

TIKKUN AMERICA

restore

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THE KING IS IN THE FIELD

A Messianic Walk through Elul

TESTING THE RIGHTEOUS

Difficult Lessons from Job's Story, Part 1

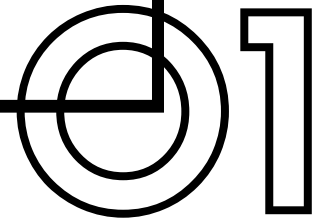
RECONNECTION AND ALIGNMENT

Foundations for the Foundation

MODELS FOR RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Acts 2:42 and our Messianic Calling

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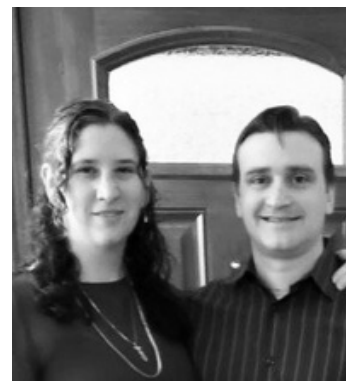


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POSITION TO PURPOSE



One of the great gifts of the Gospel revealed in the Scriptures is that God answers one of humanity's deepest questions: Who am I?

The world constantly invites us to define ourselves by achievement, failure, status, possessions, or the opinions of others, but our Abba b'shamayim (our Father in heaven) speaks a better word over us. Through Messiah Yeshua, we discover that we are loved, chosen, forgiven, adopted, and welcomed into His family.

Yet discovering who we are today does not automatically fulfill who we were designed to become in Messiah.

Identity was never meant to be the finish line. It was meant to be the starting place. Perhaps the central question of identity is, Who am I? But the question waiting for us as we leave the Sanctuary, step into the parking lot, and return to everyday life is this: Why am I?

Identity establishes our position before God, but purpose gives direction to our lives. The journey of discipleship is learning to move faithfully from one to the other.



The apostle John captures this tension beautifully: *"Loved ones, now we are God's children; and it has not yet been revealed what we will be. We know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is."* (1 John 3:2 TLV)

John holds together two truths that we often separate. We are already God's children, already accepted, already loved, and already secure in Him. Yet there remains a future reality that has not fully emerged. There is still growth ahead of us, still maturity to embrace, still fruit to bear, and still a calling to fulfill.

The Father delights in us as sons and daughters long before we accomplish anything for Him. Before Yeshua preached a sermon, healed the sick, or went to the cross, the Father declared over Him, *"This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased"* (Matthew 3:17).

Identity precedes assignment.

At the same time, God's love is so great that He refuses to leave us where we are. Grace welcomes us into the family, but grace also trains us for maturity. As Rav Shaul writes, *"For we are His workmanship—created in Messiah Yeshua for good deeds, which God prepared beforehand so we might walk in them"* (Ephesians 2:10 TLV). We are not saved by our works, but we are certainly saved for them.

Suppose God designed you before you were born to become a doctor.



Suppose that calling was woven into your gifts, your personality, and your destiny. You could walk into a hospital tomorrow wearing a white coat with a stethoscope around your neck and a clipboard under your arm. You might even know enough terminology to get you past the nursing station and into the operating room. But desire is not a diploma. Your calling is not your competence. Potential is not the proof of your practice.

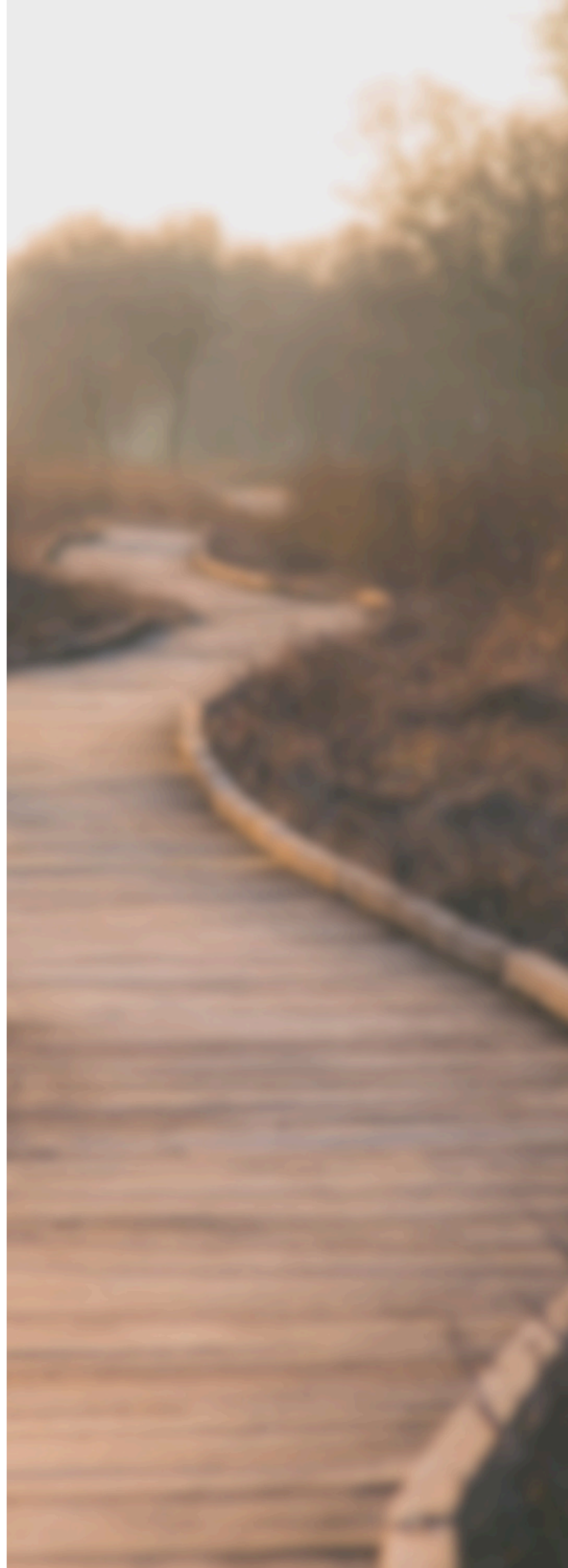
Somewhere between the white coat and the operating room, a doctor invests years of study, correction, mentorship, perseverance, failure, and experience. That long and often unglamorous process is what transforms potential into reality.

The same principle applies spiritually.

Many believers receive a profound revelation of identity and unknowingly treat that revelation as the final destination. This revelation was never intended to become a permanent resting place. It was meant to become a pathway. We do not become like Messiah merely by discovering who we are in Him. We become like Messiah by following Him day after day, decision after decision, and act of obedience after act of obedience.

Discipleship is not simply information transfer. It is transformation through ongoing relationship and obedience.

Within Jewish thought, there has always been a profound connection between being and doing. At Mount Sinai, Israel did not say,



"We will hear, and then we will do."
Instead, they declared, *na'aseh v'nishma*
—"We will do, and we will hear" (Exodus
24:7).

