

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



"Simchat Torah: Keep Saying What God Says"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): *Heb. 3:1, 6–14; 4:1–16; 10:19–25, 32–39; Deut. 8:2–3; Num. 13:27–33*

It is easy to start something. Finishing is another matter. Think about how many people begin January determined to get healthy, start a Bible reading plan, begin a project around the house, or open a book they are certain they are going to finish. Beginnings are exciting. There is energy in something new. But somewhere between the beginning and the finish line, the enthusiasm wears off, progress becomes harder to see, and other pressures begin competing for our attention. What begins with enthusiasm has to be completed through faithfulness, perseverance, endurance, and consistency. The same thing is true in our walk with the LORD.

That is one of the lessons of the wilderness. Israel came out of Egypt, saw the plagues, walked through the Red Sea, ate manna from heaven, and experienced the miraculous provision of God—and yet that very generation failed to finish the journey because they stopped trusting what God had said. The book of Hebrews speaks to believers facing their own pressures and tells them not to drift away, not to shrink back, but to hold firmly to what God has spoken. Three times, the writer of Hebrews uses the word *homologia*—"confession"—which carries the idea of the "same word." What God says, I say. That sounds simple until what I see seems to contradict what God has said. It is easy to agree with God while the Red Sea is opening. But what happens when we are standing in front of giants?

1. FIX YOUR EYES ON WHAT GOD HAS SAID | Heb. 3:1

Hebrews begins this section with a very deliberate instruction: *"Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, partners in a heavenly calling, take notice of Yeshua—the Emissary and Kohen Gadol we affirm (homologia, "our confession"/our same word) "* (Heb. 3:1). Consider Him. Fix your thoughts on Him. Before we can keep saying what God says, we have to keep our attention fixed on what God has said. One of the greatest dangers in the wilderness is allowing what is happening around us to become bigger in our minds than the One who spoke the promise. God has spoken ultimately through His Son, and Hebrews calls us to keep bringing our attention back to Yeshua.

That was Israel's problem when the spies returned from the Promised Land. All twelve saw the same land. All twelve saw the fortified cities and powerful people. But Joshua and Caleb evaluated what they saw through what God had already said, while the other ten evaluated what God had said through what they saw. Their circumstances became more authoritative to them than God's promise. Eventually they said, *"We cannot attack these people, because they are stronger than we"* (Num. 13:31). That is the danger. When our fear becomes louder than the Word of God, we begin saying something different from what He has said. Faith does not deny what is in front of us; faith refuses to allow what is in front of us to have the final word.

2. HOLD FAST TO WHAT GOD HAS SAID | Heb. 4:14

After reminding us what happened to the Exodus generation in the wilderness, the writer of Hebrews returns to *homologia*: *"Therefore, since we have a great Kohen Gadol who has passed through the heavens, Yeshua Ben-Elohim, let us hold firmly to our confessed allegiance (homologia, "same word")"* (Heb. 4:14). In other words, **cling** to the same word. It is not enough to hear what

God says. It is not enough to agree with Him when the journey begins. There comes a point when what God has spoken and what we see seem to collide. In that moment, the instruction is simple: hold fast. Don't just confess the Word when the Red Sea opens. Hold onto it when the giants appear.

The Exodus generation had seen miracle after miracle. They had experienced deliverance, provision, manna, water from the rock, the cloud by day and fire by night. Yet when the LORD said, "Go take the land," they stopped. Hebrews warns us not to repeat their mistake. We can rejoice in yesterday's deliverance and still become afraid of tomorrow's unknown. We can know that God has been faithful and still be tempted to retreat to something familiar that we think we can control. But the LORD says, "Trust Me." Faith keeps agreeing with God even when circumstances are saying something else. We hold fast because our confidence is not ultimately in our ability to understand the journey; our confidence is in the faithfulness of the One who spoke the promise.

