

# THE NARROW ROAD

## *Contending for the Holiness of God*

*We often find that there is only enough room for one to travel the narrow road, as He leads us out of Babylon and onto the highway of holiness. Yet, knowing, we are not alone, for the Lover of our soul will not forsake or abandon us.*

### MAKE ME A SANCTUARY – PART 1

#### **EXODUS 25:1-9**

*Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering. And this is the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats' hair; ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate. And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.*

#### **Our Role—His Role**

In our journey to becoming the Bride of Messiah—a mature son or daughter of God, we often experience that not only is it a narrow road, but a costly road to travel. At our new birth, when we receive Yeshua as our Savior, we are justified by faith, and are saved. Yet, our new birth was not the end of our salvation journey, but the beginning for us to receive the end result of our faith, the salvation of our souls [1 Peter 1:9].

In our Christian walk, the Lord will always have His role to fulfill in our lives. Yet, we too, have a role to fulfill—to consecrate our lives unto the Lord. To the degree that which we fulfill our role, will determine to what degree that the Lord will be able to complete His plans in our lives. In Exodus 25:8-9, the Lord told Moses to tell the people to make a sanctuary for Him that He might dwell amongst them. It required their response—

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their role. And, they were to make it according to what He showed them, not just whatever seemed like a good idea to them.

### EXODUS 25:8-9

*Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. And you shall make it according to all that I show you, the pattern of the tabernacle or dwelling and the pattern of all the furniture of it.*

The Lord yearns to make His abode within our souls—to dwell within us, that He may walk amongst us. In order to do so, He commands that we should be holy, as He is holy [1 Peter 1:15-16]. For His holiness cannot dwell in the unclean recesses of our souls. Meaning, those areas of our souls that have yet to be refined by the Refiner's fire: pride, jealousy, disobedience, bitterness, gossip, sexual immorality, impure motives of selfish gain, fame and promotion, as some examples. He will always love us, for nothing can ever take away the love and passion that He has for humanity. But our sin will separate us from Him, forever, if we choose not to humble ourselves before Him by repenting of our harmful, unholy and impure behaviours.

The Hebrew word for holy is 'kadosh.' It is Strong's H6918. It means: to consecrate, to be set apart.<sup>1</sup> As believers, we are to live in this world, but we are not to be conformed into its likeness—its corruption, its lusts, its prideful ways—its fleshly desires. Instead, we are called to be set apart from it and to be conformed into the likeness of Yeshua, until Messiah has been completely conformed within our souls, in our words, thoughts and deeds. It is not a one-time decision or act, but a lifestyle and commitment to walk the highway of holiness. And often that means surrendering our will for His: one conversation, one text message and one trial at a time.

### ISAIAH 35:8

*A highway shall be there, and a road, and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool, shall not go astray.*

### Abiding in Love

If we are to make a sanctuary in our hearts, where the Lord can dwell, we must learn the discipline of abiding in love. His love is not like man's soulish love.

It is not based on emotions or falsehood, but based on truth, purity, holiness, righteousness and justice. His pure, perfect love demands that we should live in the fullness of the truth that will set every part of our captive souls free.

### JOHN 15:4-14

*Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. **He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.** If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; **abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.***

In John chapter 15, the Lord states that if we abide in the Vine, we will bear much fruit. But if we do not, we will wither up and be cast into fire and burned. We will be cast out of His presence. To love Him, means we obey Him—His Word. To love Him, means we pattern our lives on this earth as He walked on this earth. To love Him, means we do not spiritualise scripture to convince ourselves, or others, that He did not really mean what He told us. When He said it will be the pure in heart who see God, He meant what He said, literally [Matthew 5:8].

To abide and become holy love is a progressive journey for us. It is an active state of being and it is not automatic. Every day, every decision we make it requires that we are intentional, as to whether or not we pursue His holy love. Meaning, are we willing to surrender our will, for His? And if we are willing, then in that place of learning to abide in love, we will lay down our lives for those in need. We will be able to see past the faults of others and see their needs filtered through His eyes of Light, His lens of Love and His heart of Mercy. We will love, as He loves us. When we do, He will call us friend. Many believe they



are the Lord's friend simply because they believe in Him. But to be His friend means we will obey Him, because we love Him! And that means no matter what the cost and without excuses. Therefore, the Lord, in actuality has very few friends. We all have the option to be His friend. But sadly, most will only know Him as friend, and not the other way around, because many Christians live for selfish gain.