Obedience came first. Understanding followed. They learned by walking. They became through obedience.

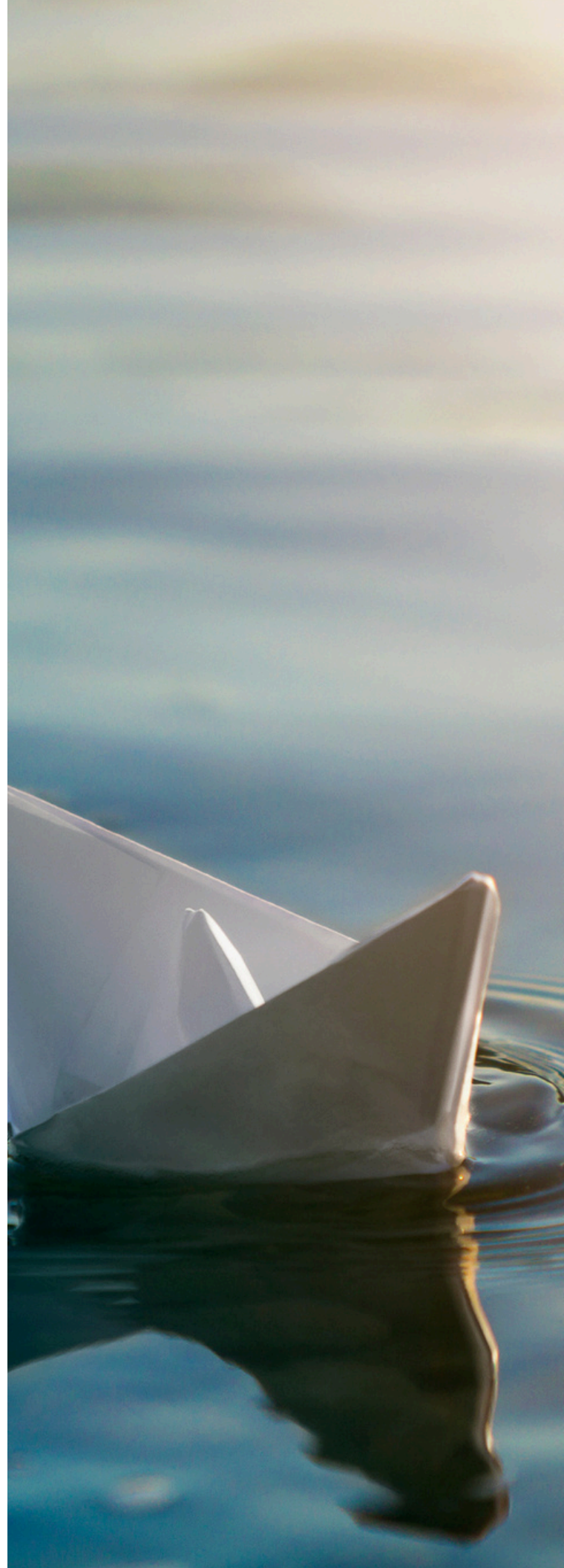
Many of us are waiting for complete clarity before taking our next step with God. Yet often God reveals the next piece of understanding only after we take the next faithful step. Yeshua echoed this principle when He taught, *"If anyone wants to do His will, he will know whether My teaching comes from God"* (John 7:17 TLV).

This understanding protects us from another danger as well. The saying goes that "we begin as human beings, not human doings." Our worth comes from God. Our value comes from God. Our acceptance comes from God. Nothing we accomplish can increase His love for us, and none of our failures can diminish the price that Messiah paid for us...

Yet our potential in God is realized as we walk with Him.

The Father reveals our identity. The Son shows us how to live it. The Spirit empowers us to become it. That process never happens in isolation.

We discover who we are before God, but we also discover who we are among God's people. We need spiritual fathers and mothers. We need brothers and sisters who recognize gifts in us before we recognize them ourselves, and we need trusted voices who love us enough to refine us when our course begins to drift.





The Father's face shines upon us, and then we become reflections of that light to one another (see Eitan Shishkoff's powerful new book – Face to Face). The moon has no light of its own. It simply reflects the light of the sun. That is our calling as disciples of Yeshua. We are invited to live so near to the Father that His character, His goodness, His holiness, and His love become visible through our lives.

Paul describes this beautifully when he writes, *"But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory"* (2 Corinthians 3:18). Notice the language of process. We are being transformed—not instantly or effortlessly, but steadily as we remain close to Him.

If we continue walking with Him, there will come a day when people no longer need to be told who we are. They will see the evidence in the fruit of our lives.

Yeshua said, *"You will recognize them by their fruit"* (Matthew 7:16 TLV).

Fruit is identity made visible. It is calling made tangible. It is purpose expressed in the world around us.

As we continue this journey from identity to purpose, here are three practical pathways for activation and growth:

First, ask the "why" question in prayer. Spend time with the Lord asking not only, "Who am I in You?" but also, "How do You want me to express that identity in this season?" Purpose is often discovered through faithful conversation with the Father.

Second, practice one act of obedience. Identify one area where you already know what God is asking of you and take the next step. Growth rarely comes through dramatic moments alone; it is usually formed through repeated acts of ordinary obedience empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Third, invite others into your becoming. Ask a trusted spiritual friend, mentor, or leader two questions: "What gifts do you see in me?" and "Where do you believe God is refining me?" God often uses community both to call forth our identity and to shape our character.

Years from now, when people look behind us, what will they find in our wake? Will they see transformed lives, healed relationships, faithful service, courageous obedience, and enduring faithfulness? Will there be evidence that we walked closely with God?

The goal is not merely to discover our identity. The goal is to become a people who so walk with God that the reality of that identity can no longer be denied.

May the Father continue to shine His face upon you. May you know deeply that you are loved and secure in Him. And may you become everything He designed you to be in Messiah Yeshua.

 **Benjamin Juster**
Editor in Chief



OUR POTENTIAL
IN GOD IS
REALIZED AS WE
WALK WITH HIM.

BENJAMIN JUSTER





THE KING

IS IN THE FIELD

ALLEN BURNER

There is a quiet transition that happens as the month of Elul approaches. Days are still warm, routines continue, and nothing on the surface seems dramatically different. Beneath the ordinary pace of life, a gentle awareness that time is steadily moving, that something weighty is drawing near, and that the soul has unfinished business with God. In the repetitive rhythm of the Jewish calendar, Elul does not arrive with resounding noise or great spectacle.

It does not carry the immediate gravity of Yom Kippur or the celebratory tone of the pilgrimage festivals. Instead, it comes like a soft knock at the door—easy to ignore, but persistent enough that, if we are paying attention, we recognize an invitation into something deeper. Elul is not the main event. It is the preparation—the space God gives us to ready our hearts before we stand before Him in the Days of Awe.



