

Psalm 103

GRATITUDE

THE BASIC UNIT OF THANKSGIVING

How Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) Brings Thanksgiving To Mind



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INTRODUCTION

The best way to strengthen the human body is with resistance training. Using bands, weights, heavy labour, or strenuous activity/exercise. Forcing your body to work against its natural desire to NOT work. Whatever your normal activity levels are, you need to do MORE in order to strengthen yourself. It can be with fun activities. It can be with hard activities. As long as your muscles are working harder than they usually do, you will build up strength, endurance, size, and power. It is how we were designed. One of the reasons we were designed this way was so that we would understand the SPIRITUAL principle of thanksgiving. It is GRATITUDE that strengthens our soul.

“Then he said to them, “Go, eat festive food and drink sweet drinks, and send a share to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our lord. Do not be grieved because the joy of Yahweh is your refuge.”” (Nehemiah 8:10). Their country had been conquered. Many of the people had been taken into captivity. A foreign king ruled them through a governor he had set up over the people. They were concerned that the king would return and take the rest of them – or worse, kill them. What were they told? Go and not only do your regular work but take the time to have EXTRA food, have EXTRA drink, and give EXTRA charity so that everyone could CELEBRATE. Why? Because when they participate in Adonai’s feasts with holy intent, Adonai is joyful. That joy – HIS joy – would give them strength. In that strength, born from thanksgiving, they would be secure and safe – no matter WHAT it looked like naturally. Nothing has changed. We too can CHOOSE to be grateful to Adonai. We can CHOOSE to be thankful. When we are, Adonai is JOYFUL. That joy is our strength if we CHOOSE it.

Adonai does not FORCE us to emote His character. We CAN, but we won’t if we don’t ENGAGE it. Anyone can gift us a vehicle full of fuel. But if we don’t get in, turn it on, and operate it? We won’t go anywhere and might as well not have it. Anxiety isn’t an involuntary thing. It is a choice. Either we are CHOOSING Adonai’s way, or we are CHOOSING the way of the world. It’s like standing on the beach. We can choose to step into the water and be at the mercy of the waves OR we can choose to step back and not be influenced by the waves. Anxiety or depression or grief or sadness are those kinds of decisions. When they come upon us, we can CHOOSE to remain in them or CHOOSE to REPLACE them. It isn’t just deciding not to be sad or anxious. That would be ridiculous. It is REPLACING them with something ELSE. Not something ephemeral, like choosing to ‘see the silver lining’, but something SOLID and REAL and MATERIAL. We can plug ourselves into a low-voltage cord not rated to operate ourselves, or we can plug into the SOURCE of honest and proper current.

Thanksgiving is the key to engaging Adonai’s character. Ruach HaKodesh was given to us – among other things – because HE has the fruit of Adonai’s character. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. Against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh together with its feelings and its desires. If we live by the Spirit, we must also follow the Spirit”* (Galatians 5:22-25). How do we follow Ruach? Follow the music (Zephaniah 3:17). Ruach HaKodesh never stops

speaking to us. He ALSO never stops singing Jesus' song over us. He joins with Jesus in singing. Full-bodied and enthusiastic singing. JOYFUL singing. And we are CALLED to participate. To join in. We are the counter-melody giving JOYFUL praise to He who sings over us. Our thanksgiving in response to His thanksgiving in the same way our love is in response to His love (1 John 4:19).

One of the best models we have for this is Psalm 103. It is a blueprint for how to maintain an attitude of gratitude in our hearts. We're going to be looking at each verse individually (and verse five more than once) and think on how each one looks at a different aspect of the human experience and our relationship to Adonai and what He has done, is doing, and will do for us as we arrive at our future. We'll remember a tidbit that pairs well with our daily verse to further explore the character of Adonai - which helps us place Him in His rightful place in our lives. We should all be able to find new ways to express these daily thanks to Him, our GOOD God.

Psalm 103

*Bless Yahweh, O my soul,
and all within me, bless his holy name.
Bless Yahweh, O my soul,
and do not forget all his benefits:
who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit,
who crowns you with loyal love and mercies,
who satisfies your life with good
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
Yahweh does deeds of justice
and judgments for all who are oppressed,
who made known his ways to Moses,
his deeds to the people of Israel.
Yahweh is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and abundant in loyal love.
He does not dispute continually,
nor keep his anger forever.
He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so his loyal love prevails over those who fear him.
As far as east is from west,
so he has removed far from us the guilt of our transgressions.
As a father pities his children,
so Yahweh pities those who fear him.
For he knows our frame.
He remembers that we are dust.
As for man, his days are like the grass.
As the flower of the field, so he blossoms.*

*When the wind passes over it, it is no more,
and its place knows it no longer.
But the loyal love of Yahweh
is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him,
and his righteousness to their children's children,
to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his precepts.
Yahweh has established his throne in the heavens,
and his kingdom rules over all.
Bless Yahweh, you his angels,
you mighty heroes who do his word
by obeying the sound of his word.
Bless Yahweh, all you his hosts,
you his attendants who do his will.
Bless Yahweh, all his works,
in all the places of his dominion.
Bless Yahweh, O my soul.*

SPEAK TO YOURSELF

Bless Yahweh, O my soul, and all within me, bless his holy name.

Psalm 103:1

A grateful heart because of what Adonai has done (Philippians 4:12-13). A grateful heart no matter what is going on (1 Thessalonians 5:18). A grateful heart regardless of what is coming toward you (Ephesians 5:20). A grateful heart no matter what we FEEL like (Psalm 116:17). A grateful heart because we love Adonai and through Him are able to love others (1 John 4:19-21). A grateful heart because of what Jesus did and who lives within us to enable us to see what Adonai says we can be, not through OUR efforts but because of JESUS' accomplishments (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). A grateful heart because of who we are in Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:21). In fact, we should have a grateful heart simply because Adonai IS Adonai (Revelation 4:11; Hebrews 13:15; Philippians 4:8; Psalm 150). It is right and good and proper. So why don't we do it with consistency? The flesh. It FORGETS that Adonai IS Adonai. Psalm 103 is a call to remember to be thankful. To remember to have a grateful heart. To remember that Adonai IS Adonai. We are going to be spending some time here because we are COMMANDED to remember this very thing.

"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Jesus is what it is ALL about. If you don't believe in Jesus and accept His payment for Sin, you'll need to pay the price yourself – which means an eternity without Adonai (John 16:8; Romans 6:23; Matthew 25:41). If we believe in Jesus and have accepted His payment for Sin, we need to submit to Him in obedience so that He is King and Lord over ALL of our lives (John 16:8; James 4:7; John 14:15). If we love Him, we should worship Him. We should submit to Him in everything. We should humble ourselves and submit to His decisions, opinions, morals, and viewpoint. Habakkuk questioned Adonai about some things and then sat back and humbled himself IN ADVANCE so that he would easily embrace whatever Adonai's answer was (Habakkuk 2:1). When Adonai answered him (Habakkuk 2), Habakkuk answered THAT with a song of PRAISE and TRUST (Habakkuk 3). He embraced Adonai's PERSPECTIVE through praise. That is what this Psalm models.

“And do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you may approve what is the good and well-pleasing and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:2). We have ACCESS to the Mind of Messiah (1 Corinthians 2:16). But we don’t naturally understand ANYTHING in that mind. We need to renew our own minds to His mind through the Word. It’s a process. We ONLY understand what has been renewed in our souls. That means study, questioning, dwelling on, listening, reading and re-reading, and then accepting. How can we hold all of that in our heads? We can’t. We need a renewed PHYSICAL form (1 John 3:2; 1 Corinthians 15:52). Until then, we have to rely on Ruach HaKodesh. *“And he took bread, and after giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” And in the same way the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for you”* (Luke 22:19-20). We are COMMANDED to REMEMBER Jesus. We do that through one of the ministries of Ruach HaKodesh.

“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name—that one will teach you all things, and will remind you of everything that I said to you” (John 14:26). Ruach HaKodesh REMINDS us of EVERYTHING the Word says – Jesus IS the Word and the Word IS Jesus (John 1:1-5, 14). If we will get it into our souls (hearts, minds, and personality), Ruach HaKodesh will remind us of it when we need to be reminded of it. Our part is to take that reminder from Him and remind OURSELVES of it. Through praise and thanksgiving. If we have to we should LIST what it is that Adonai has done for us. When my family takes communion, we list two things that we are specifically remembering in order to thank Adonai for them. We need to live in PERPETUAL thanksgiving (1 Thessalonians 5:18). We need to NEVER let it go. We need to BLESS Adonai through our praise and thanksgiving, and we need to make sure our bodies NEVER forget to do it – even if we need a thousand Post-It Notes around our house to make sure we do.

We need to do it with ALL we have. No holding back. No putting restrictions on it. No failing to give it TRUE gratitude because you didn’t like HOW or WHEN something came to pass. No trying to BARGAIN your praise out and ‘make’ Adonai move. Adonai doesn’t even HEAR prayers like that (James 4:3). We’re getting in line with Adonai, not trying to

get Him to align with us. We need to clean out the cobwebs of our refusal to submit and get those knees down. The best way to do that is simply accept that He IS God. When we give thanksgiving and praise to Him because of His natural and right position, we NATURALLY will submit because it is OBVIOUS He is THE Almighty Elohim on High. When we view Him in the place where He is, with the character He has, with the LONG list of things He has done for us, it is SIMPLE and EASY to speak out our love for Him. Our appreciation of Him. Our gratefulness toward Him, in Him, and for Him.

Command yourself to bless Adonai. Don't let your flesh off the hook. MAKE it submit. Self-talk is a KEY to keeping the flesh and old patterns of behaviour where they belong: dead in the cross. Dead in Jesus' works. Our ONLY way to stay in THE WAY is to maintain a grateful heart full of thanksgiving, praise, and a right attitude toward Him. This is done with INTENT and not by feelings. The feelings may follow that we can turn into godly emotions, but the INTENTFUL behaviour and INTENTFUL words come first. O my soul listen up: from the tips of your toes to the crown of your head, BLESS ADONAI!

