

TIKKUN AMERICA

restore

Issue 52 | Cheshvan | November 2025

OCTOBER 7TH CHANGED EVERYTHING!

Weeping with Those Who Weep

HERE WE GO ... AGAIN!

Cheshvan and Breathing a Sigh of Relief

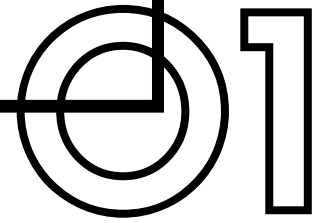
DISCIPLESHIP AND THE FUNCTION OF ELDERS

Building a Covenant Community Under the Oversight of an Eldership

ACTING OUR WAY INTO ONE NEW HUMANITY

Jew and Gentile, One in Messiah

CONTRIBUTORS



DAPHNE & ANDREW KIRK

Daphne Kirk is the founder of Generation 2 Generation, and is joined by her son Andrew who now leads as the second generation. They have ministered in over 40 nations. Since October 7, 2023 they've focused on advocating for Israel, mobilizing teams to serve there and reaching Jewish people.

Dr. Bob E. Neal is the Senior Pastor of St. Johns Discipleship Community Church in St. Johns, FL (www.stjohnsdcc.org). He and his wife are also the Founders of One New Family Ministries – a prayer and reconciliation ministry serving the First Coast of Florida (www.onenewfamily.org).

BOB NEAL



TROY WALLACE

Rabbi Troy Wallace has served as an Elder & Asst. Leader at El Shaddai Congregation in Frederick, MD.; North American Director of Revive Israel; Elder at Pillar Church, and Vice President of Congregation & Leadership Development for Jewish Voice Ministries International (JVMI). Troy and his wife, Jen currently live in Phoenix, AZ. with their 3 children.

DANIEL JUSTER

Daniel Juster is the senior apostolic leader of Tikkun America and is on the Board of Directors for Tikkun International. He been married to his wife Patty for over fifty years and they have four children and eleven grandchildren. Dan is one of the founders of Tikkun Global and leads the teaching ministry Restoration From Zion. Dan and Patty live in Israel and come back to the States twice a year to visit the Tikkun America congregations and teach.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Editor-in-Chief **Benjamin Juster**

Creative Director **Amy Strom**
Senior Editor **Mark Rantz**
Editor **Kathleen Rantz**
Graphic Design **Amy Strom**
Content Manager **Mark Rantz**
Project Manager **Amy Strom**
Advisor **Lorena Juster**



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EDITOR IN CHIEF

BENJAMIN JUSTER

Benjamin is the President of Tikkun America and one of the shaliach leaders on the Tikkun America Apostolic Team. Raised in the Messianic movement and a former Vice President of the UMJCY, Benjamin has a continuing passion for seeing people reach their potential in Yeshua. He holds a Masters degree in Messianic Jewish Studies from MJTI.



He served as the Executive Director of Tikkun International before being appointed the President of Tikkun America in January 2020. Benjamin's focus is on planting Messianic congregations, mentoring and releasing emerging leaders, and building unity among churches and ministries to stand with Israel today and in preparation for the end times. Benjamin and Lorena also help to lead the international teaching ministry Restoration From Zion, affiliated with Tikkun Global.

Benjamin, his wife Lorena, and three children live in Jacksonville, Florida.

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FRUIT INSPECTORS

BENJAMIN JUSTER

Measuring the Quality of Others Through Yeshua's Eyes

When I was a child, one of my favorite family outings was strawberry picking at the local orchard. We'd walk up and down the rows, seeking out the biggest, reddest, and ripest berries that were the sweetest. Sometimes, we'd find a luscious plant that looked perfect but bore no fruit at all. It had either been picked over or hadn't produced yet. Then there were those rare treasures—rows of plants so full of berries that within fifteen minutes we could fill an entire tray. We'd come home with baskets overflowing, enough for our dear mother to make her luscious pies, preserves, and jams.

That early experience taught me something about discernment. Not every plant looks fruitful, and not every fruitful plant looks impressive. The same is true with people. We often evaluate others based on appearance, expression, or background—but Yeshua calls us to inspect fruit, not appearances.

How Our Minds Jump to Judgment

Our brains are marvelously designed by the Creator. They process vast amounts of information almost instantly, allowing us to navigate a complex world. But this incredible capacity also means that our minds take shortcuts. Without realizing it, we make thousands of quick judgments about safety, belonging, and trust every day.

Because of these shortcuts, we can easily begin categorizing people. It's a kind of mental efficiency that can become spiritually dangerous. We label people based on where they come from, what they believe, or how they express their faith. We then can write them off and miss what God desires to do in their lives.

- We might judge someone by their heritage or background.
- Or by their political or theological stance.
- Or by whether their religious expression looks like ours.

But when we do that, we stop seeing people as image-bearers of God and start limiting them by our categories. Yeshua, however, didn't relate to categories. He related to individuals at a heart level—and He calls us to do the same.

Fruit, Not Facades

Yeshua said, *"You will recognize them by their fruit. Grapes aren't gathered from thorn bushes or figs from thistles, are they?"* (Matthew 7:16 TLV)

This passage is often misunderstood as permission to scrutinize others harshly, but that's not the heart of it. The point is not to become spiritual critics—it's to discern what kind of life and character a person's walk is producing.

We are called to be fruit inspectors, not heart inspectors. Only God sees the heart (1 Samuel 16:7). We, on the other hand, are invited to look for the fruit of the Spirit: *"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control"* (Galatians 5:22-23).

When we evaluate others, Yeshua's warning is clear: *"Stop judging, so that you may not be judged."* (Matthew 7:1). Yet in the same chapter, He also says we'll know people "by their fruit." The balance is found in humility. We are not judges of souls, but we can recognize the spiritual fruit of righteousness—or the lack of it—as part of discerning how to walk wisely.



Lessons from the Fig Tree and the Field

In Luke 13:6-9, Yeshua tells the parable of the barren fig tree. A man had planted a fig tree in his vineyard, but year after year, it bore no fruit. The owner wanted to cut it down, but the caretaker pleaded, *"Master, leave it alone for this year also, until I dig around it and apply fertilizer. And if it bears fruit, good. But if not, cut it down."*

This story is not about rushing to judgment but about patience and grace. God gives people time to grow, mature, and bear fruit.

Similarly, in the parable of the weeds (Matthew 13:24-30), the servants want to pull up the weeds growing among the wheat. *"But the master says, 'No, for while you are gathering up the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Let them both grow together until the harvest.'"*

Both parables remind us that premature judgment can harm what God is nurturing. Sometimes what looks like a weed is actually wheat still maturing. The Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) knows how to bring fruit out of seemingly barren lives. Our role is to remain patient, hopeful, and faithful.