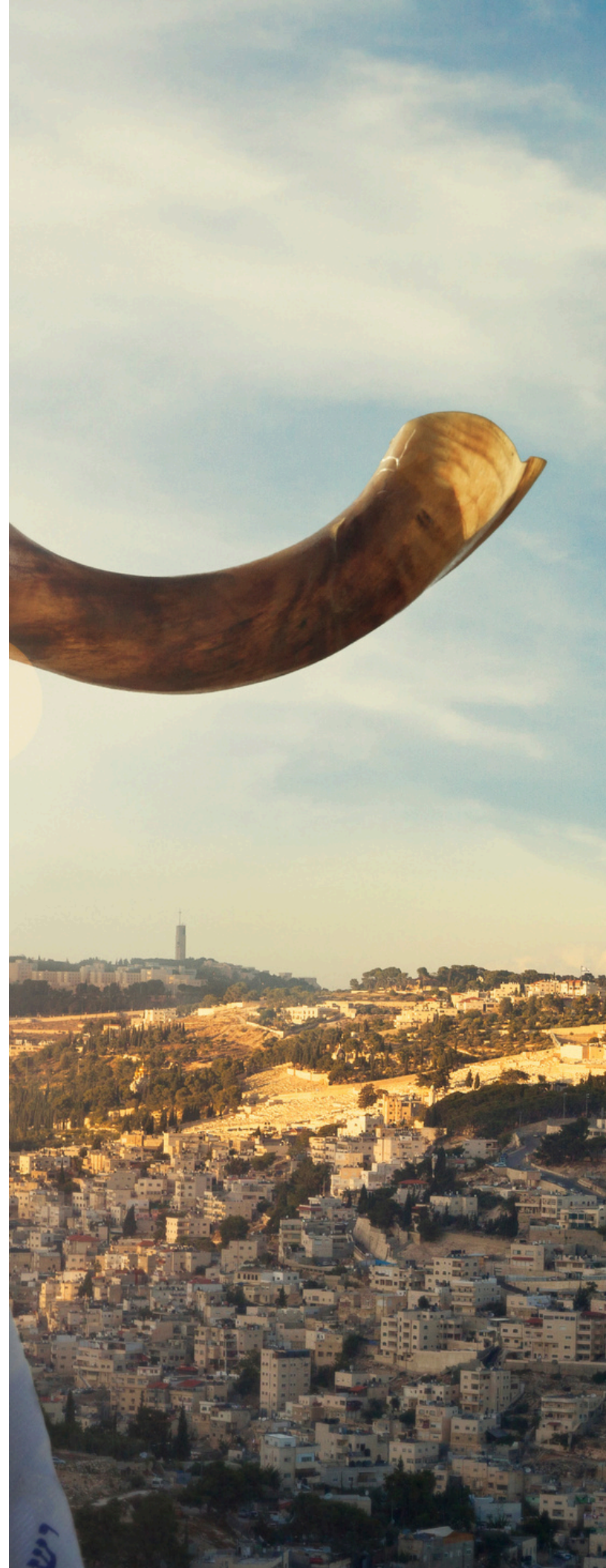
An old parable captures this season well: during most of the year, the king remains in his palace, and those who wish to approach him must carefully prepare. But during Elul, the king goes out into the field. He draws near to the people and becomes accessible. That image carries profound meaning. Before the intensity of Rosh Hashanah and the searching introspection of Yom Kippur, there is a simple invitation: come near while He is near. For Messianic believers, this resonates deeply. The King has not only come near, but has made a way for us to draw close through Messiah. Still, Elul reminds us that proximity is not the same as attentiveness. God may be near, but we must choose to turn toward Him.

Traditionally, Elul is a time of Cheshbon Hanefesh, an honest accounting of the soul. That phrase alone can make us uneasy. Self-examination tends to uncover things we would rather leave tucked away. Many approach it like cleaning out a cluttered closet—we know it needs attention, but hope no one insists on opening it just yet. A project perhaps for some later rainy day. Elul is not about shame; it is about clarity. The goal is not to dwell on personal failure, but to recognize where we have drifted and to return. The Hebrew word *teshuvah*—repentance—literally means “return.” It assumes a relationship and reminds us that God is not distant, but waiting. What we discover is not always comfortable. There are attitudes we justified, words we wish we could take back, and habits we quietly excused. But there is mercy in noticing these things now.

A small course correction in Elul is far easier than realizing later that we have been heading in the wrong direction. It is a bit like driving with your GPS muted—everything feels fine until you realize you missed the turn miles ago.

One of the defining practices of Elul is the daily sounding of the shofar. Its voice is raw and ancient, cutting through the noise of everyday life. It does not explain itself or soften its message. It simply calls. In a world filled with distractions, the shofar stands out. It is not background music; it is a wake-up call. The Shofar reminds us that time is moving forward and that our choices matter. It also reminds us that the King is drawing near. For those who follow Yeshua, the sound echoes beyond the present—pointing backward to Sinai and forward to the promise of the Messiah's return. That reality is not meant to produce fear alone, but readiness. It is easy to prepare for the High Holy Days externally. We can plan meals, attend services, and participate in meaningful traditions. But Elul presses a deeper questions: is the heart ready? Are there relationships that need repairing? Are there patterns that need to be addressed? Have we drifted without realizing it? These are not easy questions, but they are necessary ones. Preparation in Elul is less about adding activity and more about creating space—space to pray, reflect, and listen.

Creating that space can feel inconvenient. We live in a culture that rewards busyness. Slowing down for reflection may feel unproductive—as if we should at least be folding laundry while repenting. Our souls do not thrive in divided attention.





Elul calls us to give God something we rarely offer freely: our focus. One of the most beautiful aspects of this season is that it comes before the weight of the High Holy Days. Before the solemn prayers of Yom Kippur, there is time to prepare, return, and respond to the quiet prompting of God's Spirit. In Messianic faith, this season is filled with hope. Yeshua does not stand at a distance waiting for us to fix ourselves. He calls us to return and provides us the means to do so. Messiah's atoning work assures us that repentance is not a hopeless cycle, but a pathway into restored relationships. We are not striving to earn forgiveness; we are responding to grace already given.

The mitzvot of Elul are often found in small steps: a few extra minutes in prayer, a sincere apology, a habit surrendered, a passage of Scripture revisited. Moments that may seem small, but definitely not insignificant. They form a returning heart. If the process feels slow, that is not failure. Spiritual growth is steady, quiet, and lasting. As Elul continues, our attention turns toward Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. These appointed times carry real weight. They are also an opportunity to stand before God with sincere honesty, realign our lives, and experience renewal.

At its base, Elul is an invitation: return, draw near, pay attention, prepare your heart. The King is not distant or indifferent. He meets us in ordinary places and calls us back to Himself. The journey is not about perfection. It is about direction. So take the next step, open the door, listen for the shofar—and continue the journey home. Each returning step, however small, reshapes the heart, reorders priorities, and quietly aligns our lives with God's mercy, truth, and covenantal love in Yeshua.