Remembrance:

2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.”

How do we do this? Remembering. We have to REMEMBER who we are IN JESUS because in the mirror we see broken people, broken thinking, broken habits, and broken personalities. It does not SEEM like we are new. But the new HAS COME and is NOT for later. We have permission to start walking in it RIGHT NOW and we do it by trusting Jesus (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38). Isn't that great? WE don't have to make ourselves conform. We need to TRUST Jesus, BELIEVE what HE says, and then we WILL walk in it. We WILL experience it. We WILL have it as a reality in our lives. We WILL be new. New attitudes. New words. New actions. New morals. New understanding. ALL His made available to us (1 Corinthians 2:16; Galatians 5:22-23). All ours because we trust that He IS what He SAYS He IS. What a GOOD God!

ALWAYS REMEMBER

Bless Yahweh, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits:
Psalm 103:2

Lack of sleep, medications, under active thyroid, alcohol, stress and anxiety, and depression are the seven most common reasons that people suffer from a lack of memory. Another major reason is that we are present people. We live in the present, we look to the future to be our new present, and the past is simply the no longer present. Since the past is NO LONGER present, we disregard it more often than we should. It has been observed that those who do not learn lessons from the past are doomed to repeat them. There is value in knowing what we did last time. If you do the same thing again and again but expect a different result, you might be crazy. We have to vary our actions if we want to vary our results. How can we know what to do next time if we forget what we did last time? Or the famous song which said ‘what have you done for me lately’ meaning of course that past accomplishments were not going to be a factor. Our forgetting often marks the pathways of our lives.

Forgetting anniversaries, birthdays, and celebrations have led to the ending of relationships and scars in childhood that persist into adult lives. They are game changers for some people and red flags for others. When we constantly forget things, we put the burden of memory on our partners. It can also lead to the partner feeling un-seen. Memory is the repository of our relationship. The common pool we have of shared experiences. When only one of you holds that, it can be a cold and lonely pool. If you take memory issues into the workplace, a different kind of disaster can arise. Loss of profit, loss of productivity, unhappy customers, unhappy coworkers, and unhappy employers/employees. Much like marital aids, hundreds of memory aid products exist to make our lives easier to navigate with a poor memory, but they are artificial at best. They can get you through, but they don’t hold a candle to the real thing.

You would think that something (or someone) as important and world-changing as the Kingdom of Adonai or even Adonai Himself would be hard to forget. But we are stuck in

5-sense bodies. When something doesn't directly impact our sight, taste, hearing, touch, or smelling, we have a tendency to place it in a subordinate position in our lives. What we perceive we see as 'real' and what we do not see as 'not my problem'. But we know in our modern world how ridiculous that is. It DOES matter what is happening on the other side of the world. Sure, it isn't going to interfere with my making toast in the morning, but it IS going to influence my bank account. Prices rise and fall on a global scale with each commerce system affecting all the others to one degree or another. Since everything on Earth is a type and shadow of the spiritual world, why do we think things would work differently there? Why do we ASSUME that it doesn't matter as much? Oh, what an ignorant attitude we have let ourselves pick up and pass on.

"Now faith is the realization of what is hoped for, the proof of things not seen. For by this the people of old were approved. By faith we understand the worlds were created by the word of God, in order that what is seen did not come into existence from what is visible" (Hebrews 11:1-3). The unseen by fallen mortal senses is that which makes up our existence. We have to take it on TRUST based on the character of Adonai and how much we believe Him (Hebrews 11:6). This is how Abraham approached Adonai. He believed Adonai's words. Period. It wasn't easy though. Adonai even changed his name so that every time he communicated with people it would be reinforced – so that Abraham would REMEMBER the promise (Genesis 17:15). Remembrance is NOT to be disdained. It is a POWERFUL force to control our souls (minds, hearts, and personalities). We do NOT have to be LESS THAN. We can REMEMBER what Adonai has done so that we can walk in the MORE THAN ENOUGH that IS Jesus (John 15:5).

We need to develop a regimen. A regimen is a regular course of action or strenuous training in order to improve and maintain a given thing. Health, work, work-life balance, a relationship, housekeeping, finances, you name it. Our regimen needs to be one of memory. Try getting up every day, looking in the mirror during your morning routine, and speaking out ONE thing that Adonai has done for you. If you can't think of anything yourself, ask Ruach HaKodesh to bring something to mind. One of His ministries to us is bringing the Word to mind (John 14:26). He can remind us of ANYTHING and EVERYTHING that Jesus has done for us that we were aware of when it happened. He is a TREMENDOUS source of memory for us.

If we forget the benefits that we have in Jesus, we are more likely to end up in a place where we can be tempted to fall away or to add something ungodly to our lives. The ten spies FORGOT the supernatural moves of Adonai in Egypt. They forgot how He had provided for them in the desert. They had forgotten the natural leading and the supernatural events that gave them and their livestock everything they needed. They FORGOT it and ONLY looked at themselves. They had NO TRUST because they FORGOT. The Psalmist pleads with himself NOT to forget. The Psalmist starts a list of things to remember. Item by item, category by category, in order to NEVER forget all the MANY things that Adonai had done for them. We need the same attitude.

Start a notebook and write down what Adonai has done for you. Listen to Ruach HaKodesh about what Jesus had done for you. Specific and generic. things we all share in and things that were just for you and your family. EVERY SINGLE GOOD THING comes from Adonai (James 1:17). NOTHING good happens that doesn't come from Adonai. Other things can masquerade as good, but they all come with pain and chains. Only truly GOOD things are from ADONAI. And there are so VERY many. Make a list. Check it thrice. Start reading from it every day. Make a regimen of remembrance. Make it a priority. Every day speak out what Adonai has done. It is VITAL in maintaining a heart full of gratitude.

Remembrance:

Mark 10:18 “*So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”*

Only Adonai is good. Everyone else is not. It's true (Psalm 14:3). None of us make it in perfection (Romans 3:23). We all miss it and if we think we don't we're kidding ourselves (1 John 1:8). We are new in Jesus, so we are not SINNERS. But we ALL choose to NOT trust Jesus in some way, word, thought, or action at some point. We can go a long time not sinning, but sooner or later we slip up. The BEST thing about it is that we can repent in honest desire to not sin again and be corrected (1 John 1:9). But ANOTHER great thing is that things from the ONLY ONE who is good are ALSO good. He CANNOT give

bad things. He CANNOT give things that hurt. He CANNOT give things that bring us bondage. Not because He is incapable from a power standpoint, but because He has chosen His character and His character is GOOD. NOTHING bad is from Him. ALL good things are from Him. You cannot get through a single day without running smack dab into good things. Views, air, sustenance, rest, communication, relationship moments, kindness, goodness, smells, it goes on and on and on and on. He is SO GOOD to us, we really need to make sure we're thanking Him for it. Why? He deserves it! We grow up learning to thank people who gift us good things. He shouldn't be treated any differently. He gives us SO MUCH because He loves us SO MUCH. What a GOOD God!

NEVER FORGET

who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases
Psalm 103:3

Forgiveness of sin and healing are mentioned together here. Jesus put them together as well: *“But one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. And he fell on his face at his feet, giving thanks to him. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, “Were not ten cleansed? And where are the nine? Was no one found to turn back and give praise to God except this foreigner?” And he said to him, “Get up and go your way. Your faith has saved you.””* (Luke 17:15-19). Sickness is not always caused by sin (John 9:2-3). But forgiveness of sin ALWAYS enables healing. Spiritual, physical, and mental/emotional/relational/financial (spirit, soul, and body). Salvation encompasses the WHOLE picture taking us in and through Jesus from where we ARE to where Adam WAS. Our Covenant rights are inhabited in Jesus and ONLY when we are connected to Him are we able to walk in them (John 15:5). That is the reason that the power of Adonai operates in us according to our knowledge (revelation) of Jesus' love (Ephesians 3:20-21).

In the same way that Sin was paid for and our personal sins are atoned for, all of our sicknesses have been healed (Matthew 8:16-17). Jesus released the TOTAL and ABSOLUTE spirit-soul-body healing on and through the cross thousands of years ago. Adonai wouldn't put a sickness on us anymore that He would make us sin (1 Peter 2:24). Forgiveness and healing are both part of our redemption and CANNOT be separated. ANYONE can get healed. They don't need to be saved. They don't even need to be living a life approved of by Adonai. He isn't healing them because He approves of them. He heals them to show them He loves them in SPITE of their sin (Romans 5:8). But if you are a believer and have accepted Jesus' sacrifice and made Him Lord (Romans 10:9), then you are ABLE to walk in health. All the time. Even in flu season. You don't HAVE to give into sickness, disease, or being unwell because IN JESUS we are made WHOLE.

Why DON'T we walk in health all the time? Because we FORGET that we can walk in it. How do you forget something like that? By listening to commercials that list all your ills. By listening to shows, programs, and movies that show you infirm people, people aging badly, and tell you IT IS NORMAL. By listening to all the medical talk that tells you that you MUST deteriorate – you do NOT have to deteriorate but you WILL age. This isn't to say that the medical profession is wrong or the human race doesn't age badly. It simply means that because we are IN JESUS new creations, we don't have to follow the same rules as everyone else. They have to hear a diagnosis and that's all they have. They HAVE to rely on medical science ALONE. The believer gets to hear a diagnosis and CHOOSE to listen to it or listen to the Word as the final say on the diagnosis. The believer can CHOOSE to use medical science or go with the Word or both. The ONLY limits are how much we CHOOSE to trust in and believe the Word.