As Rabbi Jonathan Sacks once wrote, *"To see the good in others, even when it is not obvious, is to share in God's redemptive work."* We are invited to see potential where others see failure, and to nurture growth rather than condemn lack.





Living with Joy and Faithfulness

I've realized that I need to spend less time convincing others to see the world as I do, and more time demonstrating what it looks like to live with joy and faithfulness before my Heavenly Father.

When I'm preoccupied with correcting others, I miss the opportunity to embody the good news of Yeshua through my own life. The apostle Paul wrote, *"Let your gentleness be known to all people. The Lord is near"* (Philippians 4:5 TLV). That's not weakness—it's spiritual authority expressed through humility.

As Messianic believers, we often stand at the crossroads of cultures, theological traditions, and worldviews. It can be easy to become defensive or critical. But the world doesn't need more self-appointed gatekeepers; it needs more fruit-bearers—people who radiate love, integrity, and compassion.

Representing Yeshua Well

So how do we represent the love of Yeshua to those who think or live differently than we do? It begins with remembering that Yeshua Himself modeled truth and grace in perfect harmony. He never compromised righteousness, but neither did He withhold compassion.

He ate with tax collectors, touched lepers, and engaged in long conversations with those society had dismissed. He saw past the label to the person, past the brokenness to the potential redemption

In our relationships, we can ask:

- Am I more focused on proving my rightness or on showing Yeshua's righteousness?
- Am I creating space for others to grow at the pace the Spirit is working in them?
- Am I bearing fruit that draws others to hunger for God's goodness?

We can uphold biblical standards without becoming harsh critics. We can speak truth in love, with gentleness and patience. Correction without compassion wounds; but love with truth transforms.

Three Challenges for Application

1. Practice "Holy Curiosity" Instead of Quick Judgment

Before forming an opinion about someone, pause and ask: What might this person be going through? What don't I see yet?

"Let every person be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger..." (James 1:19 TLV).

Spend a week intentionally suspending judgment when you meet people who challenge your assumptions. Pray, *"Ruach HaKodesh, give me Your eyes to see them as You do."* Often, empathy opens the door for ministry more than argument and debate ever will.

2. Nurture Fruit in Others Through Encouragement

Like the caretaker in Yeshua's fig tree parable, be someone who "fertilizes"



others through words of life. Speak encouragement to those who are struggling to grow in faith. Sometimes all a person needs is someone to believe that God is still working in them.

"Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up..." (1 Thessalonians 5:11 TLV).

Try writing one note of encouragement this week to someone whose faith journey seems slow or uncertain. Remind them that the Gardener hasn't given up.

3. Focus on Bearing Fruit in Your Own Life

It's easy to spot the shortcomings in others, but growth begins at home. Ask the Spirit to reveal which fruit in your own life needs cultivation. Maybe it's patience, kindness, or self-control.

Take one area and create a practical plan—perhaps setting aside time each morning for gratitude or slowing down when you feel impatient. The more fruit we bear, the less time we have to count others' berries.

"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He trims so that it may bear more fruit." (John 15:2 TLV)

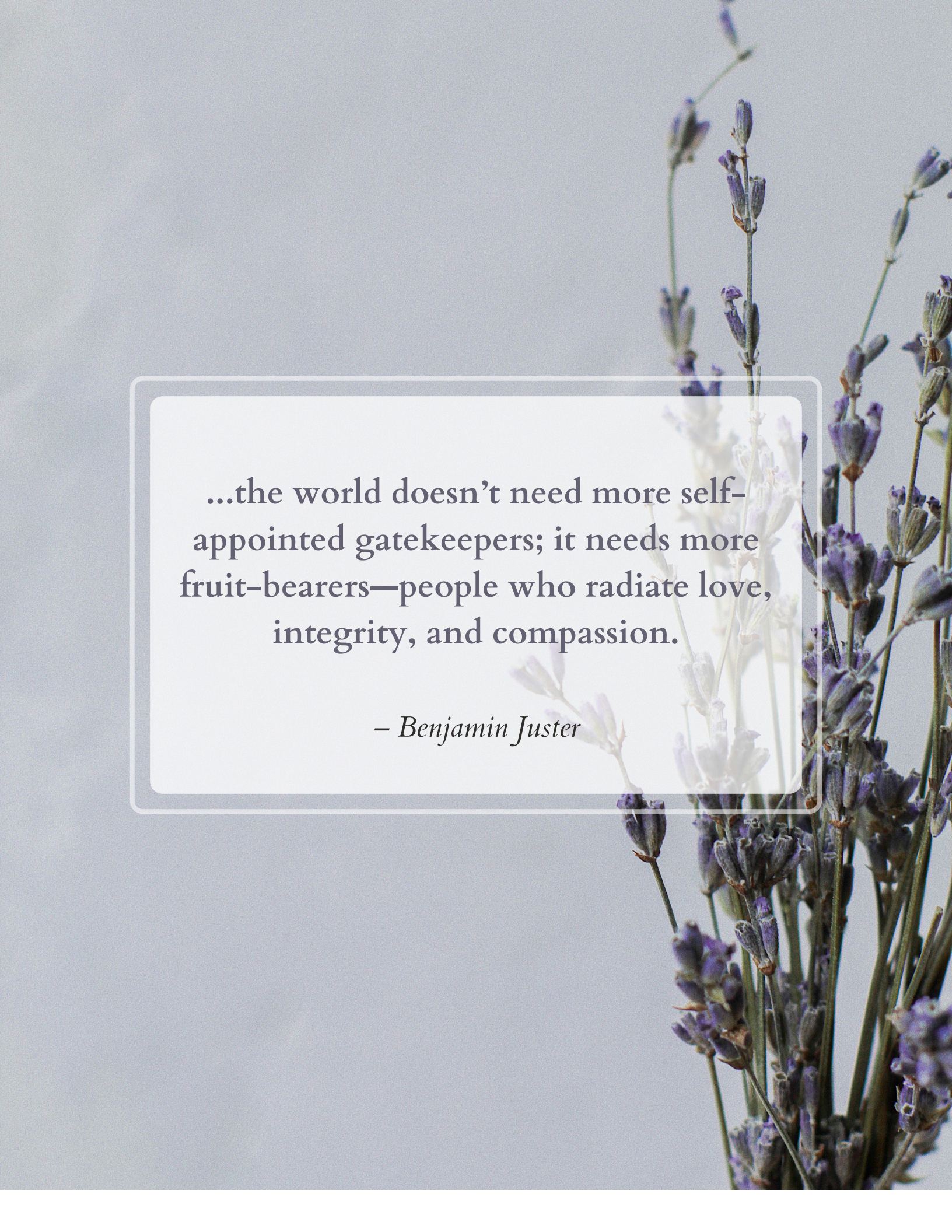
The next time you find yourself in a field—literal or spiritual—remember the strawberries. Some plants will be bare, others bursting with abundance. But all have potential under the care of the Master Gardener. Let's be people who don't just pick and judge, but who cultivate, nurture, and rejoice when the fruit finally appears.

