

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



“Straightening Out What the Enemy Has Twisted”

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Luke 13:10-17; John 8:44; John 10:10; Luke 4:18-19; Gen. 50:20; Deut. 5:12-15; Eph. 2:3-10

When our firstborn son, Giovanni, was around 3 or 4 years old, he did something that required correction. I don't remember what he did, but I do remember that he was emotional, overwhelmed, and beginning to melt down. As I tried to talk with him, I realized that more than anything, he needed to understand *why* he was being corrected. So I tried to anchor the whole conversation in one foundational truth: I love him. Even in correction, even in discipline, my love for him had not changed. So I began by saying, “Son, it's not that I don't love you...”—but before I could finish, he broke down crying. What he heard was this, “Son, ~~it's not that~~ I DON'T LOVE YOU...”. In that moment, what he heard was the exact *opposite* of what I was saying!

That same dynamic plays out in our relationship with God more often than we realize. The Lord speaks life, goodness, and truth—but there is a Liar who twists what is said, distorts what is heard, and convinces us of the opposite. God is good. He builds, restores, and redeems. But the Enemy seeks to bend what God has spoken, so that instead of running toward Him, we pull away—believing something about Him that simply isn't true.

1. THE ENEMY TWISTS WHAT GOD DESIGNED TO BRING LIFE

Yeshua describes the Enemy plainly: “*He was a murderer from the beginning... for he is a liar and the father of lies*”(John 8:44). And then He contrasts the work of the enemy with His own mission: “*The thief comes only to steal, slaughter, and destroy. **I have come that they might have life, and have it abundantly!***” (John 10:10). From the beginning, the Enemy has taken what God designed for life and attempted to twist it into something destructive. What was meant to bring rest and restoration becomes pressure. What was meant to bring freedom becomes bondage. What was meant to reveal God's heart becomes something that conceals it.

Consider Shabbat. After rescuing His people from Egypt—from endless striving under Pharaoh—God gives them provision and then invites them into rest. It was a gift: “I will supply what you need, and I will teach you to trust Me.” Shabbat wasn't just about stopping work—it was about sitting at His table, being known, being cared for, and learning to live free from anxiety. It was life-giving. It was relational. It was beautiful. But the Enemy doesn't create new things—he distorts what already exists. And over time, even something as beautiful as Shabbat can be bent into something unrecognizable relative to what it was created to be.

2. RELIGION TWISTS GOD'S GIFTS INTO BURDENS

In Luke 13, we see this distortion on full display. Yeshua is teaching in the synagogue on Shabbat, and there is a woman who has been bent over for eighteen years—unable to stand up straight. Then Yeshua speaks life: *“Woman, you are set free from your disability.”* And immediately, she stands upright and begins praising God (Luke 13:12–13). This is exactly what Shabbat was meant to be—a day of restoration, healing, and freedom. The heart of God is being revealed right in front of them.

But instead of rejoicing, the synagogue leader is indignant. “Come on the other six days to be healed,” he says, “but not on Shabbat!” In that moment, religion exposes itself. It reveals a version of God that values rules over people, systems over restoration, and appearances over compassion. The message becomes, “God loves order and structure,” while the truth is, “God loves *you*.” Religion shifts the focus away from God’s heart and onto human performance. It creates distance where God intended closeness. And tragically, it often causes the very people who need healing the most to feel unwelcome and unworthy.

3. YESHUA RESTORES WHAT THE ENEMY HAS TWISTED

Where religion indignantly demands, “You couldn’t wait one more day?” Yeshua responds in action: “Not one more second.” He sees the woman, calls her forward, and sets her free. Then He confronts the distortion head-on: *“Shouldn’t this woman... be set free from this imprisonment on Yom Shabbat?”* (Luke 13:16). In other words, “Don’t you see? This is exactly what this day is for.” Yeshua doesn’t just heal her body—He restores the meaning of Shabbat. He straightens what has been bent, both physically and spiritually.

This is what Yeshua does. He reveals the true heart of God. He lifts the weight of distortion and replaces it with truth. He reminds the broken that they are seen, valued, and loved. And He reminds the religious that they’ve missed the point. The woman walks away free—standing upright for the first time in eighteen years, praising God. Meanwhile, those who clung to their distorted version of God are left confronted with a choice: will they hold onto their system, or will they receive the heart of God that’s right in front of them?

CONCLUSION

So the question becomes personal. Has the Enemy twisted something in your understanding of God? Has a lie settled in—convincing you that God is distant, disappointed, or uninterested in you? Maybe what you heard wasn’t what He actually said. Maybe somewhere along the way, His voice was distorted, and you’ve been responding to something He never meant. Today is an invitation to look again—not at religion, not at people—but at Yeshua. He is the clearest expression of the Father’s heart.

Or perhaps the question turns the other way. Have we, at times, allowed religion or pride to distort how we represent God to others? Have we forgotten that “*we too*” were once broken, bent over, and in need of grace (Eph. 2:3–5)? If so, the call is the same: repent, return, and be restored. Let Yeshua straighten what has been twisted in us, so that through us, others might finally see Him clearly. Come to Him today—whether for healing, for clarity, or for realignment—and let Him restore what the Enemy has tried to distort.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Can you think of a time when you misunderstood something God was saying, similar to the story in the introduction? What shaped that misunderstanding?
2. What are some examples today of good things from God that have been twisted into burdens?
3. How does the story in Luke 13 challenge the way we think about “doing things right” versus reflecting God’s heart?
4. In what ways can religion subtly shift our focus from people to rules?
5. Who in your life might feel “bent over” or unwelcome—and how can you reflect the heart of Yeshua to them?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Avinu Malkhenu, Our Father, Our King, thank You that You are not distant or harsh, but good, kind, and full of compassion. Thank You that when things have been twisted—whether in our understanding or in our lives—You do not leave us there. You come near, You speak truth, and You restore. Help us to hear You clearly, not through the distortion of fear or pride, but through the truth revealed in Yeshua. Lord, search our hearts. Show us where we have believed lies, and where we may have misrepresented You to others. We repent of anything that has distorted Your love. Teach us to walk in humility, compassion, and truth. And for those who feel bent over, weary, or bound—bring freedom today. Straighten what has been twisted, and lead us all into the fullness of life You have promised.

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