Going through the gospels is invaluable. We see again and again how Jesus brought healing and redemption everywhere He went. Some are healed physically. Some are healed emotionally. Some are healed mentally. Some are healed from demonic possession. Some are miraculously healed. Some are healed through a sped up intervention of time. Some are immediate. Some are within an hour or so. Some are even raised from a condition of death. Jesus NEVER turns anyone away. Jesus NEVER fails to heal someone. Regardless of what some human-made entertainments profess, there is ZERO benefit to being sick or infirm in ANY way. It is NOT a testimony of ANYTHING but that sickness exists. A person made WHOLE is ALWAYS a more amazing testimony than someone able to minister in spite of not being whole. That DOES NOT mean we cannot be used by Adonai when we are sick. Of course we can. No one perfect has served Adonai yet – other than Jesus. We are all dealing with things, all needing more revelation, all needing more understanding, and Adonai meets us where we are at. Every time. But He CALLS us to something better than what human thinking and reasoning can imagine.

If we do not REMEMBER that He heals and we don't REMEMBER that He ALWAYS heals, then we will accept LESS than what He has for us. We have to remember. Jesus exhorts us to remember. Ruach HaKodesh is with us so that among other things, He can bring to our minds EVERYTHING that Jesus has said to us – everything that we have studied in

the Word and everything that the still small voice has spoken to us. Remembering is THE key to maintaining our revelation. What we don't use, we forget. So REMEMBER it. USE it. WALK in it. Talk with Ruach HaKodesh about it. Our Elohim is MORE THAN ENOUGH. NEVER settle for LESS THAN. We don't have to. We shouldn't want to. And Jesus DEFINITELY wants us WHOLE. EVERY time in EVERY circumstance ALWAYS AND FOREVER (Hebrews 13:8). Believe it. Trust He is telling the truth. Receive it. REMEMBER that you did. And don't EVER let go (James 4:7).

Remembrance:

Malachi 4:2 "*But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise, with healing in its wings, and you will go out and leap like fattened calves.*"

To get under Adonai's wings, you need to be pretty close. Baby birds can't be under their parent's wings unless they are following them, snuggling up to them, and maintaining closeness to their bodies. It simply doesn't work any other way. In order to be protected they MUST remain close. We can choose our position. We can choose to be godly in our words, thoughts, and deeds. We won't be perfect, but we'll get better and better the more we choose to live Adonai's way by Adonai's Word according to Adonai's standards. When we get near to Him, He gets near to us (James 4:8). He is NOT far off (Acts 17:27). He is SEEKING to be found. He isn't HIDING. He's sitting behind something that doesn't hide Him well, peeking through hands that are over His face, and loudly musing 'I hope they do not find me here' while humming. Everything is so simple. And when we change our opinions on things and choose to view things HIS way (Romans 12:2), basing our lives inside and out on the Word, we start enjoying all the benefits of His presence. Just by agreeing with Him and acting like it because we believe it – trusting His Word that it works like He says it does. Nothing could be simpler. He makes it SO SIMPLE to grasp and follow. What a GOOD God!

MORE THAN ENOUGH

*who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with loyal love and mercies,
Psalm 103:4*

More than enough. It is a mentality we can have because Adonai is MORE THAN ENOUGH for anything and everything we encounter – whether a positive or a negative. He is more than enough for our trials – who can stand against Him (Isaiah 14:27)? He is more than enough for our spiritual lives – He blessed us with EVERY spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3). He is more than enough for our world – He can overturn nations in a day (Isaiah 66:8). He is more than enough for our needs – He provides ALL our needs (Philippians 4:19) and listens for our wants (1 John 5:15; James 4:3). Adonai is MORE THAN ENOUGH for us and we need to remember that.

It would be enough to remember that He saved us. It doesn't matter if you had a small amount of things bad or a huge amount of things bad in your life. The bad was taken away, wasn't it? Not necessarily the circumstances, but the emotional bondage. The heaviness of spirit. The LESS THAN. That's why despair is so easy to give into in the world. There is a pointlessness to life without real LIFE. We cover it up in various ways, but the chains are still there. Rubbing us raw. There is a HUGE relief when we are set free. When we are saved from all of it. When WE are no longer under the burden of payment. That alone is enough for us to have grateful hearts. To be JOYFUL every day. But of course, even THAT fades when we don't remember it. When we get USED to it. When it becomes the new normal and every day again seems the same. We need to keep things in the FRONT of our minds, not the back. Take all the visual cues from the world around us and be truly thankful we have been freed from that – without judging those who are still chained.

We are ALL the same. We were ALL sinners. We were ALL in Sin. Our individual sins vary, but we are ALL sinners. Sinning in a single way is as bad as sinning in all the ways because ANY sin is rebellion against Adonai. The consequences here on Earth vary, but in the eyes of Adonai we are ALL the SAME (James 2:10). How can we justify being disgusted or feeling better than someone simply because they are doing something we haven't? The chances are high that WE have done things that THEY have not. We are

ALL the SAME. And we need to REMEMBER that. It is a SIMPLE one to forget. Our flesh helps, too. It is not only selfish, but it is PROUD. It doesn't like being told what to do and it likes to feel superior to others. Since we ALL have sinned, we can ALL be redeemed. We can ALL feel the lightness, that lifting of burdens. We should be eager to help other people get to the Light. To experience the same freedom we were given – by grace through His mercy and not by our own achievements. Everyone should get to feel this free. It is the best feeling in the world.

And Adonai doesn't stop there. He doesn't 'just' free us. He doesn't 'just' pay the price for us. He also crowns us. He doesn't only lift us up, He lifts us up and heaps love and mercy on us too. That should make us shout right there. Shout and KEEP ON shouting. Because there is no end to the heights He lifts us as we remain humbly submitted to Him in obedience and thanksgiving. He gave us not what WE deserved, but what HE deserved. What JESUS deserved. *"He made the one who did not know sin to be sin on our behalf, in order that we could become the righteousness of God in him"* (2 Corinthians 5:21). He not only MADE the Way, He made the way we walk the Way. Because of that, the Fruit of the Spirit are ours. Because of that, the armour of God is ours. Because of that, we can speak in the Name of Jesus in His place. We have it ALL because of Him.

A man of God once said, 'I don't need to fight. I need to know who I am in Jesus and the victory is mine because Jesus won it.' John 15:5 shows us we have everything we need because we are in Jesus and JESUS did it all. He finished it. If we stand on that, the devil flees. We don't have to fight him if our light is shining. It shines brightest when we REMEMBER all that the Lord has done for us, the places He found us, and the places where we are allowed to walk today and all the days afterward. We need to remember who we are IN HIM.

Remembrance:

John 8:36 "*So if the son sets you free, you will be truly free.*"

There is a LOT in my life I am free of. I can look back and get thankful I am free from being the way I was. I can walk a grocery store and get thankful I am free from dietary choices I used to make. I can look at my family, my employment, my time spent, and almost anything and find myself being thankful for what I have been freed of. I have been freed of broken thinking, broken words, broken promises, and broken actions. I

have been set free! Whenever temptation comes knocking, I can say look at what I have been freed from! And do it with a smile. What a GOOD God!

WORDS MATTER

who satisfies your life with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalm 103:5

Saliva greatly helps our mouths (including the teeth) maintain their health. According to the Centre for Restorative, Cosmetic, and Implant Dentistry (crcid.com), saliva is 'comprised mostly of water, but enriched with a blend of electrolytes, mucus, enzymes, and antibacterial components'. The point of this blend that our bodies mix up is to kick off our digestive process and protect our teeth from bits of food. This keeps harmful bacteria and acids from sticking around and deteriorating our teeth. Oral health is maintained and tooth decay is staved off by a balanced pH in our mouths. Guess what helps us maintain it? Saliva. It even helps with bad breath by attacking the microbes in our mouths that help create it. Saliva is a frontline defense system. So is the Word when the Word is on our tongue.

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love her will eat of her fruit" (Proverbs 18:21). We are GOING to eat. We NEED to eat – physically AND spiritually. We have ZERO choice over that. What we DO have a choice over is WHAT we eat. We can eat junk food, food that fights against us, food that diseases use for fuel, food that starves diseases, food that is healthy for us, or food that actively fights for us. It's OUR choice. The same thing that is true physically is true spiritually. Do we want the devil's fruit or Ruach HaKodesh's fruit? Do you want to eat "*sexual immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these*" (Galatians 5:19b-21a)? Or would you prefer to eat "*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, [and] self control*" (Galatians 5:22b-23a)? Which one is going to build you up and which will take you down? Which will be a benefit and which will be a harm? We MUST do one or the other because we ONLY have two options. It's like your gender. You might not LIKE what you are, but there are only two options and you have NO CHOICE over which you are. People have taken advantage of modern cosmetic advances (artificial and surgical) to change what gender they PRESENT, but they cannot shift what they

ARE. In the same way, we HAVE fruit in our mouths. We MUST choose which we want to present. Will we pick that which we ARE as believers, or will we choose that which we are NOT (1 John 3:9)? Will we be HONEST or will we be PRETENDERS? The choice is ours.

If we CHOOSE to keep the Word in our mouths, we will have a frontline defense against the devil's fruit. It will naturally combat the spiritual microbes that want to lead to decay and ruin. It will kickstart our digestive process so that our hearts fill up with ABUNDANT LIFE and not DEATH (John 10:10). The Lord's Word is TRUTH. The Lord's Word is RIGHTEOUSNESS. And the Lord's Word TRANSFORMS our thinking from broken to HIS (Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 2:16). This is the Living Water that rises up out of us. The Ruach by which the Word moves. We CANNOT forget the BENEFITS of having the Word on our tongues. It is ALWAYS valid for NOW. It is ALWAYS current. It is ALWAYS applicable. Yes, we live in a world of technological terrors and marvels. The Word can speak to that even through its language of donkeys, horses, and eagles. We can look beyond the symbology and see the application. When we can't, we can ask Ruach HaKodesh, the author of the book, to explain it to us – and He will (John 14:26).