As Yeshua said, *"In this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples."* (John 15:8 TLV)



Benjamin Juster
Editor in Chief



A close-up photograph of several lavender flower spikes. The flowers are small, purple, and densely packed along the stems. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue-grey. A white rectangular box with rounded corners is positioned in the center-left of the image, containing text.

...the world doesn't need more self-
appointed gatekeepers; it needs more
fruit-bearers—people who radiate love,
integrity, and compassion.

– *Benjamin Juster*



OCTOBER 7TH CHANGED EVERYTHING!

DAPHNE & ANDREW KIRK

October 7th, 2023, changed everything for us at Generation 2 Generation. Even when this season eventually passes, whatever “after” may look like, we know our ministry will never be the same again. Neither will we. Since that day, we have taken five teams to Israel on what we call “Solidarity and Serve” trips, with the expectation that they will return home as witnesses, sharing in their spheres of influence and congregations what they have seen and experienced firsthand.

As reports emerged of Jewish people being attacked around the world, it has become clear that our mandate was not only to stand with Israel, but also to comfort Jewish communities globally with a simple, vital message:



“You are not alone.”

One Jewish friend told us, *“We need you to stand in front of us. We’re too beaten up.”*

So that’s what we are doing—standing in the gap, taking the blows when necessary, and obeying the Isaiah 40:1 command to: *“Comfort, comfort My people.”*

The Power of Presence

But what does “comfort” really mean? In the Garden of Gethsemane, Yeshua was overwhelmed with sorrow and pleaded with His disciples, *“Stay here and watch with me.”* Those last two words, *“with me,”* are often overlooked. Comfort is about presence. When someone feels seen, heard, and supported, pain feels more bearable. Science confirms this fact, but Scripture declared it long before:

“Weep with those who weep,” (Romans 12:15).

Since October 7th, that has been our mandate. Our teams have wept with people in the streets of Jerusalem, in cafés, and in kibbutzim devastated by terror. We have stood in ruined homes and cried and given hugs to those who still live there. Comfort is not sending a text message or praying a prayer from afar. Comfort is demonstrated by showing up.

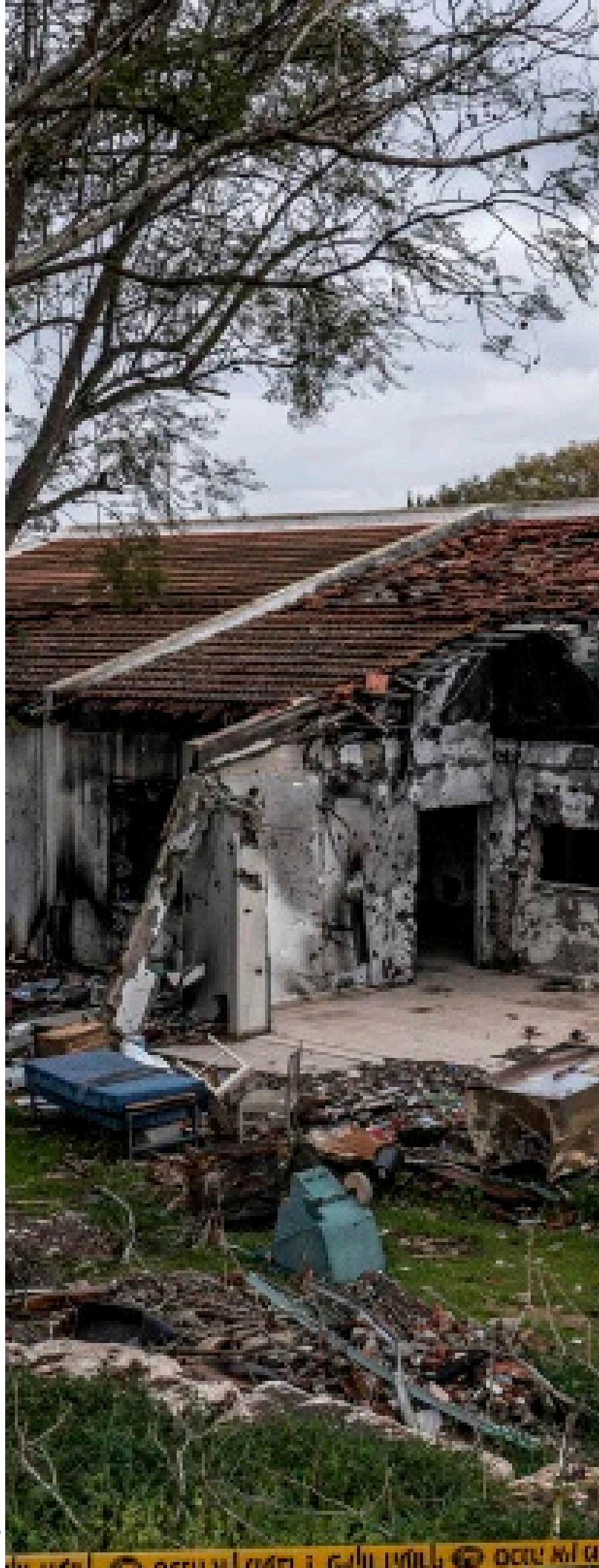
When Paul heard the Macedonian cry, “Come over and help us!” (Acts 16:9), The Scriptures reveal how, “They got ready and left at once.” The same cry is coming from Israel. So we go, and we invite you to join us. Each team member is encouraged to take a simple message: “I came from [my country] to tell you that you are not alone.” That’s it—not to fix or to preach, but to show up, to listen, and to follow where they take the conversation, even to weep with those who weep.

The Fellowship of His Suffering

Paul also wrote in Philippians 3:10 about knowing Yeshua in “the fellowship of His sufferings.” Fellowship is about relationships—and being with someone in their pain. Before our first trip after the attacks, we prayed: “Let us dip our toe into the suffering of Your people,” and He answered our prayer. It was overwhelming. But in that place of grief, we also encountered Yeshua all the more deeply.

On these trips, we have walked through the remains of burned-out kibbutzim, listened to survivors of the Nova Music Festival, and served food to displaced families and exhausted soldiers. We have spoken with IDF commanders, government leaders, trauma specialists, Rabbis, and met with young Orthodox people, giving them the opportunity to ask questions—and they did! Each time we return more broken—yet more aware of His very heart.