### **JOHN 14:23**

*Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.*

To abide in His holy love—staying connected to the Vine, can sound so simple. Yet, often we stumble over and over again, because of the areas of our souls not yet surrendered to His ways of doing things. It is a process in our lives, where often we learn from the Master how to love from the mistakes and failures that we have made. There are no short cuts. It takes patience and endurance not to give in, give up and give over, when our weak flesh wants to dominate. But thank God, He has provided the 'heavenly blueprint' and the grace that we need to succeed!

The Lord will always care more about our holiness, obedience and our character matching His, than any list of accomplishments that we have done in His great and mighty name. He will always care more about the fruit of the Spirit manifesting in our lives, than how much we display the nine gifts. He is after abundant, good fruit that will satisfy His hunger. And that hunger is satisfied when our character matches His, so that we can become compatible with Him. He wants us to make Him a sanctuary, as He longs to come and dwell within our souls.

If we are to build His Kingdom on this earth, His way, the nine gifts are needed and to be desired. But so many in the Body, particularly in the prophetic stream, are operating in them with unclean hands and impure hearts. The gifts and the callings are irrevocable. He will let us use them for selfish gain and with impure motives. He will always test us to see if we will use and abuse them. And if our soul has not been refined by fire, we will fail the tests every time. His goal is that our character matches His in our words, thoughts and deeds. For when it does, we bear abundant, good fruit that promotes His holy love. Paul, when speaking to the Corinthians about the gifts, said, *"Yet, I show you a more excellent way..."*

*abide in faith, hope and love, but the greatest is love"* [1 Corinthians 12:31, 13:13].

### **Fruit of the Spirit – Our Roadmap**

We could sum up 'abiding in love' as the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self-control. As a believer, this is our steadfast and perfect roadmap, where we learn the discipline of abiding in love. If we can 'master' the fruit of the Spirit, we will succeed in making Him a holy sanctuary, where He can make His abode in our heart. We will end up using the gifts for His fame and gain, and not for ours. But it will be painful and cost us everything, and mostly our pride as our flesh dies to its desires, in exchange for His pure and holy desires, in every area of our lives.

### **GALATIANS 5:22-23**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such there is no law.*

The fruit of the Spirit should be our 'litmus test' to judge how we are doing in any situation we face, and especially when we are going through trials and afflictions. When accessing our hearts, it is vital that we do so without partiality. Equally important, when we have missed the mark, we must not let the enemy beat us up. Instead, we aim again, by keeping our eyes on the only One Who is able to prevent us from stumbling and present us blameless before the presence of His glory in triumphant joy. We ask for grace—His strength and abilities, to help us to keep overcoming our various afflictions and temptations.

As we walk through life's circumstances, we must check our hearts to see where our flesh is ruling. For the works of the flesh will always oppose the fruit of the Spirit: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like. Paul tells us that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Beloveds, he was talking to believers, not the unsaved [Galatians 5:19-21].

### **Die Daily**

So how do we move away from the works of the flesh and towards the fruit of the Spirit? We are to die daily

by surrendering: our will, needs, wants, desires, dreams and worthless opinions in exchange for His. We are to deny our flesh, take up our cross and follow the Lamb wherever He may lead, no matter what the costs. When we do, we are crucifying our flesh, with our goal being that it is no longer us who liveth, but Messiah Who lives within our souls. When we do, we will walk after the Spirit and no longer be controlled by our soulish desires. We will bear abundant, good fruit [1 Corinthians 15:31, Galatians 2:20, Luke 14:26, 27, 33].

### **GALATIANS 5:24-25**

*And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

Beloved, nobody cares more about our souls being saved and our destinies being fulfilled, more than the Father. And because He is a good Father, He orchestrates our custom designed trials that put a pressure on us to bring to the surface what is in our hearts. For our true colours are often revealed when we face adversities. His purpose for doing so, is not because He wants to shame or condemn us. No! The opposite is true. He wants to free us from thoughts, desires or deeds that are harming us and our relationship with Him, and with others.