The Word in our mouths – not flippantly, but spoken in trust and believing – is the mechanism by which our youth is renewed. Eagles moult every year and grow out new feathers. It is a constant process ensuring that they are never without functional feathers. They have smarts and know what they are about. There is NOT a lot of confusion in their day. They have high metabolisms and need to feed on a constant basis to maintain their weight. They only use their nests when they are raising their young (a matter of months). How is it their 'youth is renewed'? By CONSISTENTLY replacing old thinking with new. Or perhaps enjoying the clarity of thinking brought about by truth? Or perhaps being able to enjoy the functioning of our spirits/souls/bodies like the eagle who sets off after childhood knowing what they are about and ready to perform it, maintaining their physique and ability by consistent feeding? The Word in our mouths gives us a picture of strength and near-constant renewal and maintenance. Like the eagle. There is not a one-time mythical renewal or rebirth. It is a process that is ongoing, but enabling the eagle to thrive. We too can thrive, but ONLY when the Word is in our mouths.

It's not enough to say the words. We MUST believe them. We can ONLY believe them when we TRUST Adonai. If we don't believe that Adonai can do it, we won't believe Him. *"By faith also, with Sarah, he received the ability to procreate even past the normal age, because he regarded the one who had promised to be faithful"* (Hebrews 11:11). Sarah laughed at the idea that Abraham could rock her boat and give her a child. But Abraham, although old, believed Adonai and got to the point that he COULD father a child. Sarah still wasn't sure and gave him her maid servant. Abraham fathered a child by her. Abraham had been renewed according to his belief and trust in Adonai. Until Sarah believed Adonai could do it and trusted that He would back up His words, nothing happened. She was ONLY renewed when she believed Adonai COULD do it and trusted that He WOULD do it. We can have EXACTLY the same. Remember both she and her husband were over a hundred when this was going on. Medical science panics when a woman over thirty goes to have a child. Sarah was over a hundred and there were NO hospitals to help her. It was a supernatural conception, a supernatural pregnancy, a supernatural birth, and a supernatural nursing. It was beyond human reason. But Adonai SAID it, so it was possible and true.

We have a choice. Do we want to live by the principles and the morals of the Word of Adonai or do we not want to? If we want to, we have to pay attention to it. We have to study it. We have to think about it. We CANNOT leave it alone. We CANNOT leave it for one day a week. We MUST put our minds on it. We MUST speak it to each other and we MUST speak it to ourselves. We MUST discuss it. We MUST align to IT, and not try to use it to make our point. It isn't about us justifying our wants and desires. It is about us changing our thinking to agree with His as delineated in the Word. It has to be so much a part of our lives that Ruach HaKodesh only needs to remind us of small things. Chapter and verse or general principles. Ruach HaKodesh should be sought every day for understanding and teaching. We should be GOOD students, DEDICATED students, and SEEKING students. We are justified by our words or condemned by our words (Matthew 12:37). Let your words be HIS Word and let Him renew you. We may age, but we do NOT need to deteriorate. When we live by the Word, speaking it out in all the areas of our lives, we have plugged into the power of Ruach HaKodesh. The raising from the dead and TOTAL restoration power the Father used to resurrect Jesus to life will be active within you (Romans 8:11). You WILL see your life renewed and abundant: spirit, soul, AND

body (3 John 2). NEVER forget it and ALWAYS be thankful for Adonai's Grace and Mercy that brought us into His Covenant (Luke 22:20). Let that thankfulness live on your tongue fuelled by and in concert with His Word. Every day.

Remembrance:

1 Corinthians 11:25 "*Likewise also the cup, after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."*"

There is no new covenant between Adonai and humanity. The New Covenant is between THE MAN Jesus and THE FATHER Yahweh. Jesus was the ONLY man who EVER did EVERYTHING godly: in thought, in action, and in words. He NEVER committed a sin, although He was tempted CONSTANTLY. He ALWAYS submitted to Adonai. CONSTANTLY. So HE got the new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Because of Adonai's LOVE for us, we were given the opportunity to enter into that covenant IN, THROUGH, and BECAUSE OF Jesus. He did it out of GRACE and MERCY. He didn't HAVE to. He did it by CHOICE. Because of His LOVE. He made the Way, He empowered us to walk it, He sent His Ruach to guide and correct us, and He NEVER stops speaking to us about it and the CORRECT Way to live in and through Him (John 15:5). He NEVER lets us forget and implores us not to reject His message. What a GOOD God!

WAITING IS SERVICE

who satisfies your life with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalm 103:5

Where else do eagles renew in the Word? Isaiah 40:31 “*But those who wait for Yahweh shall renew their strength. They shall go up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not grow weary they shall walk and not be faint.*” Waiting on Yahweh renews our strength. This is not waiting patiently for whenever it is that Adonai decides to move. This is waiting on Yahweh like He is a customer at your restaurant or a king in whose court you operate. Waiting is serving. One of the best ways we do that is with a grateful heart because it produces thanksgiving, which is what links the two verses. Thanksgiving is His rightful gift. Other gifts are also good, but He truly deserves our thanksgiving. We just don't always know how to give it because we get clouded by the world around us. But if we WAIT on Him, we WILL be thankful.

When you are serving a king, you seek to maintain a friendly, reverent disposition. You're not rude. You're not over-friendly. But you're pleasant and kind. You maintain a reverence with them because of the differences in your stations in life and your acknowledgement – without bitterness or resentment – of that difference. This is EASY with Adonai because He is SO CLEARLY above us. “*Great is Yahweh, and very worthy of praise, and his greatness is unsearchable*” (Psalm 145:3). Our problem is that we FORGET He is RIGHTEOUS. We lean into the friendship we can have with Jesus and Ruach HaKodesh, and we FORGET He is RIGHTEOUS. Totally and completely RIGHTEOUS. If we stood in the physical presence of their full glory, we would explode (Exodus 33:20). When we are caught up to see Jesus face to face, our flesh is going to explode and leave us in our true and perfected form (1 Corinthians 15:52). THAT is how righteous He is. THAT is how perfect and good. THAT is why we should REVERE Him. Being friendly is ENCOURAGED by Adonai. We are FAMILY. But He is the HEAD, He is the SOURCE, and He IS Elohim. As we worship Him and get to know Him, remember WHO He is. Remember WHAT He is. He IS the I AM. He IS Alpha-Omega. He IS Yahweh. Look in scripture and see how the Earth itself reacts to His presence. Read the visions of the

Glory of Adonai in Ezekiel. See how HOLY He is. When we remember that, all our interactions with Him become worshipful. Friendly. Pleasant. Respectful. Reverent. Ruach HaKodesh is the foundation of that attitude in us (Philippians 3:3; John 4:24). It's like being best friends with the King. You never forget the position, no matter how personal and friendly you are allowed to be. Like a child never forgetting who the parent really is. It isn't off-putting. It isn't distance. It's RESPECT. It's REVERENCE. And it is the point at which true WISDOM begins (Proverbs 9:10).

When you are serving in the food and beverage industry, your goal is to entertain as many requests as possible from those you are serving. You do this to make them feel like they are special. Like you care about their wants and needs. Like you want to satisfy them and leave them satiated, while having respected their boundaries, concerns, and issues. With Adonai we seek to entertain as many of His requests as possible because we love Him. When you love someone, you want to care for them. You want to know them better to make you feel closer to them. You want to do things for them to make them happy, because when THEY are happy YOU are happy. Jesus told us that was how it was going to work with Him. Jesus told us that when we let ourselves love Him, we would obey Him because being godly with our words, thoughts, and actions pleased Him (John 14:15). The great thing about Adonai is that He NEVER overburdens us (Matthew 11:28-30). We will NEVER have more requests than we can handle and they will ALWAYS be things that He has empowered us to do – through Ruach HaKodesh we have access to His armour and His fruit (Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 6:10-18). We're NEVER asked to do something that will stretch OUR resources (mentally, physically, emotionally, financially, etc) because we are ALWAYS asked to work WITH and THROUGH and IN Jesus (John 15:5). When we let go of the idea of MINE, we clearly see they are all HIS resources. We're borrowing them or moving them around, but they are all HIS. So it doesn't tax us to use them, have them, or give them away. We can focus on obedience. We can focus on DOING what He's asked us to, knowing that HE is giving us the tools AND the supply to achieve them. The best part? His JOY at our obedience supplies us the STRENGTH we need to accomplish what we've been asked to do (Nehemiah 8:10).

Being a server in a restaurant can be a mentally taxing position. The customers expect you to be a kind of walking encyclopedia on your restaurant. Knowing everything on the menu, everything about the facility, and intimately acquainted with the many ways that

they can customize their experience. The more you know about the restaurant, the better able you'll be to serve everyone who comes in (especially the menu). The more we know about Jesus, the more Ruach HaKodesh can work in our lives (Ephesians 3:20). The more we know about the Word, the more we know about how we are meant to live, how we are meant to interact with the world, and the values and morals that are both right and good. There is a LOT in the Word. There are over 31,000 verses, 3,000 to 8,000 promises, 613 Laws, over a thousand instructions, and more than 365 verses showing us that we do NOT need to fear, but can have His peace. That's a LOT. This is why we need to study the Word. Each verse has layers upon layers. If we will take the time and the effort to get it into our heart, Ruach HaKodesh is right there to teach us about it, expound on it, commentate it for us, and bring it to mind whenever we need to apply it (John 14:26). The more we know, the more freedom we can walk in. The more we know, the more we will be able to model it for the world in and through Jesus. The more we know, the more we will be able to help guide and disciple other people who are also seeking Him. There is NO downside to knowing the Word, and knowing as much as we can of it. It is ALWAYS a benefit and should be studied in one way or another on a DAILY basis. It is the manual for abundant life (John 10:10).