One woman told us of being trapped in her bomb shelter with her family.



Her four-year-old son whispered, “Just open the door and let them kill us.” Their only lifeline was a narrow bulletproof window they cracked open centimeter by centimeter to breathe until the IDF soldiers rescued them. We have stood where bodies burned in cars, where bullet holes scar ambulances, where entire security teams died protecting others. And yet, even there, hope rose as we saw helicopters flying overhead carrying rescued hostages and as Orthodox soldiers collapsing in tears as we told them,

“You are not alone.”

We will never forget an elderly Holocaust survivor in Jerusalem who told us, “*I have no more tears left.*” And to this, our reply was simply: “*Then we will cry your tears.*” And together, we sat and we wept.

Why We Go

Some ask us, “*Why go during a time of war?*” But the real question is: How could we not? “Comfort” always means showing up. That’s why we go. That’s why a young worship leader sold everything—including his guitar—to join us on one of these trips.

Along the way, we also serve. We work in orchards on the Golan Heights. We support Orthodox families, Ukrainian Jewish immigrants, and children from surrounding nations who come to Israel for heart surgery. We sit at Shabbat tables with Orthodox rabbis, listen to



trauma experts, and share life with soldiers. I'll never forget one soldier holding his daughter, saying, *"Do you know why I fight? I fight for her."* Our response was, *"That's why we came too—for her."*

A Call to Come

Dear friends, this is not just an article—it's a plea. A plea to every reader, and to every congregation: *"Come with us, or send people to come."* Dip your toe into Yeshua's suffering by standing with His people in Israel in their darkest hour. Walk with them. Cry with them. Bear witness and return equipped to speak boldly on Israel's behalf.

For nearly 17 years, we have led teams, even in times of conflict, and we have never seen hearts so open. People are hurting. The cry is urgent. And the time to respond is now.

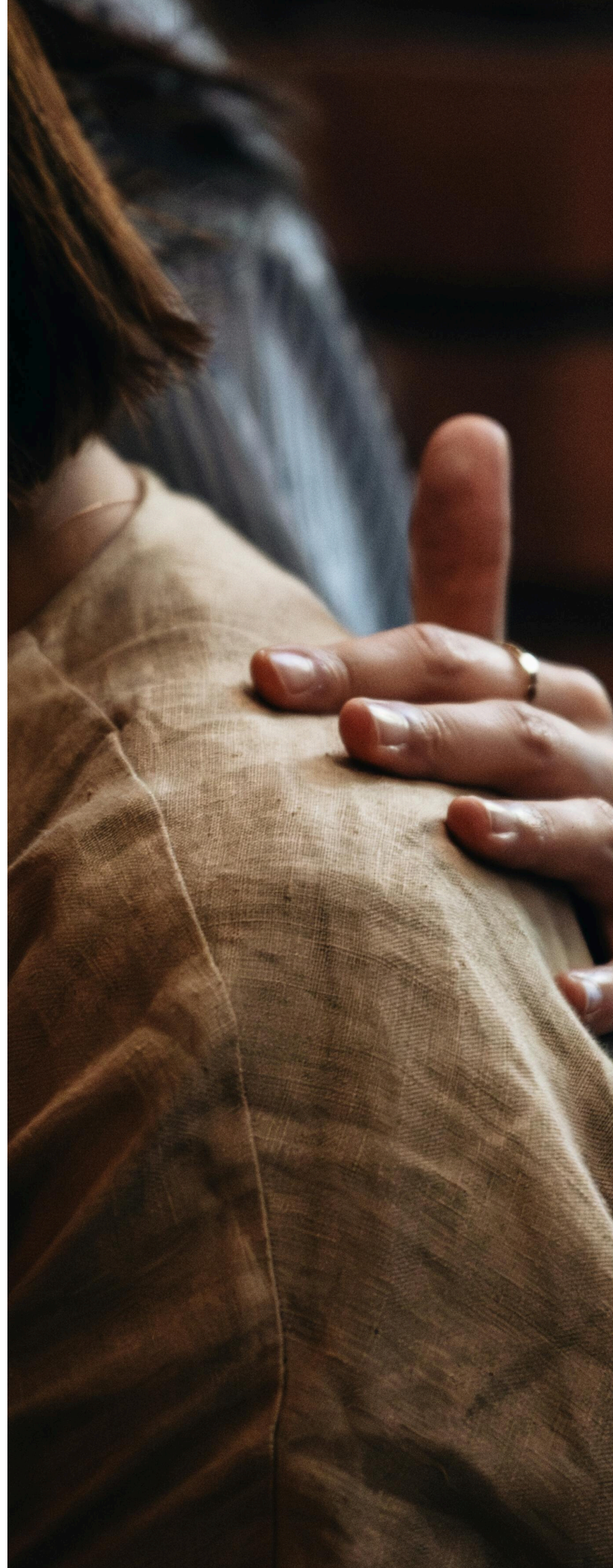
"Comfort, comfort My people," says your God. (Isaiah 40:1)