3. HELP ONE ANOTHER KEEP SAYING WHAT GOD HAS SAID | Heb. 10:23–25

The LORD never intended for us to make this journey alone. Hebrews uses *homologia* again when it says, "*Let us hold fast the unwavering confession (homologia, "same word") of hope, for He who promised is faithful*" (Heb. 10:23). But notice where the writer immediately goes next: "*And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good deeds. And do not neglect our own meetings, as is the habit of some, but encourage one another—and all the more so as you see the Day approaching*" (Heb. 10:24–25). Apparently, one of God's provisions for helping me hold onto His Word is YOU. And vice versa. Sometimes I can remind myself what God said. Sometimes I need you to remind me.

There are moments when fear becomes loud, disappointment becomes heavy, and the wilderness seems to last much longer than we expected. In those moments we need brothers and sisters beside us saying, "Don't forget what God said. Don't go back. Don't stop here. Don't let what you see make you forget what He spoke." This is why being in community with other believers matters. This is why encouragement matters. In the weariness of battle, we need people who love us enough to shake us awake when we are tempted to lie down on the battlefield. We stir one another toward love and obedience. We remind one another of God's faithfulness. We help one another keep pressing forward until together we finish.

CONCLUSION

This is where all three of these truths lead us: fix your eyes on what God has said, hold fast to what God has said, and help one another keep saying what God has said. Hebrews eventually declares, "*But we are not among the timid ones on the path to destruction, but among the faithful ones on the path to the preservation of the soul*" (Heb. 10:39). Who are we? We are not those who shrink back. We are not those who allow the wilderness to convince us that God has abandoned us. We are those who trust Him. And that leads directly into Hebrews 11: "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of realities not seen*" (Heb. 11:1).

Your circumstances may say, "The giants are too big." Fear may say, "God has forgotten you." Disappointment may whisper, "Turn around. Go back to what you know." But faith keeps returning to what God has spoken. He brought Israel out because He intended to bring them in. He was faithful in Egypt, faithful at the Red Sea, faithful in the wilderness, and faithful at the border of the promise. The same God is faithful today. So keep running to His Word. Keep

running into His presence. Keep gathering with His people and reminding one another of His faithfulness. **Keep saying what God says until you see what God said.**

Maybe somewhere along the journey you have allowed what you see to become louder than what God has said. Maybe fear has crept in. Maybe disappointment has worn you down. Perhaps you have not walked away from God, but somewhere inside you have begun to shrink back—to stop expecting Him to be faithful, to stop trusting His Word, or to retreat toward something that feels easier to control. Today is an opportunity to bring your heart and your words back into agreement with Him. Fix your eyes again on Yeshua. Bring your fear, weakness, questions, and weariness to the throne of grace. You do not have to pretend the giants are small. You simply have to remember that they are not bigger than the LORD. Ask Him to renew your confidence in what He has spoken. And if you see someone beside you growing weary, become the person who reminds them, “Don’t stop here. Don’t go back. He who promised is faithful.” Let us be a people who hold fast, encourage one another, and finish.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does *homologia*—the idea of saying the “same word” as God—help you understand about biblical confession and faith?
2. Why did Joshua and Caleb respond differently from the other ten spies even though all twelve were looking at essentially the same circumstances?
3. **What situation in your life right now is tempting you to trust what you see or feel more than what you know God has said?**
4. **Have disappointment, delay, fear, or a desire for control caused you to begin “shrinking back” in some area of your walk with the LORD? What would holding fast look like practically?**
5. Who in your life may need you to remind them of God’s faithfulness this week? What could you intentionally say or do to encourage them to keep going?

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank You that You are faithful and Your Word is true. Forgive us for the times we have allowed circumstances, fear, disappointment, or our own understanding to become louder than what You have spoken. Help us fix our eyes on Yeshua and hold firmly to our confession of hope because You who promised are faithful. Teach us to trust You when the Red Sea opens and when the giants stand in front of us.

Holy Spirit, strengthen us to persevere and finish. Keep our hearts from drifting and our faith from shrinking back. Surround us with brothers and sisters who will remind us of Your truth, and make us people who encourage others to keep trusting You. May our hearts, our words, and our lives continually agree with You. Whatever lies ahead, help us keep saying what You say and faithfully follow You all the way to the end.

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