Have you ever gone to customer service? Isn't it impressive the smiles they bring to bear? The cheerfulness? The enthusiastic greeting and invitation to open up your life and give them a better look? It helps to melt away your frustration with your issue, gets you thinking more positively about the company, and births within you hope that your deal can be solved. What about toddlers/babies and dogs? Their sheer unbridled enthusiasm to see you again? Even if it's only been a few minutes? These are the ways we are to approach Adonai. Giving Him an enthusiastic greeting because we know He is the solution to our situations. That He IS the hope of our overcoming. That He is awesome and great and worthy to be praised and we get to see Him again! "*Enter his gates with thanksgiving, his courts with praise. Give thanks to him; bless his name*" (Psalm 100:4). "*Therefore let us approach with confidence to the throne of grace, in order that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need*" (Hebrews 4:16). "*And calling a child to himself, he had him stand in their midst and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you turn around and become like young children, you will never enter into the kingdom of heaven!"*" (Matthew 18:2-3). Approaching Him with singing and dancing and cheerfulness is the way to greet Him. Adonai is ALWAYS about JOY (Zechariah 8:19). Singers were always a key part to entering the Temple (1 Chronicles 25). WE are the Temple of Ruach

HaKodesh now (1 Corinthians 3:16). We should be enthusiastically greeting Him all the time. Every time we go before Him, hear from Him, see Him, and think of Him. Yes, that is a LOT of enthusiastic greeting, but He is truly GREAT and worthy of all that joy.

We are to wait on Adonai like we wait on our customers and children – but even more so. We perfect our praise with joy. We change our attitudes about our expectations when we give Him His proper place. We grease the wheels of our thoughts, actions, and words with the thanksgiving that we give to Him. We will be renewed when we wait on Him. He sees our efforts, and replaces our strength with His. Every time.

Remembrance:

Exodus 19:4 “*You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt and how I bore you on eagles' wings and I brought you to me.*”

We are told in Isaiah that we can mount up with eagle wings without being wearied or fainting from the effort. It doesn't always feel like that, though. Sometimes it feels like an impossible effort. Something FAR beyond our abilities. And we are not wrong. There are times that we are totally and completely unable to affect change. These are the times Adonai takes the lead. He doesn't ASK us to do it. He asks us to OBEY and be in the place with the right attitude and willingness to cooperate with Him. The things Moses and Aaron did were not all that difficult or complicated. It took courage. It took some effort. But mostly they did simple things that Adonai used to supernaturally perform what they could never do. He protected His children. He drew them out from under oppression. And He brought them into total and complete freedom under His wings. He does the same thing today. Through Jesus we are connected to the Most High (John 15:5). We overcome because we are in the overcomer. We are free because Jesus did the work. It is finished because Jesus finished it. We have what we have because of what HE did, not what WE did or do. What a GOOD God!

CONSISTENT CONNECTION

who satisfies your life with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalm 103:5

When we serve someone, we get a unique perspective on our own self. The things that kick up inside us, the frustrations, the patience, the curtness or gentleness. They all give us insights into where WE are more than we get a picture of where THEY are. Thanksgiving or what we don't want to give thanks for shows us the areas and the situations that we are or are not trusting in Jesus. Ruach HaKodesh's MAJOR ministry to the believer is to show them (or remind them) that they CAN trust in Jesus (John 16:8). We ALWAYS need to be trusting in Jesus in EVERY way, but we miss it. It is only through Ruach HaKodesh and His consistent interactions with us that we truly understand where we need to shine the light of His love (Ephesians 3:16-21).

The first thing we need is genuine and authentic communication. Your heart should match what you want to say (intent). Breathe normally and don't panic – even if you know you're in the wrong. His presence brings PEACE, not anxiety (Philippians 4:7). Take a moment to think on the words you want to say. Do they honestly and accurately portray what you want to communicate? Focus on and really listen when He speaks back. We don't always LIKE the things we hear, but that is because we don't have the light of His love on it yet. If we are being told something by Adonai, we CAN achieve it with His help. We're cooperators, not dictators. Our brains tend to race ahead when someone is speaking and it fills in any blanks that it hears. Because of that, we only truly take in about a quarter of what we hear. We need to stop, pause, and REALLY listen. We're listening to understand, not to justify or 'fix'. We can repeat back what we think we heard for confirmation. We can look at the Word to confirm it. Adonai doesn't contradict Himself. Everything we hear from Him will be confirmed in the Word. Authentic communication is about bringing your WHOLE self – body, soul, and spirit – into alignment with HIS whole self – Father, Son, Ruach. He even helps us when we can't manage the words (Romans 8:26-27). It is a two-way street, but He holds our hand as we cross it.

A good waiter or waitress will come by your table (hopefully not when you've just put food in your mouth) a few times during your meal. Checking to make sure you have everything you need – and that you can identify it (say in the case of art deco salt and pepper dispensers). Taking notes for anything new you want, and making sure that it gets to your table. Refilling drinks, bringing more of any complimentary items. Generally, they take care of you, enabling you to have the best meal possible by making sure you have everything you need. This is one of Ruach HaKodesh's roles with us. However, WE also have a role here. We are to be checking in with Jesus. We aren't to be PASSIVE, but ACTIVE participants in this meal. He is our bread and He is our drink (1 Corinthians 11:17-34), but we can ALWAYS ask for more. We can check in to see if we need to read something specific in the Word, study something new, pray more, praise more (we can ALWAYS use more praise), and also to see how HE is doing. Maybe He is sorrowful about something going on in the world. Maybe there is someone He really wants us to pray for. Maybe He wants to talk to you for a while. Maybe He wants to listen to you talk. Communication is always a two-way street and to make sure traffic is flowing, we need to check in. Consistently, if not constantly. A check-in doesn't have to be an hour-long prayer session based on all the points of Jesus' prayer to His Father (Matthew 6:9-13). It can be a quick few words touching base. A moment to arrange for intimate time. A chorus of a hymn or praise song. A verse of scripture that came to mind that you wanted to mention. Maybe even a word of thanks for something He has done that you really appreciate. Like in a restaurant a check-in is making sure you can have a good meal, it isn't the meal itself. Don't forget to check in. We're His kids, and He likes to know where we are. Be responsible and honour Him by checking in.

In a restaurant, we're not allowed to go to the kitchen and get ourselves some more water. Or bread. Or grab a dessert we've suddenly decided to add. The waiter or waitress needs to replace our stuff or get us anything new we need. When we are operating in the Kingdom, we are going to get tired if our resources are not being replaced. If we're not getting re-filled with fuel. When we make Adonai our Source, we'll be looking to Him for all our needs, all our direction, and all our wants. If He is the centre of our system, He will replace our strength with His. If we are in Jesus, JESUS is doing the work. We're along for the cooperation. Praising Adonai renews our strength. It refreshes us. It enables us to keep going LONG after we should have stopped. Adonai is THE

transformative power in this existence. If we will obey Him and stay plugged into Him, He will supply ALL our needs – which includes giving us the strength to run the race He has called us to. *“Remain in me, and I in you. Just as the branch is not able to bear fruit from itself unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you, unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—this one bears much fruit, for apart from me you are not able to do anything”* (John 15:4-5).

In some ways we are the patrons of the restaurant. In some ways we are the wait staff. In both scenarios, Ruach HaKodesh is the head waiter. The one in charge of all the other staff. The overseer representing the management, as it were. He is the one we communicate with if there's a problem, no matter which side of the table we are on. He enables us to get messages to the head office. He brings instructions from the head office to us. He is the communicator through which we communicate from spirit to Spirit. He is the one who handles the quick check-ins – going both ways. He is the one through whom Adonai's strength flows. He is our point of contact spiritually and physically. And the language He speaks is Heaven's language: thanksgiving. It is through prayer and praise that we manage all of this. Praise keeps communication flowing. Praise keeps us keeping Him in His rightful place. Praise checks in and lets Him know we're thinking of Him and wanting to bring Him with us into everything we do, say, and think. Praise shows our devotion to Him and reinforces to all involved that we acknowledge Him as our Source and Provider. Praising Him consistently, with regularity, enables us to maintain what needs to be maintained so that our meal is the best it can be.

Remembrance:

John 6:53-54 “*Then Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life in yourselves! The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”*

We're pretty good at eating and drinking. Of all the things humanity has to do, that's one we got down right away. But we balk at eating right, don't we? In the natural world, we claim it's rabbit food and unfit for people – although it is the PERFECT diet for EVERY SINGLE HUMAN BEING (we are permitted more, however – Genesis 9:3; Romans 14:1-23). In the same way, SPIRITUALLY there is ONE perfect diet for EVERY SINGLE

HUMAN BEING – but WE get to choose whether we have it. The meat is the body of Jesus which bore stripes, bruises, and wounds to free us of the bondage of evil altars (1 Peter 2:24). The drink is Jesus' blood poured on the Mercy Seat to provide substitutionary payment for Sin – Sin period and individual sins (Hebrews 9:12). The New Covenant is Jesus' covenant with His Father, but they opened it up to all of us. All WE need to do is accept it. To enter into it. THEY did ALL the heavy lifting. All that's left for us is a decision and some obedience. From threat? NO! From LOVE! His for us and ours for Him. What a GREAT covenant! What a GOOD God!

GOOD EQUIPMENT

who satisfies your life with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalm 103:5

Everyone who works knows the importance of footwear. Especially those in the service industry. Being on your feet all day serving people can REALLY take a toll on your feet. Having improper footwear can take a good day and make it horrible. In some professions, improper footwear will get you fired. Our footwear affects our safety and our attitude toward our work. Our disposition is as important as our equipment when it comes to serving. No one likes a grumpy waiter or waitress – regardless of whether their own behaviour is leading to it. Our disposition not only affects those we serve, but it also determines how quickly and gracefully we respond to honest correction. And it can ALL start with what's on our feet.