It is much easier to be kind to those in our lives when all is well. It is another story, when facing the pain of the loss of a loved one, betrayal, slander or our many fears that can paralyse us. We can be encouraged, for our afflictions do not take the Lord by surprise, but are by His divine design. They are not meant to destroy us, but transform us into the fruit of the Spirit, that we may endure through our difficult, unpleasant and painful situations, His way.

The Lord always goes after our heart, wanting to purify and free us from the traumas that we have suffered. When we allow Him to do so, by dying daily, we become compatible with His nature. When we go through suffering, His way, we bring an offering to Him that is more precious than gold or silver. We are making a sanctuary, where He can dwell in our hearts, with our costly tears, pain, surrenders of self and of others. We must not waste our tears and trials.

Equally, we must deal with our sin. But God will not force us to deal with it. He is a God of free will and will never force Himself upon our lives. His grace is

sufficient and it abounds the worst sin we could ever commit. But it will be up to us to bring Him our free-will offerings, by confessing it, as often as needed, that it may be covered by the Blood and wiped out of our book of remembrance. There are eternal consequences for unrepented sin that has not been covered by the Blood of the Lamb. It is not a one-time event, when we receive Messiah. And why it is important that we keep short accounts, by searching our hearts daily, asking Him to show us any sin that is within us. And not for Him to shame us, but for Him to cleanse us from it.

### **1 JOHN 1:8-9**

*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*

### **HEBREWS 10:26-27**

*For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.*

Yeshua forewarns, in Matthew 7, that the way that leads to destruction is broad and many will enter it. And how the way that leads to life is difficult and narrow, and how few will find it. Why will few find it? Because to contend for the holiness of God to permeate every area of one's soul—to let go of the low life, to obtain the high life, will cost a person everything. It is painful and lonely, as He test our faith with fire after fire, all the while proving our faithfulness in the most difficult, dry seasons. If we choose the narrow gate and road, our sin will no longer be hidden. Instead, covered by the Blood for those who are humble and repent.

### **MATTHEW 7:13-14**

*Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

## **Eternal Rewards**

God will not minimize our disobedience to Him. We will always have a choice whether or not to obey. If

we choose to obey, we will have a reward of life. If we choose to disobey, we will have the reward of death, for the wages of sin are death. We might make it to heaven, but suffer the loss of the eternal rewards that the Father had always intended for us to obtain. That is not His will for any of us. Instead, that we would abide in the Vine, producing abundant, good fruit.

Yeshua is coming for a Bride, who has made herself ready. A Bride, who will be found this side of eternity without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. A Bride, who overcomes by the Blood of the Lamb, by the word of their testimony, and who do not love their own life, unto death. May we not give in or give up to the ungodly ways of this fallen world. Instead, may we keep surrendering our will for His, until the full stature of Messiah has been forged within our souls. May we present every man perfect in Messiah Yeshua and go onto perfection [Ephesians 5:26-27, 4:13, Colossians 1:28, Hebrews 6:1].

#### **COLOSSIANS 1:27-28**

*To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.*

#### **REVELATION 19:7**

*Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.*

Remember, in Exodus, for the Israelites to build a sanctuary where the Lord could dwell, they were to bring their gold, their silver and their best linens. They were not to bring their second bests. Instead, no expense was too great. It was a requirement.

So, too, is it for those who want to be the Bride of Messiah. He requires that we bring all of our will, and give it to Him, so that He can take our free-will offerings and give us something far better—everlasting rewards! Rewards that no eye has seen, no ear has heard and that no heart has imagined what God has prepared for those who love Him!

His ways are pure and holy, yet full of grace. I can tell you, personally speaking, at times it will be humiliating, ugly, messy, embarrassing, and painful as we see our sin the way He does. For the Lord will not tolerate any compromise or mixture with the

ways of this world in our lives. It is not easy, and actually, often hard—but worth it!

May the Lord keep searching our hearts and try them, and see if there is any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way of everlasting life [Psalm 139:23-24]. AMEN!

#### **ENDNOTES**

1 *Blue Letter Bible*, Strong's Concordance H6918

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