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ALLEN BURNER





RECONNECTION AND ALIGNMENT

GRANT BERRY

As we read in our first article, about going deeper with the Father with much greater intimacy and connection, God is drawing us closer to His Heart during these days so we may fulfill His great commission of love and truth, proclaiming the Kingdom of God until He comes.

Everything starts with God's Heart as a Father and His love for us. He wanted to create a family with real children made in His image (Genesis 1:26). There had to be a divine pattern for human beings in the image of God. That image of God and man together is found in the "Anointed One"—Mashiach, the Christos. This is Yeshua—the Messiah.

God, in His amazing love, desires not only that we worship Him as His creatures, but also that we join together with Him as a family (Ephesians 3:14-15), that we become partakers of His divine nature (2 Peter 1:4), and that we become one with Him (John 17:21-23). The sacrifice of Yeshua on the cross makes the divine Alignment possible for us. Yeshua's death and resurrection are the magnet that pulls us into that divine love and unity.



ATTACKED AND DIVIDED

It is this family of God that has come under such great attack from the evil one, first for the Jews and then for the Gentiles, because the devil knows how central oneness is to the “power and glory.”

If family love and unity are a prerequisite for the greater power and glory to come upon us, as discussed in our Foundations of the Foundation book, wouldn't the enemy do everything in his power to attack and prevent it from happening? This is precisely what has transpired through God's family since the call of Abraham some four thousand years ago. Jews have been scorned, the One New Man ravaged, and the Body of Messiah and the Church horribly divided by race and creed. Hence, the need now for this Reconnection.

RECONNECTION AND ALIGNMENT

The word Reconnection is not biblical in origin; however, we wouldn't need to be reconnected to one another if we were not disconnected in the first place. This not only applies to Jewish and Gentile believers in the Nations and Jewish and Arab believers in the land in the One New Man, but to all of God's children in the Ecclesia (Church).

In this article, we outline what the Reconnection and Alignment are, what they could look like, and why we need them now, in the hope of recognizing their significance as central to God's end-time plans. The end goal is for all of God's family to be reunited as one Body and one Holy Temple on the earth (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). This is what Yeshua prayed for. As our dear brother Jonathan Friz from the 10 Days of Prayer ministry always says, “Jesus gets what He prays for.”

The Reconnection is what needs to happen, leading up and into a Restoration and Reconciliation, first between Ishmael and Isaac, between Jewish and Gentile believers, and between all races and tongues and then corporately, between Israel's remnant and the Church in the Nations. It invites God's mercy (key word) to heal and restore all divisions (Romans 11:32; 12:1).

The Alignment is the proper connection of love and unity between all of God's children. The Alignment moves and operates within these alliances with a synergy and active cooperation that reunite the Bride in preparation for the Bridegroom, God's end-time plans, and the Lord's return. Through the Alignment, there is a covenant position for everybody—order, direction, and readiness for action. Alignment is an order that allows for everyone to have his or her own place.

Alignment, like Reconnection, also has a corporate connection with the Church in the Nations (Christians) coming into alliance with believing Israel (Messianic), both in the land and the Nations and vice versa. It is the proper working of Paul's description of the Body in 1 Corinthians 12:12–31.

Alignment also includes the proper working and functioning of the Body through all types of worship and prayer, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the governance of the Church through fivefold gifts. The personal focus of the Reconnection and Alignment restore the One New Man, while the corporate focus restores its Kingdom principles.



Simply put, God now looks to restore the “Former Glory” we read about in the Book of Acts for the “Future Glory.” Through the cross and resurrection, Yeshua created a beautiful One New Humanity that changed the world. Those near, His precious Jewish children, and those far, His precious children in the Nations, are breaking down the wall of hostility between them (that Yeshua paid the price for), coheirs together with Israel so that we can be One Family in God (Ephesians 2 and 3). The Reconnection has begun and is in process, but much more is needed. Yet the future glory will be greater than the former glory, even as Yeshua intimated (John 14:12).

We are being called into the last days before He returns. While we know it may be challenging, it will be most glorious. This is according to the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy in chapter 2, verses 28–32, where the Holy Spirit is poured out in the world. Yet what will be remembered most is not necessarily the power of God working through His Body, but rather the love that produced it. This is our calling in this hour: to love God with such passion and hunger and to love one another in such a way that it would stand out in the world and make people envious of it.

As the prophet cries, *“Build up, build up, prepare the road! Remove the obstacles out of the way of my people”* (Isa. 57:14). Yeshua’s unconditional love is working through His Body without any compromise to His Holy Word, resulting in a purity in how we worship and a vigilance in how we pray for ourselves, our Churches and





Congregations, for Israel, and the world around us. We have so much to look forward to and gain as we humble ourselves and submit to God's plans to Restore, Reconnect, and Realign His Ecclesia (Church) so that the fullness of His Glory will be released upon us.

BREAK OFF THE OBSTACLES

However, to fully achieve this goal, we must be willing to rid ourselves of past negative influences that may be impeding that intimacy and especially that love and unity in the family. Without condemnation, we need to be honest and real with ourselves personally and corporately in the Church about our past in how the Church has treated the Jewish people, how it may still be affecting us now, and how Satan spawned this deception.

From Scripture, which must always be our anchor, through the apostle Paul, God gave edicts to the Ecclesia to love the Jewish people on account of the patriarchs, to draw them to jealousy, never to be arrogant thinking we replaced them ... and with the mercy we have received as a result of those Jews who rejected Yeshua, to release that mercy back to them (Romans 11).

Yet sadly, the ancestral Church went in the opposite direction. Instead of loving the Jewish people unconditionally, despite their rejection, Christians persecuted and murdered them. Unfortunately, these actions and attitudes have passed down the generations for some eighteen hundred years, almost unhindered. Their influences are still at play in some

form or another through our generational lines without full repentance.

History has repeated itself numerous times as a result of these wrong attitudes, with the Spanish Inquisition, numerous pogroms, and the Holocaust, with nearly all the German and world Church remaining silent.

In the world, we are once again witnessing the rise of antisemitic influences that have been explosive since the October 7th war in Israel in 2023. But unfortunately, the Church is not much better, mostly remaining silent as the Church in Germany did with the rise of antisemitism—and look where it led. **Yet even if one is not antisemitic and against the Jewish people, these past antisemitic influences in our ancestral lines (through our parents, our grandparents, and the like) can affect the way we feel and think toward the Jewish people and toward Israel.**

Our main objective here is to understand this negative generational influence and how the devil is still using it against us. We must now rid the Church of these residual curses. This is actually how racism is also perpetuated and travels through generational lines. The result of continued racism is, at least, that it causes a *stony heart* and an *indifference* in the Church toward the Jewish people and the edicts given to aid in their restoration (Romans 11).



These effects described are, unfortunately, still greatly apparent across the whole Church. They muddy our view of God's Word to restore the firstborn to the Family, and many are still entirely under the guise of replacement theology.

It makes us wonder, "What's next?" as we continue to see this horrible, ugly, antisemitic spirit raise its head throughout the world. The Body and the Church must rid ourselves of these negative influences now!