We serve Adonai through our thanksgiving. We can be thankful because we are spiritually prepared to walk in what He has for us. In Jesus, we have access to what we need to do what we've been called for. Another reason to be thankful toward Adonai. He equips us. *"and binding shoes under your feet with the preparation of the good news of peace"* (Ephesians 6:15). These are Jesus' shoes. Jesus' footwear. They are designed to get us where we're called to go and give us grip when we get there. *"How delightful on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns as a king."*" (Isaiah 52:7). Our understanding that Adonai's attitude toward us in Jesus is one of PEACE and not JUDGEMENT gives us incentive, not only for personal gratitude, but to spread the Good News to other people. This is one of the foundational principles of what makes us able to walk His Way. It sets up our whole disposition in the Kingdom. We NEED to understand His love for us (Ephesians 3:14-21). Since we are NOTHING without Him (John 15:5), we need to understand who we are in Him in order to function. When we're scared of Him smiting us, we are not operating as we should be. If we're condemning other people, we're not presenting the Good News as He wants it presented (John 3:17-18). We NEED to understand that Adonai is peaceful toward us. Operating from

LOVE toward us. Operating from LOVE toward every human being ever. When we understand that Adonai is not mad at us (Colossians 1:13-14), we're able to keep going – in our calling and in our praise.

When we're secure in our relationship with Adonai, we function differently. We look to Him for strength. We look to Him for help. We look to Him for support. We look to Him for advice. We look to Him for everything we aren't, because He is the Source of EVERYTHING. We can trust that because we trust Him. We trust Him because we KNOW our relationship with Him. We are in His covenant through Jesus. We can believe it because we KNOW He is faithful. We KNOW He is true. And He has proved Himself trustworthy through His Word. When He becomes our Source, HIS resources become OUR resources in and through Jesus. That means when we are called to do something, we're given the resources to achieve it. They are ours even before we're called to make sure that we have what we need. Jesus broke the evil altars of the curse through the cross so that we can live in the Blessing instead.

What does this have to do with thanksgiving and service? It can be work. Not TOIL, but work. If we are good servants, we won't shy away from some work. We have to stay on top of our flesh. We have to make sure we're making headway with praising Adonai by making sure to maintain the gratitude in our hearts. If you look over what we've talked about today, we have three or four things to be grateful about on a daily basis right there. Well, as we step out into what we're called to do, we have to take the reins a little. We need to make sure that we are stepping under that yoke Jesus shares with us (Matthew 11:28-30). We do that by keeping Him in His place and worshipping Him there. We know we can't do it alone. We KNOW He's a strong tower. We KNOW He's a high wall. We KNOW He's a fortress. We KNOW He's sheltering wings. And we should be THANKFUL for that. Our feet shod with the knowledge He is at peace with us prepares our minds to accept that He is our EVERYTHING and we work to maintain that attitude by renewing our mind with the Word, listening to the consistent exhortation of Ruach HaKodesh and holding to what we have learned from Jesus. You know what that creates? Satisfaction in Him. Because life didn't start until we accepted Jesus. Life didn't begin until we were resurrected WITH and IN Him to life from death. Until we stepped out of the tomb with Him, we weren't alive.

Staying in Jesus, then, is a HUGE goal for our lives. He IS what gives us life (John 10:10), so we WANT THAT. *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch that does not bear fruit in me, he removes it, and every branch that bears fruit, he prunes it in order that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I in you. Just as the branch is not able to bear fruit from itself unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you, unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—this one bears much fruit, for apart from me you are not able to do anything. If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown out as a branch, and dries up, and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this: that you bear much fruit, and prove to be my disciples”* (John 15:1-8). If we want to produce the fruit He says is PROOF we are with and in Him, we have to be willing to undergo trimming. That’s how you maintain your vines and your fruit trees. Pruning. It isn’t a massive overhaul. It’s a precise and careful trimming of what isn’t needed in order to let the plant put its energies into what IS. It is US willing to be corrected.

We should be GRATEFUL that Adonai corrects us. That He even wants to. There are a lot of people I have been around in my life. Many of them have done things I disagree with or I know to be either ineffectual, dangerous, or flat-out wrong. I have not corrected most of them. It’s because I didn’t care. They weren’t my people. They weren’t my responsibility. I didn’t care if they got in trouble or injured. BAD ATTITUDE. No, I cannot go around correcting everyone. That’s rude. But I should CARE. If I CARE, then I am likely to be listening when Ruach HaKodesh tells me to intervene, or pray for them, or say something very specific in a very specific way. Ruach HaKodesh is THE corrector (John 14:22-26). He makes sure we are doing what we should. He talks to us about WHY we should be doing it. He REMINDS us of who we are in Jesus AND that we can trust Jesus with our situation, words, actions, and thoughts (John 16:8).

Our responding to that correction quickly and gracefully is a type of worship. We should be thankful for it. Think of how we could have gone wrong if we hadn’t. Think of the trouble that could be in our lap if we’re not listening to the One who KNOWS ALL

THINGS. Remember, we KNOW Adonai isn't mad at us but has an attitude of love, mercy, and grace toward us. He is still righteous and requires godly behaviour, thoughts, and speech from us. He corrects us like a Father does a child, with OUR best interests at heart. We can TRUST this is His attitude because Jesus is right there with us walking in humble submission to the Father. We're empowered to do our work, with His tools, in cooperation with Him. If we are stepping out of alignment with His will, we will IMMEDIATELY be told so that the consequences are small, the way back is small, and we are hardly off course at all. We are corrected IMMEDIATELY to make the process of repentance easier on US. That's because He LOVES us. Isn't that something to embrace? To rejoice in and about? To accept, quickly, and thank Him for it? I think so.

A good servant is a grateful and thankful servant. Because they are serving from love. They are equipped with the tools, equipment, and clothing to be comfortable and able to succeed in service. Everything is taken care of. It isn't toil, but good and honest work. Effort well worth expending because it keeps us close to Adonai and right in the centre of His will. A good servant gracefully accepts honest and constructive correction, because it makes everything better for everyone. Because it lessens stress and disharmony. Because it is a sign of love, respect, and acceptedness. What great things to be joyful about! What great things to be thankful for! It's so satisfying to live like that. To exist like that. To move forward into ever-greater, ever more cooperative ventures with Adonai. To truly partner with Ruach HaKodesh in thanksgiving to Adonai.

Remembrance:

Proverbs 3:12 “*because whomever Yahweh will love, he will rebuke, as a father delights in his son.*”

Correction from my father did not always FEEL like it was loving. I am in no way saying that it wasn't, but it is rare for the miscreant in a given situation to FEEL grateful at being rebuked – and it doesn't matter if it is physical or verbal. I didn't enjoy it, but I was never made to feel less than. I was never made to feel rejected. Disappointed in me, maybe, but that's about it. Can't blame him. I was NOT a helpful or pleasant child. Got into a lot of trouble in a lot of arenas and was not easy to have as a son. That said, He never stopped equipping me for success. Whether with furniture, a stable home, money, food, and attention. I was still FAMILY, you see. Adonai is the SAME WAY. Yes, I miss it.

Yes, I was a sinner. But He still died for me. He corrects me. He equips me. Not because of MY performance (for which I thank Him), but because Jesus brought me into the family. Jesus brought you (or can) in too. We're FAMILY. Yes, we get corrected. We get corrected because He wants the BEST for us. He wants us to prosper and grow and become all that HE says we can be. Not because of what we DO or are DOING or WILL do, but because of our COVENANT CONNECTION. We don't get what WE deserve, but what JESUS deserves. We repent when we're corrected because we don't want to be separated from our FAMILY. Our LOVING family. And He does NOT put us into time out. He IMMEDIATELY cooperates with us to get us back on track, deal with the consequences, and renew our mind with the Word so that going forward we think about the thing what HE thinks about the thing (which prevents repeating the mistake). He's loving us through the whole process from before we began to after it's over. What a GOOD God!

SERVEE NOT SERVER

who satisfies your life with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalm 103:5

To be effective in the riotous and ever-moving world of the service industry, we have to know how to prioritize and we MUST be multi-taskers. As a service provider, you've agreed to be in a specific location for a specific duration of time. Other than that, the pace of the work, variety of the work, and complexity of the work is in a large part set by the ones GETTING the service, not the ones PROVIDING the service. We often look at praise and thanksgiving as EMOTIONAL things, but they aren't. We can praise whether we FEEL like it or not. It isn't about US, but about whom we are serving. *"It will not be like this among you! But whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be most prominent among you must be your slave—"* (Matthew 20:26-27).

This all goes WAY back. *"At that time Yahweh set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of Yahweh to stand before Yahweh, to serve him and to bless the people in his name until this day"* (Deuteronomy 10:8). Priests serve Adonai. We are all priests in Jesus. *"And you yourselves, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ"* (1 Peter 2:5). What are the sacrifices? *"Therefore through him let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name"* (Hebrews 13:15). We are priests serving Adonai with our praises – from the confession of His name (Romans 10:9) to thanksgiving and gratitude (Psalm 107:1-3). HE determines what He needs, not us. We CAN meet that need. We're empowered as His priests AND we have Ruach HaKodesh living inside us to teach us and guide us in what we should say. We are servants of the Most High Yahweh.

We minister to Adonai and Adonai blesses us. We do not minister TO BE blessed, it is simply a natural result of the ministering. Take your kids. You don't tell your kids to

behave to get things. But when your kids are behaving, you're likely to bless them. The extra attention, the extra treats, the extra presents, etc. We naturally give more to those who are nice to us. We get along better with them. It's a natural consequence of the quality of the relationship. Adonai is love and gave of Himself BEFORE we were even in existence (Revelation 13:8), much less in a position to be good or try and 'earn' anything (Romans 5:8). He is LOVE, so He loves us. He is MERCIFUL, so He shows mercy. He shows GRACE because of those two things as well. So we're not doing this to earn favour. We're not trying to manipulate Him. This isn't a ploy – it wouldn't do us any good anyway (Jeremiah 17:10).

