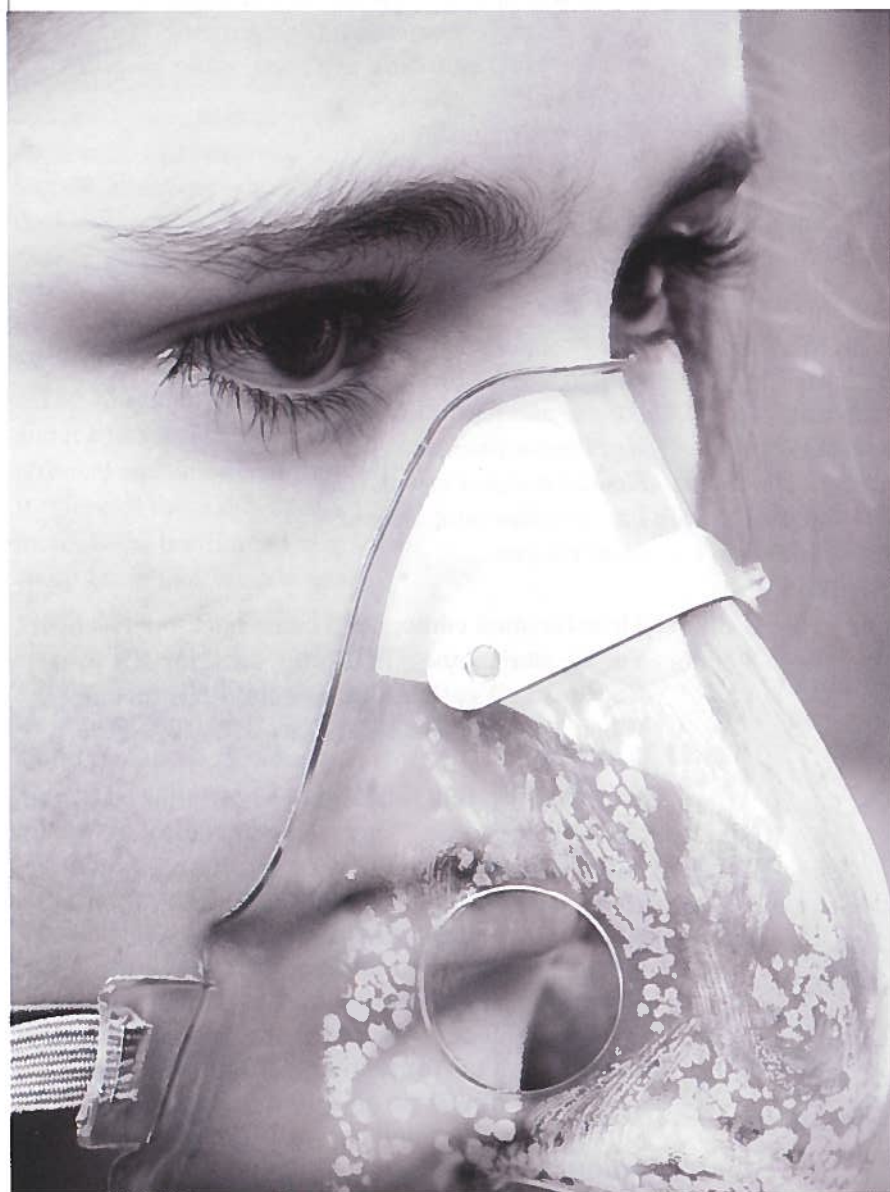
**Then He shall come, He'll come back for His own
Yes He shall come, He'll come back for His own
And we shall gather, gather round His throne
When He comes back for His own.**

After writing this musical presentation I wanted to use the chorus "Then He shall come..." as part of a song that could be sung on its own. In seeking to capture the imminence of Yahshua's coming the words of "In just a little while" began to take shape. In Paul's letter to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 4:16-18) he states that Yahshua will come down from heaven with the trumpet call of Yahweh and that those who are alive and left will be caught up in the clouds to meet Him and will be with Him forever. He exhorts the believers to "...encourage each other with these words"

I hope that the song "In just a little while" has been and will continue to be a source of encouragement to all who sing it. As we live our lives in this temporary world may we never lose sight of the fact that in just a little while the King of Kings will surely come!

STAYING IN THE GAME

Alcot Walker



It has been said that “encouragement is oxygen to the soul”. It follows then that discouragement seeks to cut off life to the soul.

The old adage “smite the shepherd and the sheep will scatter” is something most of us ministers have used in sermons and on occasions preached as a subject. It is used, as a matter of course, in strategic military thinking as seen in many Hollywood action/war films. “Take the leader or commander or chief out, and the others will lose heart.” The old proverb has particular relevance to church leaders. I’ve seen and read of cases where congregations have literally disintegrated; people leave the church in droves, individuals form splinter groups, and whole communities rocked all because a leader has been cut down. Of all the career-wrecking failures the one that gets most comment is when a leader gets caught in a web of sexual immorality or financial impropriety. But you know there are other subtle, less talked about ways in which many leaders are often taken out of the game.