CURSES INFILTRATE THE CHURCH WITH LINGERING EFFECT

There is another promise in the Word for the family at play that is significant to our understanding: *"I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse"* (Gen. 12:3). We also understand from Scripture the importance of obedience in our walk with the King: *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments"* (John 14:15 ESV). Obedience provides the grace and protection we need to stay on the path. Still, when we disobey, we open ourselves to the greater temptations of the enemy, and deception creeps into the walk. These same principles also apply to the Church corporately.

Plus, with the measure given, it is measured back to us (Matthew 7:1-2). The Body of Messiah is not free of this universal principle that Yeshua brought to light; the negative fruit of judgment affects us all. Thus, the Church's hostile actions toward the Jewish people over the centuries opened the door to these curses and the devil's influence. As a result, Satan achieved his objective in



this area, causing massive schisms between Jews and Gentiles, as well as wrongful attitudes, hatred, judgment, and indifference toward the Jewish people. Also, Satan infiltrated the Body with these residual curses in light of Genesis 12:3, which is hindering greater intimacy with God for many in the Church.

Only God's love and mercy can possibly cure these negative influences. But it is also God's timing now to heal up the Body in this place as Israel comes back to life spiritually, and we are connected back to her to prepare the Bride for the Lord's coming.

To get to the crux of this issue, it's important to point out that we are not personally responsible for the sins of our fathers and mothers who travel through the generations (Exodus 20:5). However, if their actions affect our hearts and the way we think, that can lead us into sin and hold the Church back from its role and edicts to love Israel, with a great indifference toward her. Shouldn't we be willing to address our hearts and face these past and *generational sins* that are far more subtle, to rid ourselves and the Church of these past negative influences? Plus, these past actions have brought confusion to the Church's *eschatology* (end-time views), which has everything to do with the Restoration of Israel and the Lord's return.

This is most challenging for God's children from the Nations, but we must be willing to face the past in how the Church treated the Jewish people in order for God's love to freely flow back



to them and for us to get fully free of the devil's wiles. This is not about what we have done wrong but what we need to do right. To receive God's mercy now, we need to expose the devil's influence and be washed clean of these past negative lingering influences the devil has been using against us to maintain division and control.

To break these lingering influences away from the Body, we obviously need confession and repentance. We also need to understand where they started and how the rest of the Church has been affected, so we will know how to pray for the rest of the Church to get free, if its people are willing.

In the Western Church, which was responsible for breaking away from its Jewish roots and heritage, these negative residual influences are still at play in the way our ancestry has acted toward Israel and the Jewish people. These influences have been passed down generationally and remain mostly unrepentant of.

In the case of the Eastern Church, these influences have been passed down through its connection to the Western Church—some with lesser effects—but repentance is still needed all around. Plus, Replacement Theology infiltrated the entire Church, and this negative mindset convinced the Church that it is Israel without the people of Israel. This false theology, along with all its lingering influences, must be broken off from all of God's children to free us and rid the Body of them, once and for all.



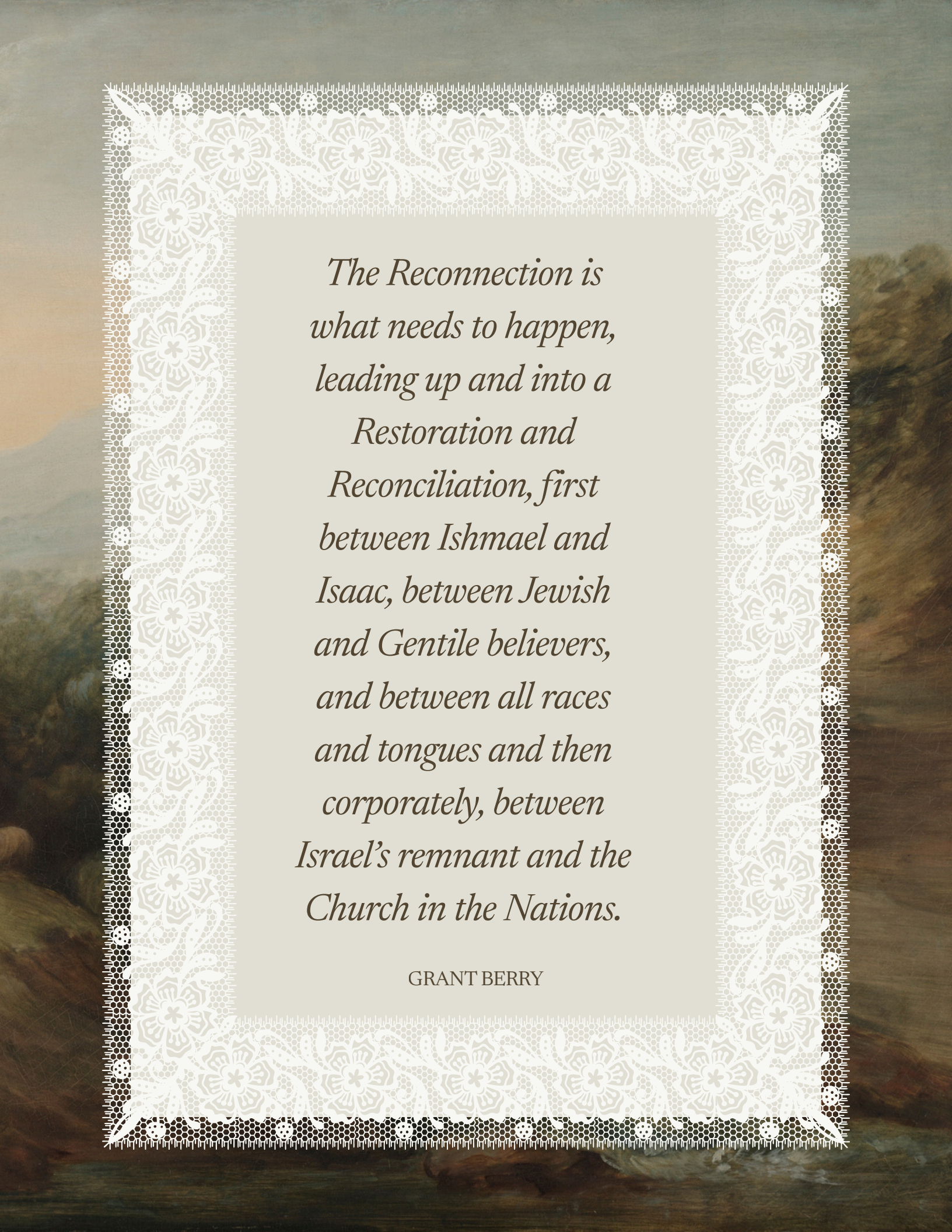
CAN WE IMAGINE?

Can we imagine for a moment what a Reconnected Body would look like in the Ecclesia (Church)? God's love melting away the divisions between us and the Body fulfilling its role, that the Kingdom would truly arise in these days in a greater measure, helping to lay the pathway for the Lord's return.