We are flesh suited spirit beings. We have a foot in each world, as it were. That means that we need to be good stewards of our time in the physical world without neglecting the spiritual world (2 Corinthians 4:18). In fact, what is unseen is more important than what we can see, measure, and touch (Hebrews 11:3). Yet it is all too easy to get caught up in it. The stresses and events of our everyday lives – more so when crises rise up, whether local, national, or international. If we can't maintain coming to Him with trust, how can we please Him (Hebrews 11:6)? If we can't please Him, how is He blessed? If He isn't blessed, how can WE be blessed? If we're not blessed, how can we be satisfied? He's not asking for hard things. He isn't asking for impossible things. He is asking for a SIMPLE thing. To give Him His rightful place. It's like agreeing that the sun is visible in our sky and gives light, then acting accordingly. Adonai wants us to recognise His natural place, agree it is His rightful place, and then act accordingly. In order to do that, we need to be multi-taskers. We need to take care of our responsibilities here in the natural world at the same time that we are paying attention to the spiritual world and our responsibilities there.

Ruach HaKodesh is a HUGE help if we let Him be. He is constantly talking to us about our lives and what we do. Showing us where the Word impacts us. Giving us Word-based counsel. Showing us where and how trust in Jesus is needed in every situation we're in. Reminding us who we are in Jesus and what our covenant rights are as children of Adonai. And also of our duties and responsibilities as children and priests in the Kingdom. We might have issues keeping our attention on multiple things in multiple places, but He does not. He is omnipotent and omniscient. He will direct our attention where it needs to be and speak to us about what we need to be doing, even giving us the

words to say if we need them. He is our guide, teacher, corrector, and encourager. He'll be the one reminding us that Adonai is the priority in our lives. That time with Him is NEVER wasted time. That He is the One we serve, and that our service is voluntary: out of love – not meant to be ignored, lip-service, or a drudgery. We minister to Him with our praise and thanksgiving, giving Him anything He asks for (prayer for someone, for example) as part of that service. It ends up blessing us more than we bless Him, but that's just a benefit from being humbly submitted and obedient to our Father, King, and Lord.

Remembrance:

Ephesians 2:8 "*For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God*"

You know when you're a kid and you hear your name called forcefully? Isn't the instinct to say 'I didn't do it!?' I mean, statistically speaking there's SOMETHING you did that you shouldn't have done, right? Well, salvation works exactly that way. WE didn't do it. Not only that, we COULDN'T do it. We have no right to determine what it is that is 'good'. We cannot determine this because everyone has a different standard for what is good. We don't even have the chops to determine HOW to do good. Not really. We barely manage an imitation of it by following the structure laid down by the laws of our countries. We still fail, though. There is ALWAYS something WE think is good or a way WE think good should be done that really and truly is NOT good. Only Adonai can say what goodness is. Only Adonai can save us. He is the ONLY one outside the system. The ONLY one who wasn't created. He IS, He WAS, and He WILL BE. He is Alpha-Omega. Independent. The ONLY one who is or ever was. The uncreated. You know what? He didn't wait for us to get it. He didn't wait for us to understand. He put things in motion right away. He made sure to make a Way for us to get back to Him. He even gave us the tools as part of our DNA. He loved so that we could love. He gave us His faith. He did ALL the heavy lifting because we COULDN'T. Ever. He did it all. He finished what we started. He did that for you and He did that for me. Because He CHOSE to show us Grace. Because He LOVES us. What a GOOD God!

SATISFYING EXCITEMENT

who satisfies your life with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalm 103:5

Solomon knew the principle of how to be satisfied. “*A person of blessing will be enriched, and he who gives water also will be refreshed*” (Proverbs 11:25). The Complete Jewish Bible translates it as: “*The person who blesses others will prosper; he who satisfies others will be satisfied himself.*” Which is the RESULT of having a heart of gratitude toward Adonai. We get satisfied with good things. Thanksgiving, then, is all about BLESSING. Us blessing Adonai and Adonai blessing us. Adonai really is a GOOD God and cannot HELP but want to share Himself with us. The thing is, WE have no idea what is truly on the menu. We don't REALISE what is possible with Adonai. That is one of the reasons He set up this idea of service. It isn't only meant to showcase the possibilities of being humble (something we ALL need). One of the other things it does is show us what WE can have in Him.

Imagine being a server at a restaurant. It's your first day. You've learned the menu, but you're still a little shaky on it. You know the specials for the day. You can handle things if they don't get too crazy. Your first customer shows up and you go to take their order. They order something you've never even HEARD of. You check with the kitchen and yes, they CAN make it and you DO sell it. This happens every time this customer comes in. Again and again. Soon you have a second menu in your head made up of DOZENS and DOZENS of things you had never heard of and didn't know were possible to order. It not only makes YOUR mealtimes at the restaurant more interesting, you start recommending things to other customers. Everything opens up and the possibilities are near-endless. That's what thanksgiving is like.

True worship isn't the singing. It isn't the words of praise. It isn't even the attitude of praise. True worship is when we have a submitted spirit, we LISTEN, and then we APPLY what Adonai says to us. True worship is conforming to who He is. It is changing OUR

thinking into HIS thinking. True worship is about transformation. We get there because we have taken the time to prepare our hearts with the praise, the singing, the words acknowledging who He is and what He is. Think about Jesus' prayer (Matthew 6:9-13). Jesus acknowledged who His Father was, worshiped His name, submitted to His will, thanked Him for needs met, asked for guidance, and acknowledged the Father's Way was the ONLY Way to have a life of real success. Eighty percent of the prayer was worship, ten percent was asking – but asking for what the FATHER deemed as our needs, and then ten percent was agreeing to comply with the Father's thinking. The percentages are broad estimates, but you can see the balance of praise to asking to obedience.

We will be satisfied with what we know is possible. You cannot be satisfied with a full fridge of groceries if you don't know it's possible. You cannot be satisfied with a new vehicle if you do not know it's possible. If all you know is scraps and used vehicles, that is all you will look for and all you will be satisfied with. There will be no hunger for anything more because you don't know it is available. What's the stereotype for successful advertising? You watch an ad and declare 'that's the thing I never knew I always wanted'. We can have a vague sense that there is more to life. More available. But if we never see it, we will never KNOW it. If we don't KNOW it, we cannot be satisfied with it. Part of thanksgiving is learning that we CAN BE RENEWED even as we go. Like eagles.

One of the great lies of religious thinking is that you have to take off your meat suit to get satisfied in Adonai. That you need to be walking the streets of Heaven before you are truly blessed. That down here we lose, up there we win. It's horrible thinking that robs you of everything that is available to you in and through Jesus. Don't mistake me. There is a fullness and completeness we CANNOT reach until all parts of us are transformed into glory (spirit, soul, AND body). Our spirit is transformed right now into what it will always be (Ephesians 1:3). When we begin to draw on what it has access to, we start to see it operate in our lives here. That's the battle of the soul (mind, personality, and heart). That's the territory where we need to pull down the devil's strongholds and put up Jesus' Word. Our bodies are made of fallen material and will always go with the easiest, laziest, most selfish path. The habits of broken thinking. But Ruach HaKodesh renews this body from the inside out (2 Corinthians 4:16). The Father gives it life (Romans 8:11). We are not subject to the same 'rules' we were when we were lost. We are

a NEW CREATURE, one third Ruach HaKodesh! We get NEW attitudes, NEW thinking, and NEW possibilities (Ephesians 4:23). We won't reach the end of that process until we're before the Throne or Jesus comes back, but we are on the journey RIGHT NOW.

"By this love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment, because just as that one is, so also are we in this world" (1 John 4:17). If we don't know what is available to us, we will not be thankful for it. We will not have a heart full of gratitude for it. We won't be seeking it. We won't be hungry for it. We'll coast along with the bare minimum with substandard feathers which are getting older by the day and impacting our ability to fly and function as we should. We need to get our eyes on what is possible in Jesus, study it out, and get the Word about it inside ourselves. We need to have Ruach HaKodesh remind us about it. Get ourselves stirred up under His guidance. Get excited and eager. Get hopeful expectation surging through our minds and bodies. Seek the renewal that He says is possible, and be GRATEFUL that it is available and that it WILL come to pass.

When we get really excited, we can't HELP but praise Adonai. When I look around my home at all the things we have, all the opportunities that have come our way, and even that we are here in this place, I feel a surge of gratitude toward Adonai about it. Look what Jesus has done! I have NOTHING He didn't bring my way. And we're not done! We'll get into a better and better position. When this stuff and this place is ready to bless someone else, we're moving up to the next step. It's a continual process and we're excited to be a part of it. I can't think about that without praising Adonai. Who KNOWS what I will be shown tomorrow. Or the next day. Or the next. As I renew my thinking with His Word (Romans 12:2) there is NO LIMIT to the possibilities available. Adonai is MORE THAN ENOUGH in every aspect of my life. I am grateful for Him and for what He does and for the future He'll show me. Aren't you? Get into the Word and start seeing it. The BLESSING of Adonai is an amazing thing. The covenant we get to be a part of is an amazing thing. Only Adonai could have done this! Praise Him for it. Ask Ruach HaKodesh to remind you of all Jesus has said about you in the Word. As you see more and more of the menu that is available to you, praise Him for each and every item. Get renewed. Piece by piece. Day by day. Get renewed.

