

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



“A Foundation for Fullness of Joy”

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): 1 John 1:1-4; Jn. 1:1-3; Jn. 15:7-14; Luke 24:39; Acts 17:27; Heb. 12:18

When John writes this first letter, he is writing into a community that has been torn by conflict and marked by division. This was not a disagreement over something small or secondary. The issue at stake was the very identity of Messiah Yeshua, the reality of His incarnation, and the truth of His atoning work. Some had departed from the faith once proclaimed, and John writes as a pastor, not simply to win an argument, but to call the people of God back to the foundation of truth, fellowship, and joy.

John's opening words are grand and poetic, but they are deeply practical. He is not writing so that believers can gain mere intellectual attainment or hold doctrinal ideas at a distance. He is writing so that the Word of God would be received, eaten, and absorbed into the lives of God's people. The goal is transformation. The goal is that what God has spoken would form us more and more into His likeness, so that our lives would bear fruit, our fellowship would remain rooted in truth, and our joy would be made full.

1. THE WORD OF LIFE WAS REALLY REVEALED

John begins with words that bring us back to the beginning: *“What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of life—”* (1 Jn. 1:1). He is making it clear that Yeshua was not an idea, not a symbol, not a spiritual appearance, and not a myth wrapped in religious language. John heard Him. John saw Him. John looked upon Him. John touched Him. The eternal Word of Life entered human history in a real body, in real time, among real witnesses.

That matters because false teaching often begins by disconnecting spiritual truth from embodied life. Some were teaching that the body was evil and only the spirit was good, and that led either to punishing the body or excusing sinful behavior with the body. But John confronts that error by pointing to Yeshua Himself. The Life was revealed. The eternal Son was with the Father and was made visible to us. The One who was from the beginning truly came in the flesh, and because He truly came, He can truly redeem.

2. THE WITNESSES PROCLAIM WHAT THEY HEARD AND SAW

John continues, *“The life was revealed, and we have seen and testify and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us”* (1 Jn. 1:2). John is not drawing attention to himself as though the witness is greater than the One witnessed to. He is doing what a faithful witness does: pointing beyond himself to the reality of Yeshua's life, death, and resurrection. What he heard years earlier was still ringing in his ears. What

he saw years earlier was still vivid before his eyes. The impact of encountering Yeshua had not faded.

This is why John's testimony carries both authority and pastoral urgency. He is not offering secret knowledge for a spiritual elite. He is proclaiming eternal life openly, clearly, and faithfully. This eternal life was *"with the Father"* (1 Jn. 1:2), echoing John's Gospel: *"In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God"* (Jn. 1:1). Yeshua is distinct from the Father and yet eternally one with Him. He is not merely a teacher touched by God for a season. He is the eternal Son, the Word made visible, the Life revealed.

3. TRUE FELLOWSHIP LEADS TO FULL JOY

John then gives the purpose of his proclamation: *"What we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so you may have fellowship with us. Indeed, our fellowship is with the Father and His Son, Yeshua the Messiah"* (1 Jn. 1:3). Fellowship is much deeper than coffee, conversation, or a friendly gathering after service. The word points to a shared common life, a communion rooted in truth. John is writing to preserve that communion, because division had entered the believing community, and false teaching was threatening to pull people away from the fellowship established in Messiah.

Then John adds, *"These things we write so our joy may be full"* (1 Jn. 1:4). Full joy is not found by drifting from truth, redefining Yeshua, or separating doctrine from daily life. Full joy is found in abiding in Him. Yeshua said, *"These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be full"* (Jn. 15:11). And He immediately connects that joy to love: *"This is My commandment, that you love one another just as I have loved you"* (Jn. 15:12). The fellowship John is calling us into is a life shared with the Father, with the Son, and with one another—a life marked by truth, obedience, and self-sacrificial love.

CONCLUSION

John's opening words bring us back to the foundation. Yeshua is the Word of Life. He was from the beginning. He was with the Father. He was revealed in the flesh. He was heard, seen, touched, testified to, and proclaimed. The faith we have received is not built on hidden speculation or private spiritual theories. It is built on the living Messiah who entered human history, laid down His life, rose again, and now calls us into fellowship with God and with one another.

And this matters for us today. We still live in a world filled with voices that separate belief from obedience, spirituality from embodied faithfulness, and love from truth. But John calls us back to the center. We do not simply hold ideas about Yeshua; we abide in Him. We do not simply gather around religious language; we share in the communion of life with the Father and His Son. And as we remain in that truth, walking in His love, our joy is not shallow, fragile, or temporary. It is made full.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it so important that John emphasizes Yeshua was heard, seen, looked upon, and touched?
2. How does denying either the real humanity or the full deity of Yeshua affect the message of salvation and atonement?
3. John writes so that believers may have fellowship with the apostles and with the Father and His Son. How does this deepen your understanding of biblical fellowship beyond casual friendship or social gathering?
4. In what ways do people today still separate “spiritual life” from what they do with their bodies, choices, habits, or relationships?
5. Where might the Lord be inviting you personally to return to abiding in Him so that your joy may be made full?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Avinu Malkhenu, Our Father, Our King, thank You for revealing eternal life through Your Son, Messiah Yeshua. Thank You that He is not an idea, a symbol, or a distant religious concept, but the Word of Life who came in the flesh, walked among us, died for us, and rose again. Lord, bring us back to the foundation of truth. Guard us from anything that distorts who Yeshua is or pulls us away from fellowship with You. Teach us to abide in Messiah, to walk in His commandments, and to love one another with the self-sacrificial love that reveals Your heart.

Let Your Word not remain merely in our minds, but become fruitful in our lives. Restore true fellowship where there has been division, restore clarity where there has been confusion, and restore joy where it has grown dim. May our joy be full because our life is rooted in You.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.