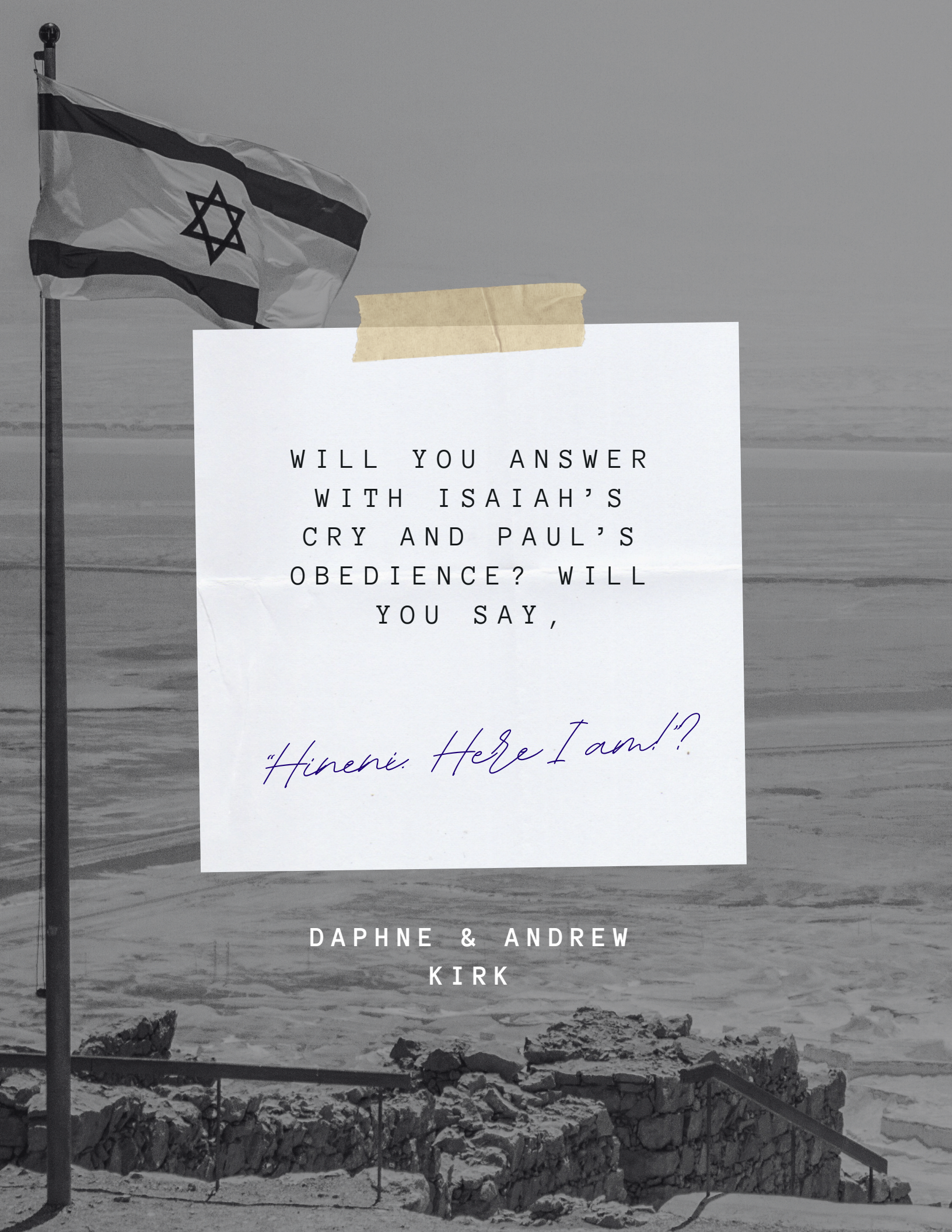
Will you answer with Isaiah's cry and Paul's obedience? Will you say, ***"Hineni. Here I am!"***?

Please—Come. Come. Come!

For more information, please see:
www.G2gMandate.org/Solidarity

or email at: info@G2gMandate.org





WILL YOU ANSWER
WITH ISAIAH'S
CRY AND PAUL'S
OBEDIENCE? WILL
YOU SAY,

"Hineni. Here I am!"?

DAPHNE & ANDREW
KIRK



TROY WALLACE

HERE WE GO ... AGAIN!

When I served at El Shaddai Congregation in Frederick, MD alongside Roeh Todd Westphal from 2007-2015, we always took a deep breath when we got to חשוון (Cheshvan) on the Hebrew calendar. For those of us in congregation and synagogue leadership, it is as if the playoffs and the World Series have finally come to their conclusion for the players, coaches, and managers. Depending on how the Fall Holy Days overlap with Shabbat each year, we had prepared, hosted and led as many as 15 services in the month of תשרי (Tishrei) – and that doesn't include all the work of אלול (Elul) that preceded us beginning the work of Tishrei!

I found a t-shirt in those days, pictured above, that expressed our relief that I sent to many of my friends also in Messianic Jewish communal leadership at the time that stated “*Rabbis love Cheshvan.*” We can breathe a sigh of relief now that the work of “*our Super Bowl season*” is behind us and the month of Cheshvan has arrived.

Though the work of a rabbi and the life of a congregant returns to a more normal pace in Cheshvan, it is not a time that we as followers of Messiah Yeshua should slack in our pursuit of a Jewish value driven life in pursuit of the God of Israel. Yes, the specific focus on teshuvah, judgment, making things right with others, and celebrating our sustenance during our wanderings in the wilderness has come to an end. And the work of the High Holy Days should serve to propel us into a New Year with a renewed focus on seeing our lives more fully embody the values of our forefathers, the life of the Torah and the character of our Messiah as we engage the New Year.

One of the highlights of this new month for me is that we get to read the wonders of the Torah from Genesis – the pursuit of the Torah begins again! While we roll back the scroll at שמחת תורה (Simchat Torah) and read בראשית (Bereshit/Book of Genesis) the first Shabbat in Tishrei, the story of the “Father of Nations,” Noach, kicks off the first Shabbat of Cheshvan (Gen 6:9-11:32). And the narrative of Avinu Avraham {our father Abraham} immediately follows the second Shabbat during the month of Cheshvan (12:1-17:27). These two fathers – the father of the Goyim and the father of Am Israel (the people of Israel) – take us all the way back to the inception of our mixed communities of faith where Jews and those from the Nations dwell together seeking the God of Israel and what He asks of us as those who dwell together with different distinctions and obligations.



The wonders of the Torah continue as the month of Cheshvan continues to unfold. In וירא (Vayera), we learn of Abraham meeting with the God of Israel in the form of a man who receives Abraham’s worship, eats with him, and tells him and his wife Sarah of the pending birth of the son of promise through their procreation, which stretches their ability to believe (Gen 18:1-15).

We also hear the Lord tell Abraham of the forthcoming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and we learn of Abraham's willingness to intercede on behalf of the violent and morally wicked of his generation (18:16-19:29). We are also introduced to Lot and his daughters and their incestuous offspring in response to their being spared from a local destruction that they understood to be global (19:30-38).

Parashah Vayera culminates with the recounting of העקדה (the Akeidah) – the binding of Isaac in Genesis 22. About 30 years further along into the story of our founding family, we learn of the Lord's testing of Abraham obedience. Each time I read this section of the text, I encounter Abraham's faith as one who waited 25 years for a son of his union with Sarah and then was willing to put the promises to him, Sarah and the future generations on the altar now that Isaac is about 30 years old ...

Would I or would we be willing to do the same? Surely, Abraham is the father of all who believe! (Rom 4:16) Abraham's willingness to obey frightfully challenging commands helps us to conceptualize how obedience is better than sacrifice (1 Sam 15:22) and enables us to imagine how our own belief and subsequent obedience might be credited to us as righteousness (Gen 15:6).

Imagining Isaac carrying the wood on his back willingly as he likely understood himself to be the lamb that the Lord will provide for Himself (22:8) helps us to see the image of Yeshua's willingness to lay down His own life a few millennia later.