It has been said that “encouragement is oxygen to the soul.” It follows then that discouragement seeks to cut off life to the soul. As a leader, I have been left almost disabled and ineffective by discouragement. It’s relatively easy to handle discouraging remarks and accusations coming from outsiders, but

when it comes from insiders dealing with it can be so complicated and painful. As I look back at my early experience, I realise that times when I was berated for getting it wrong or not doing it in the way my predecessor had, I said in my head, "No! I'm not going to take that on board." And I would robustly defend my actions. However, after the wave of discouraging words had passed I discovered they hadn't passed over or through me, but they had settled in my heart – because I had spent time thinking about them in resentful ways and did nothing about them.

It had not occurred to me that I needed to uproot those negative words that had settled in my heart. Little did I know they had the potential to kill. During years of ministry many discouraging remarks, complaints, criticisms, etc., have come my way and peppered the ground of my heart, sucking life out of me. The net result of all that? Well, at various times I lost the edge to my passion, which consequently caused me to slide into apathy where I just couldn't be bothered. Not a great place to be! I thank Yahweh that at no time did I throw the towel in, roll over and die. Somehow I stayed in the game. My salvation there was down to Yahweh's grace.

Having been flattened a few times by discouragement, I have learnt how to handle its threat and force. The Scripture warns: "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life" (Prov. 4:23). The state of my heart is crucial, for my own sake and the sake of those I lead; for from it flow things that bring radical life-change – good or bad depending on what has settled and grown

in my heart. So these days I guard my heart with great diligence, and especially where discouragement is concerned. I don't want to be cut down and have the sheep scatter. I have identified principles for guarding one's heart against being weakened by discouragement.

First, I must have absolute confidence in who and what Yahweh has made me; in the gift and calling He's placed in my life; in the vision He's imparted to me; and that He's called me to lead the congregation. If I don't have this assurance I am immediately prone to the serious threat of discouragement.

Second, I make every effort to listen to what people have to say to me, whether good, bad, ugly or indifferent. This is a 'must do' for leaders – listening to those they lead. Because I have been hurt in the past I can have tendency not to listen to my critics. In listening I treat all criticism, negative and positive, as an evaluation of my leadership. Therefore, before allowing any opinion to fall into the ground of my heart and settle I pass all criticism through the filter of prayer and against the truth grid of the church's mission and vision. This is to establish whether what is being said is in or out of alignment with the ethos and mission of the

church, or whether the motive of the person making the criticism is way off-key and he or she is in need of help. For this second principle to really work I spend a lot of time with my greatest encourager and supporter – Yahweh. Getting alone with Him in times of solitude enables me to listen to Him and get His view.

Prior to getting with Yahweh I will seek the view of another minister, someone I'm accountable to, who is able to speak objectively into my life and who won't be afraid to tell me the truth in love. We all need someone like this – if you don't have such a person, look for one. They help to bring clarity to our situation.

Third, in the event of being disapproved of or receiving unbearable bad news, I seek to do as David did: encourage myself in Yahweh (1 Sam. 30:6). I have learnt that in some cases the best way to clear one's heart of negative words, disappointments or happenings that produce discouragement, is to flush them out with tears of repentance before Yahweh.

For us the threat of discouragement is ever present and because of its destructive potential it's important that we know how to deal with it, stay in the game, lead the flock effectively, and finish well.

I have learnt that in some cases the best way to clear one's heart of negative words...is to flush them out with tears of repentance before Yahweh.





GLOBAL PRAYER

Prayer is a muscle in the spiritual body of Messiah that must be flexed so that His body can do its work effectively.

Prayer transcends time and space; therefore, as a global community of believers, through praying for presented needs, we are able to strengthen and support each other. This is a wonderful opportunity to bear one another's burden.

We have gathered some requests from around the globe – and as individuals, as a small group community or as an entire local church body let us pump up our prayer muscle and intercede on behalf of brothers and sisters in Yahshua.

From The Assembly of Yahweh (South India)

Please pray for...

- PS* (young man of 23 years) has the Aids virus and is seeking water baptism
- SR* (faithful sister of 70 years) suffering with cancer
- The brothers and sisters of this congregation to be united in vision and purpose

*To protect identity

From The Congregation of Yahweh UK

- Over the last year or so we have been going through a lot of organisational restructuring. Please help us to pray that we will settle into the changes so as to become more effective in our ministry
- Please join us in praying that Yahweh will raise up and develop emerging leaders in our local congregations

From The Congregation of Yahweh Kenya

This congregation has a number of groups around the country with a National Leadership Team (NLT) that provides oversight and leadership.

Please pray that ...

- The NLT will find its footing to carry out the responsibility of the Work in Kenya effectively.
- Yahweh will guide NLT to spell out responsibilities of local shepherds/ministers and the senior regional ministers for them to work effectively and be accountable.
- The NLT will become clear about other's roles and responsibilities for the forward development of the congregation, and for the purpose of accountability.
- Local ministers will understand clearly their role in the Congregation so that they may, with knowledge, give account to Yahweh and the Congregation.
- Each member of the Congregation will find his/her particular place of service in the Body of Messiah, and give themselves fully to it.
- Each local fellowship will witness for Yahshua in their area effectively.

Send your prayers, along with your name, church and country to:

Ha'Shem Magazine
'Global Prayers'
92-94 North Sherwood Street
Nottingham NG1 4EE
ENGLAND

Or Email:
admin@CongYah.co.uk

**Items must be received by
30 June 2006**