

Excellence

II Peter 1:5. For this very reason, try your hardest to furnish your faith with goodness **(arete {ar-et'-ay} virtuous thoughts, feelings, and actions. Moral goodness, moral excellence in modesty, purity!)**, goodness with knowledge **(gnosis-general understanding and intelligence regarding of God)**,

The New American Standard Bible actually uses the term excellence for Arete:

II Peter 1:5. Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge,

This is a profound, revolutionary process that leads to increased intimacy with God, thereby knowing Him better. When we know Him better His presence increases, when His presence increases the gates of heaven are opened, when the gates of heaven are opened the supernatural follow them that believes! The collective struggle we face is that we live in a society that possess a “close enough” attitude coupled with a severe lack of patience in our electronic, instant download, wifi-broadband, social media culture where everything appears to be close to instant! The Kingdom of God also posses’ instant miracles but the development of intimate relationship based upon excellence with our King of Kings is one that is developed over time. Built upon trials and tribulations that build and define that relationship. God teaches us patience by allowing us to experience it (to be transparent I at times have issue here- I can be very impatient sometimes), we are taught foundational trust and patience by experiencing trials:

James 1:2-4. Regard it all as joy, my brothers, when you face various kinds of temptations; ³ for you know that the testing of your trust produces perseverance **(Perseverance is hupomone {hoop-om-on-ay'} steadfastness, consistency, endurance, and perseverance. It's the characteristic of a person who is not swerved from their purpose, from their loyalty, trust, and devoutness to God).** ⁴ But let perseverance do its complete **(Teleios {tel'-i-os} in the Greek; completed, in want of nothing, mature, perfected, brought to integrity and virtue, of strong moral character)** work; so that you may be complete and whole **(holokleros {hol'-ok'-lay-ros} free from sin, faultless, without defect, blameless, perfectly sound)**, lacking in nothing.

James says to let God's testing, adversity build steadfast and unshakable trust, integrity, and character that produces a perfectly sound, blameless, faultless, mature person of God! This is done over time, we prove ourselves unto God in

how we respond to testing, temptation, tribulation, and trials. This is the foundation of Excellence.

Colossians 3:23-24. Whatever work you do, put yourself into it, as those who are serving not merely other people, but the Lord. ²⁴ Remember that as your reward, you will receive the inheritance from the Lord. You are slaving for the Lord, for the Messiah.

When you anything for God, our King, put yourself into it, and it's to be done with a spirit of excellence, your very best. Not close enough, not quickly or the bare minimum, not just enough to appease Him. What every you do for God is to be above and beyond every time!

Deuteronomy 12:11. then you will bring all that I am ordering you to the place ADONAI your God chooses to have his name live -your burnt offerings, sacrifices, tenths, the offering from your hand, and all your best **(mibchar {mib-khawr'}: best, choicest, select)** possessions that you dedicate to ADONAI

What you give unto God, all that we are commanded to give unto Him, your tithes, offerings, service, time, gifts, prayer and worship is to be the very best, the choicest you can possible offer. Tenths are tithes! Like all commands Adonai gives us we have free will and choose whether or not to Obey! And if we do, to do so with a cheerful heart! Many Christians today say tithing isn't biblical but they are incorrect!

Exodus 35:4-5. Moshe said to the whole community of the people of Isra'el, "Here is what ADONAI has ordered: ⁵ 'Take up a collection for ADONAI from among yourselves - anyone whose heart makes him willing is to bring the offering for ADONAI: gold, silver and bronze;

Sha'ul confirms this in II Corinthians 9:7 when he said "God loves a cheerful giver". If one desires to be prosperous, one must tithe. We are mandated to give God our very best:

Ezekiel 20:40. For on my holy mountain, the high mountain of Isra'el,' says Adonai ELOHIM, 'the whole house of Isra'el, all of them, will serve me in the land. I will accept them there, and there I will require your contributions, your best **(Ray'Shiyth -Root word is mibchar, very best combined with Rosh-the head or first fruits-the very best first fruits)** gifts and all your consecrated things.