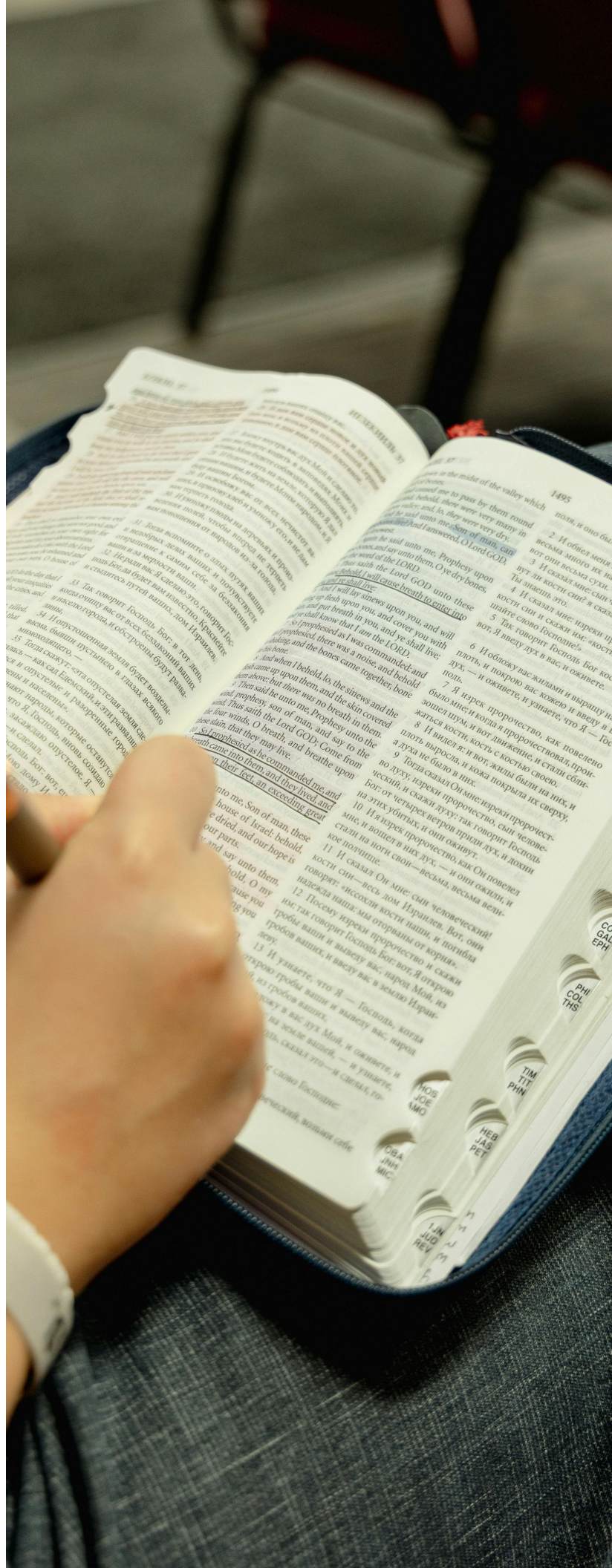
The Torah ends in Cheshvan by beginning with the recounting of the life of אמנו שרה (Imanu Sarah - our mother Sarah) in חיי שרה (Parashah Chayei Sarah) in Genesis 23:1-25:18. As with all living creatures on earth, her life culminates in her death. And her death enables Abraham to purchase the first portion of the Land of Promise to secure a burial place for her body (23).

With Sarah' legacy secured in Isaac, we see the future generations of the people of Israel secured in Isaac's marriage to Rebekah (24). And as this portion of Torah ends, we read of the end of Abraham's life as Ishmael and Isaac come together at his burial (25:7-10) reminding us of the possibility of peace between the Arab and Jewish people whom they establish in their descendants.

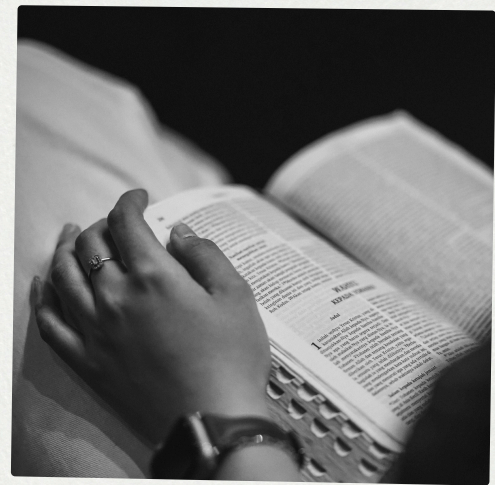
Though the crush of the High Holy Days is behind us, this is not a time to sit back and recuperate from the hustle and bustle and religious busyness of the past season of observance. Instead, we can lean into the stories we read year after year with fresh eyes of our heart that He might further inscribe the words of the Torah on the flesh of our heart as promised in the ברית חדשה (Brit Chadashah – New Covenant Scriptures) to Jeremiah – there is so much more to learn this year!

While it might be tempting to disengage from the stories we read from the Torah as commonplace, I want to exhort you to not treat that which is holy as common as we read familiar stories once more. Let's continue to press on in the upward call of the Messiah Yeshua in 5786 (Phil 3:12-15)

-Here we go... again!