This article is a chapter in Grant Berry's groundbreaking book, "Foundations for the Foundation," available at <https://reconnectingministries.org/foundations-book/>, on restoring Israel and the Church as one family, according to John 17.

Disclaimer: The views of this article may not necessarily reflect all of the views of Tikkun America, but instead, the insights of its author.





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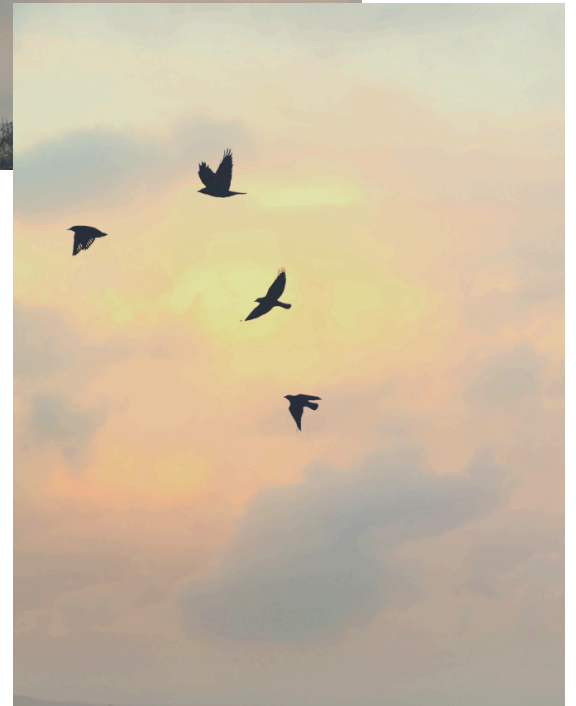
GRANT BERRY



TESTING THE RIGHTEOUS

ZACHARY WILLIAMS

PART ONE



The story of Job has always been a fascinating story that teaches some profound lessons. The most common lessons from Job tend to focus on the beginning and the end of the book: the honorable way that Job responded when suffering came upon him that he did not deserve, and the way that Adonai restored Job double when the whole episode was over. Because the story ends on a good note, it is easy for us to simplify the story and simplify the lessons we apply to our lives from it.

We often easily relate to Job based on the idea that if we personally do not feel like we deserve some specific suffering in our life, then Adonai will surely see and understand and will eventually redeem us from this suffering as He did for Job – because that is true justice somehow in our thinking. The irony is that very line of thinking is exactly the mistake that Job eventually made later in the book, and Adonai rebuked him for it. In this series of articles, I am going to dive into some deeper and more difficult lessons in Job, and why those lessons make all the difference in how we should apply the book of Job to our lives.

The first difficult thing to note about the beginning of Job is that it was because he was righteous that he was selected for testing and suffering, rather than despite it (Job 1-2). When we read the story, it is easy to accept that as a fact of the story. However, do you think it would have changed how Job thought about the situation if he had known that Adonai had bragged about Job's righteousness in the beginning?

Later, when he wants to make his case to Adonai (Job 23), he would have understood that Adonai already knew everything that Job would have wanted to tell Him. And yet, even if Job knew those things, it would not have changed the situation that happened to bring Job's suffering.

The second difficult thing to note in the beginning of the story is that while most of the story is about Job, the original context is a heavenly 'contest' – if you will – between Satan and Adonai. So, what is the challenge? The challenge appears to be about Job, but Job is just an example and test subject. The real test is about how followers of Adonai behave (the righteous) and how followers of Satan behave (the wicked). Satan's challenge is that Job only behaves righteously because he is blessed and healthy. Adonai responds that he will let bad things happen to Job to prove that Job will still respond righteously and be faithful to Adonai.

Truly, the wicked do behave the way Satan alleged: they only do what is right when things are easy and going well for them.

The followers of Satan are bribed with health, wealth, and power. When the truly righteous are tested and suffer, they still choose righteousness. These are difficult things because they challenge our conception of righteousness. If righteousness is purely about doing right things, then true justice would always demand a reward for good behavior – immediately, of course! Instead, righteousness has more to do with faithfulness in a relationship to Adonai, regardless of current circumstances. Wickedness seeks shortcuts to what it wants because it wants those things more than wanting Adonai Himself. You can almost hear Job exclaiming the classic Jewish joke, “God, couldn’t you have chosen somebody else?!”

We are so used to modern movies that the plot and scene in Heaven in Job almost seem like the introduction to a children’s movie. The end of the book wraps everything up nicely as if everything is put back right. This challenge and plot almost sound quaint if the situation were not so real. Is it lost on us that his first children did not come back? Does the fact that Job was later healed reduce the pain of his disease when he was suffering it? Most of Job’s suffering arrived in a matter of days, but Job’s full restoration could have taken years.

Which brings us to the third difficult thing about the beginning of Job. The test had to be real. Job could not know about it. The test could not be stopped partway through and ‘reset’.





The test was Adonai deliberately allowing injustice. That injustice had to play itself out and could not be reversed. What the challenge demonstrates is that Adonai has full jurisdiction over final justice, and He can choose when and where that final justice is executed. That is why Adonai has promised the Day of Judgment before eternity. It takes faith to believe that the future Day of Judgment will come, and it changes our perspective of justice in this life. It means we still seek true justice, but the justice that we can execute is never complete.

When we understand those difficult lessons, I believe we apply the book of Job to our lives differently. I have had many circumstances in my life where leaders used me as an example to gently but publicly teach people lessons about negative behavior in a group. Many times I was told that they chose me 'because I could take it'. Meaning I could handle the situation well while something about my negative behavior was talked about publicly for the sake of teaching other people, and I would not become crushed or discouraged because of it. Let's just say that reinforced the lesson for me as well. In a similar but much grander way, Job was chosen as an example to all of heaven and earth and for all of time since then. Even when he later makes a mistake and Adonai rebukes him, the example is set because Job's integrity held true. The lesson of Job's mistake is amazingly easier to understand because in all other areas of his life he walked in righteousness. Truly the testing of the righteous brings a different kind of reward.