God both requires and commands Excellence. It is to be done before Him in praise:

Psalms 33:2-3. Give thanks to ADONAI with the lyre, sing praises to him with a ten-stringed harp. ³ Sing to him a new song, make music at your best **(yatab {yaw-tab'}) to do good, to do well, do thoroughly, do right)** among shouts of joy.

A precedence is being established here, God wants our very best in every area of our life in relationship with Him. This is done over time as we grow and mature into Him, becoming Echad with Him, His thoughts become our thoughts, His desires our desires. Here is a rhetorical question; Is everything you do for God done so in Excellence, is it the best you have? If your tithe and offering the best you have? Is your prayer, devotions, and praise unto Him the very best you have? Is your ministry, your gifting given to God with a spirit of Excellence? As Colossians states, to you perform at work with a spirit of Excellence as if you were doing it directly for God (which you are)!

Here is a profound Biblical verse, a Patriarch that succinctly explains and defines what the term "excellence" means, it's a reference that I recall week after week when we receive our offerings:

Genesis 26:12-13. Yitz'chak planted crops in that land and reaped that year a hundred times as much as he had sowed. ADONAI had blessed him. ¹³ The man became rich and prospered more and more ("vayelech haloch vegadel"), until he had become very wealthy **(Gadol Meh-ode: Gadol: Powerful, important, magnified, great, doing great things Meh-Ode is abundantly, exceedingly, might and force)** indeed.

Isaac became a great man! He continued prospering until he was exceedingly, abundantly great. Scripture reveals that even though Isaac was great "he became rich and prospered", he didn't stop there, He became even greater. Adonai spoke to Isaac, told him to stay in the land the He would bless him and prosper him even in the midst of Famine. Isaac heard and obeyed God, he listened (the important of hearing God's voice). Isaac could have done the bare minimal and God would have sustained Him but Isaac didn't stop at well enough or the bare minimum. "More and More" in verse 13 is "vayelech haloch vegadel", statement means that Isaac walked and lived in a manner that caused him to Grow.

This is a biblical example of true excellence. Excellence is both a character trait and an attitude that we hone, a true spirit of excellence is continuous and has no end. Regardless of how many accomplishments you done in your life, how much God blesses you, no matter how great or well known and respected you become they are all steps in the process of growing ever more intimate with Him

thereby causing one to strive even harder for excellence in all that we do for Him. When your accomplishments become your end goal, we've succeeded etc... the spirit of excellent ceases. Isaac never became complacent, he never ceased severing God with excellence and God blessed him, so much so that verse 14 states:

Genesis 26:14. He had flocks, cattle and a large household; and the P'lishtim envied (Kaw-naw: They envied him, they were jealous of him, they were provoked to jealousy) him

The Philistines weren't envious of his cattle, flocks, and large home, there were envious of him, Isaac, of his relationship with God. Unfortunately, they didn't seek to emulate Isaac and work on a relationship of Excellence with God themselves, instead, they became a savage, warrior group that brutally attacked and killed others.

God is more interested in who you are than what you are. His will for your life is to be who He created you to be. Every believer, either Jew or Gentile is called to have excellent in your heart, in your walk, and in your relationship with God. Excellence begins in the heart; you cannot be ordinary in your heart and extraordinary in your life. Similarly, you will not lead an ordinary life if you retain excellence in your heart. There are five characteristics of excellence that are key to waling in Excellence with the God of Israel.

1. Excellence is achieved through Humility. The proud will hide their inadequacies, but the humble will acknowledge them and seek to excel in their weakness through Yeshua.

II Corinthians 12:9. but he told me, "My grace is enough for you, for my power is brought to perfection in weakness." Therefore, I am very happy to boast about my weaknesses, in order that the Messiah's power will rest upon me.

It's ok to acknowledge weakness. We obtain God's grace and power through humility:

James 4:6: But the grace he gives is greater, which is why it says, "God opposes the arrogant, but to the humble he gives grace."

2. Excellence is Developed Over Time.

You're not born excellent nor is excellence a heavenly gift. Excellence is developed over time by patience, experience, discipline, dedication, trust and testing. We've already shared this foundation in:

James 1:2-4. Regard it all as joy, my brothers, when you face various kinds of temptations; ³ for you know that the testing of your trust produces perseverance **(hupomone {hoop-om-on-ay'} steadfastness, consistency, endurance, and perseverance. It's the characteristic of a person who is not swerved from their purpose, from their loyalty, trust, and devoutness to God).** ⁴ But let perseverance do its complete **(Teleios {tel'-i-os} in the Greek; completed, in want of nothing, mature, perfected, brought to integrity and virtue, of strong moral character)** work; so that you may be complete and whole, lacking in nothing.