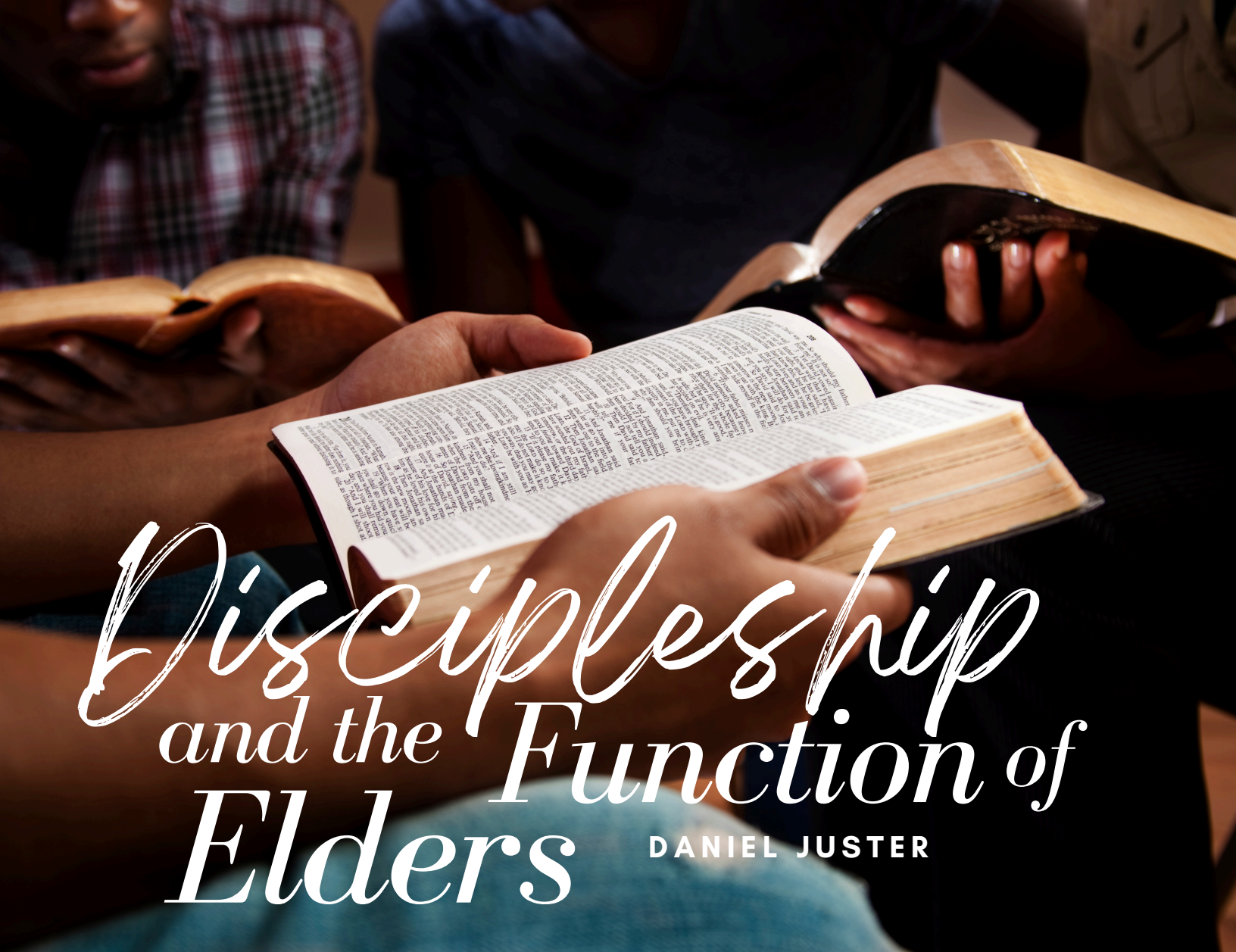


HERE WE GO AGAIN!



ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS NEW MONTH FOR ME IS THAT WE GET TO READ THE WONDERS OF THE TORAH FROM GENESIS – THE PURSUIT OF THE TORAH BEGINS AGAIN! WHILE WE ROLL BACK THE SCROLL AT שמחת תורה (SIMCHAT TORAH) AND READ בראשית (BERESHIT/BOOK OF GENESIS) THE FIRST SHABBAT IN TISHREI, THE STORY OF THE “FATHER OF NATIONS,” NOACH, KICKS OFF THE FIRST SHABBAT OF CHESHVAN (GEN 6:9-11:32).

–TROY WALLACE



Discipleship and the Function of Elders

DANIEL JUSTER

Last year, in 2024, I gave a message to our congregation, Ahavat Yeshua in Jerusalem. At that time, the title of this teaching was the sub-title presented here, “Build Covenant Love Community Under the Oversight of an Eldership.” In a day of social media replacement for real depth of intimacy in relationships, the building of community together is of the utmost importance for our spiritual growth as followers of Yeshua. This is especially important for us today as we have just walked through the Days of Awe, and as we embrace our calling to biblical order in the body of Messiah, and before an unbelieving world.

Covenant Love Community and Acts 2:42

The Bible teaches that when a person comes to Yeshua, he or she becomes “echad” one with all who are committed followers of Yeshua. This unity is expressed in our coming together in local gatherings and also in maintaining friendships outside of the gathering.

Acts 2:42-46. first gives us a picture of such gatherings in stating,

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking bread and the prayers. And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts.”

Certainly Luke presents this picture as an ideal of community. Note that they broke bread together in their homes. The larger gathering was in the Temple, but intimacy was demonstrated in the home for the body of Messiah..

In I Corinthians 12-14, the instruction assumes an intimate meeting in a home context where we read,

“When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up. If anyone speaks in a tongue, two—or at the most three—should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret.



If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God . . . For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged.”

The amazing implication is that everyone has the opportunity to actively contribute. This is only possible in the intimacy of smaller gatherings, which were the primary meeting places for the early Yeshua movement.

I Corinthians 12:13 thus notes that in one Spirit we were all immersed (baptized) into one body. We are one. Therefore in Hebrews 10:25 we are told to, "... not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as some have done, but to meet regularly and practice mutual building up."

Continuing, I Corinthians 13, the great love chapter, enables us to realize that covenant love is the rule for Yeshua's Messianic community as believers are mandated to live in community.

The Oversight of Elders

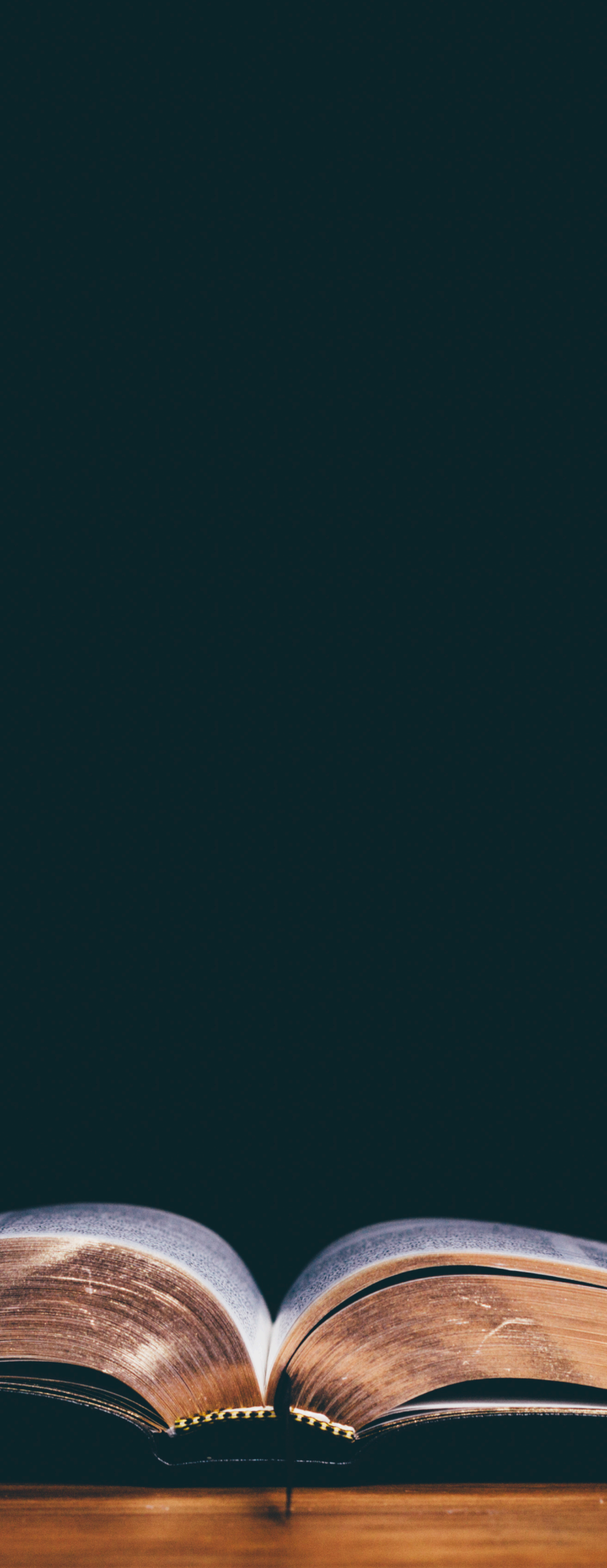
In my book *Growing to Maturity*, pages 136-144 I speak of the role of elders in this community. This book has stood the test of time and is still the most well used guide for Messianic Jewish discipleship since 1982 (there are three editions). Elders are responsible to oversee the flock and see that the members are truly disciplined and committed to serve those within the congregation and those without. The role of elders is shown in the very Acts chapter 2 passage with which we began. The first statement of the passage is that the people devoted themselves to the Apostles' (Emissaries) teaching. The Apostles were the elders of the Jerusalem Messianic Jewish community. This role is delegated to elders of congregations as more congregations are planted. So, for this reason, Peter calls himself an elder in I Peter stating,



"Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock"

The members of the church or Messianic community are exhorted to submit to the elders, to be teachable and grow in that submission.

"Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those



who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you" Hebrews 13:17

Discipline Under Elders

I have been a Messianic Jewish leader for 53 years. However, before there was a Messianic Jewish movement, I was disciplined in a Reformed Church (like Presbyterian). We understood that elders were to enforce discipline when there was gross sin and even to excommunicate when there was not sufficient repentance and restitution. I understood that the context of Matthew 16 where Peter and the Apostles were given the keys to Kingdom and the power of binding and loosing (also repeated in Matthew 18:16ff) had to do with the elders forming the courts of the body of believers. They are to bring discipline for sin.

However, some issues are too much for local elders, and there should be an eldership appeal court, especially if a senior leader is accused of gross sin. Sexual abuse is one of those issues. We have been grieved to see social media used in prosecuting cases of abuse because there were no quality advocates to bring the case before a true biblical or apostolic court. A true and righteous court provides a safe place for the complainant as well as the accused. Only in a fair court can we be confident of the conclusions and judgment. And we are to be submitted to the decision of the court as we are taught in Deuteronomy (*Davarim*) chapter 16.

Recently I was involved with an international group of leaders led by our friend Mark Pfeifer that put together a document entitled “The Kingdom Accountability Project.” The document in question categorizes gross sins, the appropriate discipline needed for such sins, and a system of courts for all congregations for biblical jurisprudence. I think it is a very important step of progress. I am thankful that in 53 years of ministry I know of no case of a leader locally or in our network who has committed sexual abuse. But that does not mean that we cannot embrace even more safeguards to protect all members of the body of Messiah.

Conclusion

However, I want to conclude on the most positive note. We can only become all we are meant to be as we walk in community together. In this, we have the advantage. We are a Messianic Jewish community and times for gathering and intimacy around the calendar are a wonderful blessing.



DID YOU KNOW?

The members of the church or Messianic community are exhorted to submit to the elders, to be teachable and grow in that submission.

DANIEL JUSTER





Acting Our Way into One New Humanity

BOB NEAL

"For [Messiah] himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated them." - Ephesians 2:14 (NLT)

Little Ezra and his parents were walking together on the beach one day. Ezra saw a beautiful kite soaring high above the water, dancing in the sky. His parents took note of his interest and, on his birthday the following week, surprised him with his own kite. Ezra loved it but his parents noticed he never took it out of the packaging.

One night, his father saw little Ezra in his room, hugging his new kite, saying, "One day I hope I can fly you." Ezra's



father came in and said, “Son, you already have what you need. Unwrap it and let it soar!” Little Ezra was hesitant at first, but he ran out into the field, unwrapped the kite, and held on tight to the string as he watched it soar into the clouds.

Like little Ezra, we often forget to use the gifts and blessings that our Heavenly Father has already given us. Nearly two thousand years ago, Jesus reconciled in His body - once and for all - all of the hostility, division, and animosity that had separated Jews and Gentiles for thousands of years. Through His sacrifice, He made us one. The question is: why are we praying for something that we already have?

Three Powerful Truths:

1. We already are reconciled: (see Ephesians 2:14, quoted above)

2. We have been given the ministry of reconciliation:

“And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through [Messiah]. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him...” see II Corinthians 5:18-21, NLT

3. We are all called to be Ambassadors, proclaiming this powerful message of reconciliation to the next generation”

“Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts; let them proclaim your power.” Psalm 145:4, NLT



So, instead of only praying for reconciliation, let's start acting as if we already have it! Jesus the Messiah already did the work – and He invites us to live it out. Here are three simple steps you can take this season to become an Ambassador of Reconciliation in your community:

1. Extend an Invitation:

Next time you are hosting a Shabbat party at your home, why not invite some Christian Gentile friends to come along? They may not understand everything, but that's okay! We have unity in the Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 12:12-13).

2. Honor the Distinction:

Recently, when I spoke at Elim Messianic Congregation, I had husbands and wives stand up. I said, "Do you know the Bible considers you two to be ONE? But, we can clearly see that you are two distinct people. Let's thank God for that!" Spiritually, Messianic Jews and Christian Gentiles are one in Messiah (see Galatians 3:28). Instead of trying to look, dress, and act the same, let's honor the distinctions our Heavenly Father has given us. Unity is not spelled "uniformity."

3. Act in Demonstration:

I personally love being invited to celebrate Passover Seders, Sukkot, or other Jewish festivals like the 10 Days of Awe with my Messianic Jewish brothers and sisters. It's always a great reminder of what the Messiah did for us and how

we can worship, pray, and celebrate together as one new family. If you are invited to a Christmas Eve service this year, why not participate as a sign of unity and support?

We see demonstrations of reconciliation bring about powerful spiritual breakthroughs in people's lives and also shift the spiritual atmosphere around our community. When we demonstrate John 17 unity, our Heavenly Father bestows blessings (see Psalm 133).

Remember, let's not keep the incredible work of reconciliation Messiah did for us "wrapped up" like Little Ezra did with his gift. Let's reach out and work FROM reconciliation, not FOR reconciliation. We already have all that we need.





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BOB NEAL

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bethshalomcorona.com

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