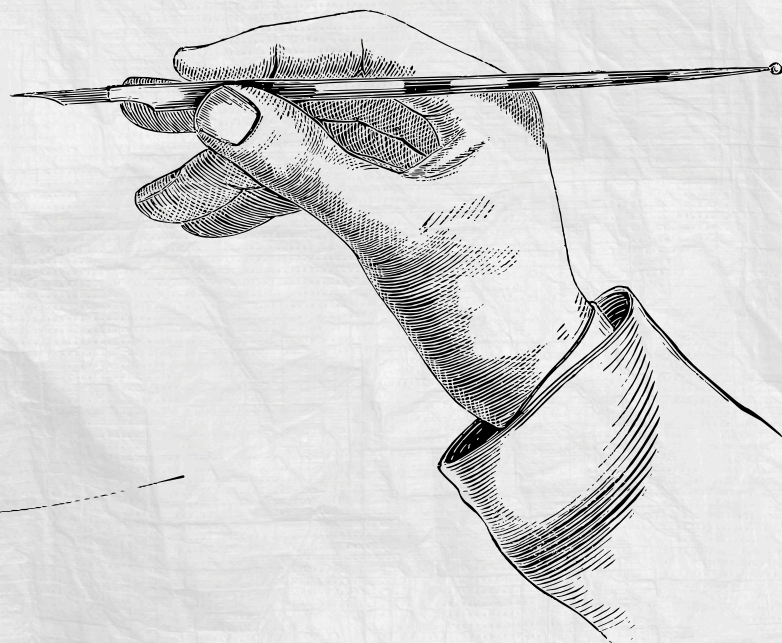
Normally as I end an article, I would love to wrap it up nicely. I just do not think these lessons from Job sit nicely. They are an affront to our human sense of justice. The deeper spiritual truths are harder to accept. You have to accept that the near-term reward for righteousness can sometimes be more pain than you ever thought you could handle. It teaches us to be humble, whether in peace or in suffering, because Adonai is enthroned in heaven either way. And the book has many more lessons for us. In the next couple of articles, I will explore two more difficult lessons from Job that I hope will be spiritually digestible and bless the reader.

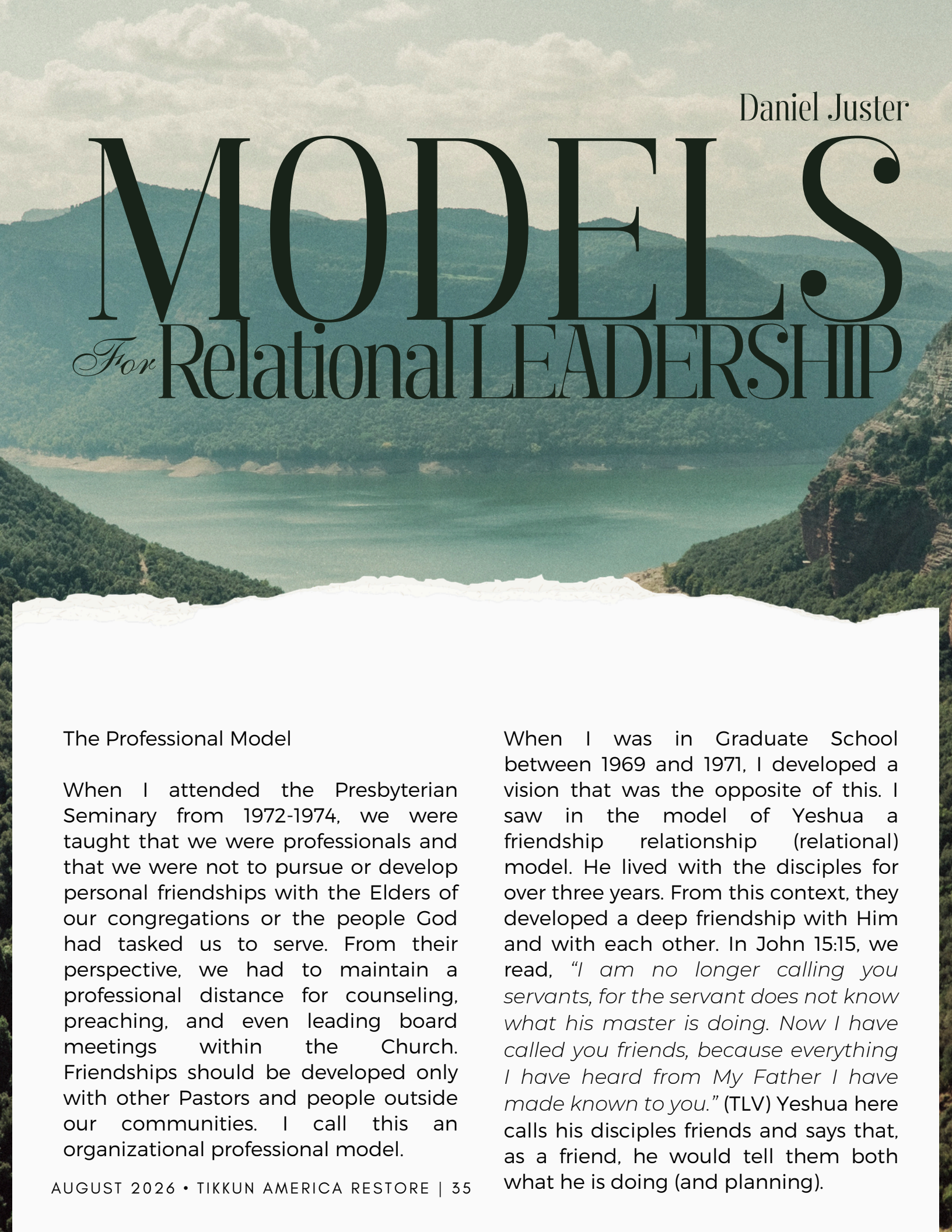


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ZACHARY WILLIAMS





Daniel Juster

MODELS

For Relational LEADERSHIP

The Professional Model

When I attended the Presbyterian Seminary from 1972-1974, we were taught that we were professionals and that we were not to pursue or develop personal friendships with the Elders of our congregations or the people God had tasked us to serve. From their perspective, we had to maintain a professional distance for counseling, preaching, and even leading board meetings within the Church. Friendships should be developed only with other Pastors and people outside our communities. I call this an organizational professional model.

When I was in Graduate School between 1969 and 1971, I developed a vision that was the opposite of this. I saw in the model of Yeshua a friendship relationship (relational) model. He lived with the disciples for over three years. From this context, they developed a deep friendship with Him and with each other. In John 15:15, we read, *"I am no longer calling you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing. Now I have called you friends, because everything I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."* (TLV) Yeshua here calls his disciples friends and says that, as a friend, he would tell them both what he is doing (and planning).



The Acts 2:42 Model

In Acts 2:42, Luke notes that the disciples “... were devoting themselves to the teaching of the emissaries, and to fellowship, to breaking bread and to prayers.” (TLV) This new community was continually together; they met together from house to house, they shared meals, and gave themselves to prayer and to the apostles' teaching. In that era, my student friends were reacting against what we called plastic, artificial, and inauthenticity in relationships. We saw an alienated population driven by economic motives. We wanted to see a lasting biblical community that brought humane living for God's people.

We called this developing a community characterized by covenant love relationships that would last a lifetime. In such a community, love will be tested, people will be disciplined, and they will grow into the likeness of Yeshua. Open, transparent relationships would be key. New people would be won to Yeshua and be added to the community. This is certainly the model we see with Paul. Note how he expresses his father's heart to the Corinthians (I Cor. 4:15) in stating, “*For though you may have ten thousand guardians in Messiah, yet you do not have many fathers. For in Messiah Yeshua, I became a father through the Good News.*” We also note how Paul wept in parting from the Elders of Ephesus in Acts 20. This is not a distant professional model.