Furthermore, excellence is developed in the details. If you do the little things diligently every day to improve, excellence becomes attainable. It's all about implementation. Plan to be excellent, and then take every step necessary to fulfill that plan.

3. Excellence tests every spirit.

I John 4:1: Dear friends, don't trust every spirit. On the contrary, test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Excellence requires testing because excellence is easily distracted and lost. Testing the source of all things of the spirit enables one to make sound, kingdom decisions to pursue the things of God. By testing the sources you reduce the likely hood of birthing Ishmael's and reduce wasted time chasing rabbit trails.

4. Excellence must be complete, not partial!

Excellence is not a gift or attribute of the Ruach. Excellence is a matter of the heart, it's a developed attitude that will invade every area of your life. God asks us to excel in everything we do:

II Corinthians 8:7. Just as you excel in everything - in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in diligence of every kind, and in your love for us - see that you excel in this gift too.

True excellence is dedicating yourself 110% to everything you do, Kingdom or secular, as if you are working for the Lord

Colossians 3:23. Whatever work you do, put yourself into it, as those who are serving not merely other people, but the Lord.

5. Excellence doesn't compare with other ministries, Excellence isn't haughty.

Excellence does not compare itself to other ministries, gifting, or anointing. God judges every individual by their fruit, what you've done based upon your giftings and ability, not by comparing you to others around you. Excellence; is measured by looking inward and comparing your growth and fruit to where you were you started or where you were at in the past with God.

Galatians 6:4. So let each of you scrutinize his own actions. Then if you do find something to boast about, at least the boasting will be based on what you have actually done and not merely on a judgment that you are better than someone else;

Let me bring this together. We honor the same God, Same Holy Spirit, Same Messiah as the rest of the greater body. What distinguishes the Messianic expression of trust and worship is the desire for excellence in obeying, honoring, serving, ministering, and worshipping our God.

Joshua 1:7-8. Only be strong and very bold in taking care to follow all the Torah which Moshe my servant ordered you to follow; do not turn from it either to the right or to the left; then you will succeed wherever you go. ⁸ Yes, keep this book of the Torah on your lips, and meditate on it day and night, so that you will take care to act according to everything written in it. Then your undertakings will prosper, and you will succeed **(Tas'Kyl-comprehension, understanding, prudent wisdom, prosperity).**

To serve God with excellence like Isaac, brings wisdom, comprehension, and prosperity. To cherry pick God's word, to even argue its tenants is not serving our King with Excellence. The heart of the Messianic expression of trust and worship is to honor God with excellence in all that we do. I have become even more dedicated and zealous for God's word, mitzvah's, instructions, Yeshua, and the Holy Spirit than ever before because I desire my relationship with Him to be one of excellence on my part! As we've just read in scripture we see that God blesses that spirit of excellence in service to Him and you reap a hundred fold harvest in the midst of famine..... Success, Comprehension, wisdom, and prosperity.

The "spirit of excellence" is a mindset focused on achieving the highest quality in all actions, driven by dedication, integrity, and continuous improvement. It involves diligence, faithfulness in small things, stewardship, and a strong moral

compass, setting high personal standards beyond mere competence or competition.

Dedication & Hard Work: Striving for outstanding results and going the extra mile, even when no one is watching.

Integrity & Character: Living honorably, being faithful, and demonstrating strong ethics in all aspects of life.

Stewardship: Properly managing talents, resources, and responsibilities, treating even small tasks with care.

Continuous Improvement: A commitment to learning and growing, seeing challenges as opportunities to evolve.

Focus on God/Purpose: In a spiritual context, it's about honoring God in everything, representing His kingdom well.

Excellence is an internal drive, not just external show; it's about quality and faithfulness in every are of our life in serving Adonai! It's distinct from mere perfectionism, focusing on diligent effort and growth rather than an unattainable ideal. God doesn't