Implementing the Acts 2:42 Model

My first opportunity to implement this vision was when I was called to the First Hebrew Christian Church in Chicago in 1972. I did not have a method for raising leaders. I only knew to call those who were willing to live near and form a proximity community, and to live within walking distance of one another. 45 heeded that call. I developed discipleship lessons. Then, from those who were responding to the vision, ... now a Messianic Jewish vision, Elders were nominated from those who seemed mature enough. Two of the key couples were young and had no children yet. Our first child was born in 1975. However, the idea of long-term community and raising our children together inspired us. To our surprise, we were called to move from Chicago to lead Beth Messiah Congregation in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC. The question now was how do we build community and develop Elders in this new context. My heart was that God would answer my prayer, that we would have a group of Elders that would walk together in a covenant love relationship for a lifetime.

A Growing Understanding of Developing Leaders

In the early years in my new congregation, I discovered a network of congregations that emphasized the raising up of leaders. If we are to grow in a community-oriented way, then we are limited by the number of Elders and home group deacon leaders that we can raise. Here is what I learned:



1. Preach radical commitment and dedication to the Lord and submission to His will in leading us in service in the congregation.

2. Find those who are willing to be raised, and look for four main characteristics:

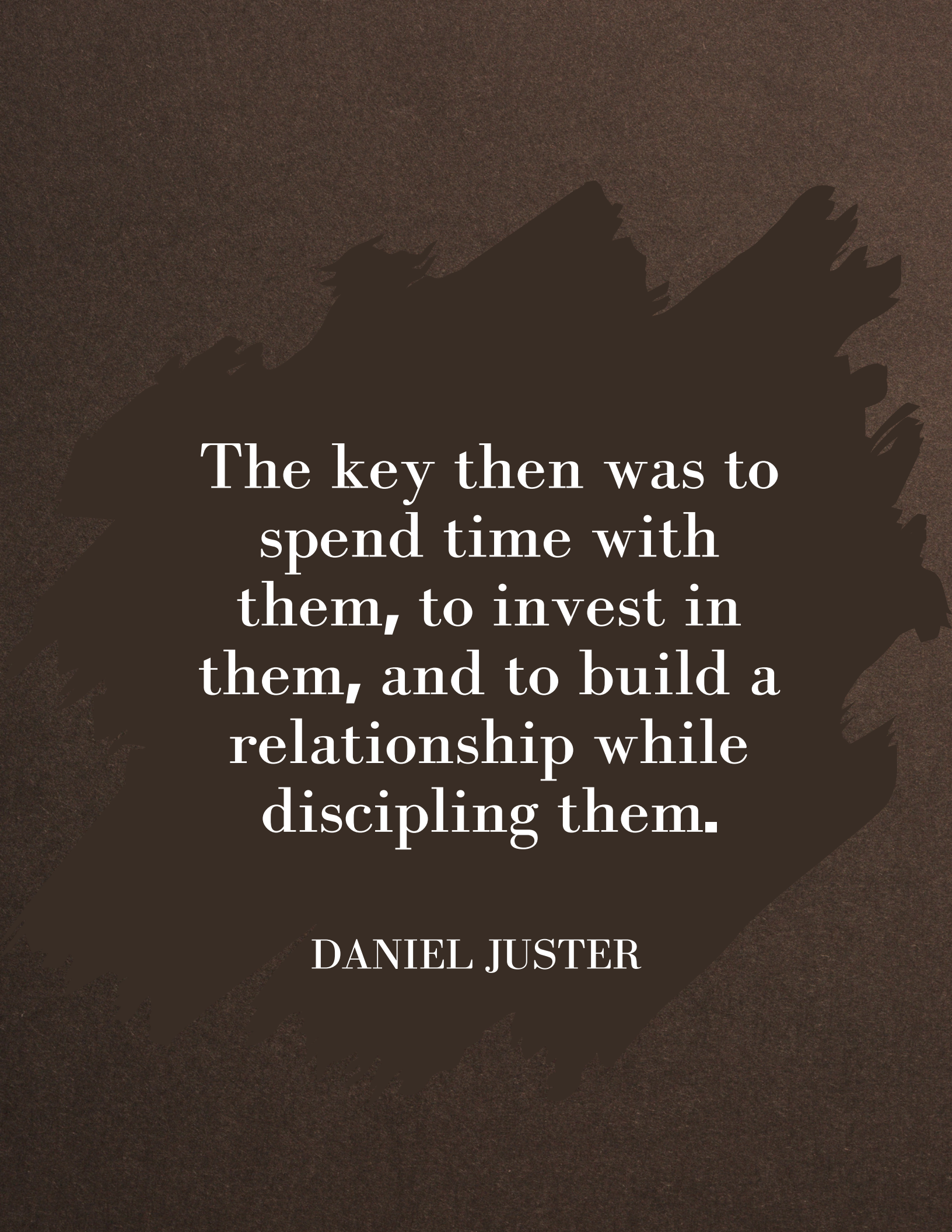
1. Worshippers of God
2. Teachable
3. Marriage and family in order
4. Intellectual capacity to lead and to articulate

If I did not have any that fit the criteria, then it was my job to find those closest to qualifying. The key then was to spend time with him, to invest in them, and to build a relationship while discipling them to qualify. **This sounds like what Yeshua did, and it worked!**

Not only did we raise up Elders and Shamashim (Deacons), but we built covenant love relationships that have lasted in many cases until this day, 45 years later.

Homegroups became the basis for intimacy, love, and transparency for members. This included such a covenant love connection in a network of congregations, planting congregations, and even ministry stretching across the ocean to Israel, where I now serve with my right and left arm leaders from that early time, along with people who were in my congregation then and are now in Israel in our congregations there.





The key then was to
spend time with
them, to invest in
them, and to build a
relationship while
disciplining them.

DANIEL JUSTER

Our Congregations

Arizona

BETH MAYIM CHAYIM
bethmayimchayim.org

YESHUA HA'MASHIACH
yeshua-hamashiach.org

BETH EMANUEL
bethmanuelaz.org

California

BETH DAVID
bethdavidmc.org

BETH SHALOM
bethshalomcorona.com

Colorado

OR CHAIM
or-chaim.com

Florida

BEIT HALLEL
beithallelocala.org

ELIM CONGREGATION
ElimMessianicCongregation.org

BETH YESHUA, HOUSE OF
THE RISEN SON
bethyshua.us

Illinois

NEW JERUSALEM HOUSE OF
PRAYER
newjerusalem.net

Kansas

KINGDOM LIVING
kingdomlivingkc.org

REMNANT OF ISRAEL
shalomwichita.com

Maryland

EL SHADDAI
escfrederick.com

ROSH PINA
roshpina.life

New York

ADAT CHAIM
adatchaim.net

BETH AM MESSIAH
bethammessiah.org

Pennsylvania

BEIT SIMCHA
beitsimcha.com

SHORESH DAVID
shoreshdavid.com

Tennessee

B'RIT HADASHA
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SHOMAIR YISRAEL
syknox.org

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