Remembrance:

2 Corinthians 3:18 “*And we all, with unveiled face, reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory into glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*”

We all have the ability and the covenant right to see who we are able to become in Jesus. It is like looking in a mirror and seeing what Adonai sees. This is the glory of Adonai that is living inside us. See the grace He has given us. See what we can become through Jesus. It isn't far off. It's RIGHT THERE. We have the covenant RIGHT to transform from who we were to the glory of Adonai in Messiah Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:21). But to see it, we need to turn the lights on. A mirror is NO GOOD in the dark. We can pray to help us turn the lights on (Ephesians 1:18). We can shine the Word on it to turn the lights on (Romans 12:2). We CAN look at that mirror (James 1:23) because Jesus put it there and Ruach HaKodesh holds it up. We can see the glory of Him in us, and through that transformational experience, the world around us will start to see Him in us as well (Philippians 1:6). We'll start to glow with His glory and shine like lights in the darkness (Matthew 5:14). WE won't be glorified, but JESUS will be glorified as people see His glory written all over our faces, actions, and words. When we become more and more like Him. He will draw them to Himself and we get to cooperate with that process. Isn't that awesome? What a GOOD God!

APPRECIATION

who satisfies your life with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalm 103:5

Anyone in the service industry knows the power of the upsell. Getting new customers into your business is costly. Really costly. But selling better and pricier things to existing customers is not. They're already there. You can guide them to different things to meet their needs and expose them to new products, which makes you more money because you didn't have to spend all the money to get them there. Airlines offer upgrades to their seats. Hotels offer upgrades to their rooms. Software companies (business and entertainment) offer packages and premium versions. If you're already there buying, why not get this one that does better/has more? It can be done for sleazy reasons like getting them to buy the item with more mark-up. It can be done to build better relationships, satisfy more customer needs, and be a benefit for both sides. Either way, upselling is part and parcel of the commerce transaction. It is easy to get caught up with it. But thanksgiving with Adonai is NOT a commerce transaction.

Thanksgiving is about expressing appreciation. Every server worth their salt thanks their customers. They welcome them to the place of business, treat them with kindness and gratitude during their time there, and thank them for having come in when they go. It is a welcoming attitude. One that makes them want to return. To head to that place where everybody knows your name. Your 'third place', after home and work, where you spend your time. Companies have spent hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars trying to make this place. There is great value in feeling welcome in a place. One of the great benefits of practising gratitude in the heart toward Adonai is a welcome feeling on both sides. We feel welcome in His presence and He feels welcome in ours. It is a mark of being a believer and truster in Him (Romans 8:9).

But what about when we get past the greetings. When we've finished washing His feet (John 13:1-17), expressed our gratitude that He is with us, and we get onto the ordering.

Not just what He would like from us, but what we would like from Him. The small, but important part of prayer that happens after the praise and worship (Matthew 6:9-13, especially vs 11). Don't try to upsell Adonai. Don't let your WANTS take over. Be satisfied with your NEEDS being met while preparing for more – the wants. Adonai has promised to meet ALL our NEEDS (Philippians 4:19; Matthew 6:31-33). They WILL be met. We're THANKING Him, not ASKING for them. We should have full trust that they will be met. We should believe Him about it 100%. With NO doubt at all, because He is trustworthy. Period.

When we move into the arena of WANTS, we're asking for something more than our needs. IF those wants are godly – something to bring Him glory and not just greed – we KNOW we will have them too (1 John 5:14). If we're asking for things for OUR desires purely and He has no part in them, they are NOT godly requests (James 4:3). Remember, He WANTS to bless us. He's not KEEPING things from us. He ONLY keeps ungodly things from us. He ONLY doesn't give what will cause us to stumble. That doesn't mean we will never get it, only that we need to get His thinking on it. Take money. Some people are DESTROYED when they get money. Those kinds of people need HIS thinking on money in order to receive it and thrive. When we ask and don't get, we need to check our motives and check our thinking against the Word. Our prayer requests – like everything ELSE in the Kingdom – is NOT about getting Adonai to do or give what WE want. It is about US choosing to receive what HE wants. *"May your kingdom come, may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"* (Matthew 6:10).

In our needs and in our wants, we should be giving thanks to Adonai for the opportunity to come before the Throne to communicate with Him. *"Therefore let us approach with confidence to the throne of grace, in order that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need"* (Hebrews 4:16). This is the REASON we come to Him: to receive His mercy and grace. This is salvation. This is the Good News: we can have it because of what Jesus did! The highlight of EVERY day should be the opportunity we have to thank Him for it. To show our gratitude with our thanksgiving and praise. Not to GET something, but to truly appreciate all that He IS and all that He DOES. To LOVE as we are LOVED. And yes, it will renew us, bless us, and make us better bit by bit every day of our lives.

Thank you, Adonai, for being who You are. Thank you, Ruach HaKodesh, for never letting us forget the wonderfulness of our Elohim and King. Thank you, Jesus, for all you did for us and the great love you show for us. We love you. We thank you. We worship you, and we bless you. Thank you. SO much! Amen.

Remembrance:

John 14:27 "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you—not as the world gives, I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.*"

Adonai doesn't give like the world gives. In the natural world we can be told we're getting something and we can be promised something, but until it actually shows up in our hands we're not sure if we're getting it OR if it will be as it was advertised as being. Adonai doesn't work like that. He is faithful. He is true. And He is good. When Adonai promises something, you get it. Period. It will be EXACTLY what He said and will work EXACTLY as He said it did. In fact, He is SO FAITHFUL you don't even need to wait until you have received something to thank Him for it. Timing is HIS province, thankfulness is OURS. It is a mark of how much we trust Him when we thank Him for stuff we haven't received yet AS IF WE HAVE. It isn't thanks that we'll have it one day. It's thank you I have it. He is THAT dependable. He is THAT faithful. He is THAT truthful. If HE promises, He WILL deliver (Romans 4:21; Hebrews 10:23). What a GOOD God!

TIMELESS

Yahweh does deeds of justice and judgments for all who are oppressed,
Psalm 103:6

Anyone can have justice. All that is needed is to apply to THE Righteous Judge. Adonai laid it down in the Ten Commandments. Exodus 20:13 “*You shall not murder.*” Adonai was telling them that they did NOT have to take things into their own hands. He will protect them. He will defend them. If they would bring the situation to Him (1 Peter 5:7), He would deal with it in the most humane way for everyone involved. The problem is, as a species, we just won’t leave it alone. We don’t bring Him our situations. We cling to them, call them problems, and start blasting with both barrels until everything is lying down. We cause more ‘problems’ than we solve with that method and using it doesn’t get our needs met because we’re despising the one who gives solutions. Even when we start out right, we often forget the TIME factor. It is all so simple, but we like to make it complicated.

David wrote many psalms about how Adonai was going to deliver him. How Adonai was going to punish the wicked. How Adonai was going to make all the circumstances change. And He did. David’s trust was NOT misplaced. But some of those situations didn’t resolve right away. Some of them weren’t converted into memories for twenty years or more. But even twenty years can be a flash in the pan when your eyes are on the right thing. “*For our momentary light affliction is producing in us an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure and proportion*” (2 Corinthians 4:17). In the light of ETERNITY, ANYTHING that happens to us – NO MATTER HOW LONG – is all momentary. We have to see things from Adonai’s perspective. He once said He wasn’t completely mad at the Amorites (Genesis 15:16). It was over FOUR HUNDRED YEARS before it was full (Deuteronomy 20:17; Amos 2:9) – and there is no record of how long it took to get to that ‘not yet full’ in the first place. We do NOT always see time as He sees time.

So what is the ‘secret’? Don’t mix time with your trust in Adonai and DOUBLE don’t mix it with your thanksgiving. Our gratitude is based on the TRUSTWORTHINESS of Adonai, NOT in our SEEING action. An angel was once sent to save a city (2 Kings 19:35). No one saw the angel arrive. No one saw the angel strike down those men. No one saw the angel leave. They didn’t know when the angel was coming or that an angel WAS coming. It happened on Adonai’s timeline. Other than a promise of saving them (Isaiah 38: 2 Kings 20), the king had nothing to stand on. So they stood on the promise of Adonai. And Adonai delivered them. In His own way and time. If you are going to trust, TRUST. Don’t put a time limit on Adonai. Believe He can do it and stand on that. It is the way Abraham did it (Genesis 15). He waited decades for the fulfilment of it, but did NOT leave off (Genesis 21). He was SO ADAMANT about it (Romans 4:3), it helped him through a situation twenty years AFTER the fulfilment (Genesis 22; Hebrews 11:17-19). When we CHOOSE to believe Adonai in spite of what the situation is or the elements of it that we can see, we unlock the ability to be truly thankful about it.

Much like with believing, we need to NOT add time to our GRATITUDE. If Adonai says He is going to do something or we are going to get something, we ARE. It may LOOK like innocent people have been taken down. It may LOOK like judgment didn’t come to save them in time. But that is NOT ACCURATE. From OUR perspective that might be a fact, but the TRUTH is that the wicked reap a harvest from the seeds of their deeds. They may or may not get the fullness of it in this life, but there are always chains and pains attached to every ungodly thing they do (Psalm 32:10). And when they stand before the Righteous Judge, they will unfortunately receive the full harvest they worked so hard to plant and care for (Romans 2:5-6). Just because WE don’t see it, doesn’t mean it’s not coming to pass.

Hold onto the promises of Adonai. Hold onto them and encourage each other in them – the ones for you and the ones for them. We need to build and strengthen and develop our thankfulness. The Word and encouraging each other in it and in the promises is how we do that. *“Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for the one who promised is faithful. And let us think about how to stir one another up to love and good works, not abandoning our meeting together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging each other, and by so much more as you see the day drawing near”* (Hebrews 10:23-25). There is

NO TIME LIMIT ON THANKS. Don't put one there. EVER. Just be grateful. Be thankful. Know that He is FAITHFUL. Know that He is MERCIFUL. Know that He shows us all GRACE. We know that, so we can thank Him for that.

Being oppressed sucks. There's no way around that because our flesh doesn't like to be oppressed or afflicted. But we can thank Adonai for His saving us. We can thank Adonai for redeeming the time between when it started and when it ends. We can thank Adonai for everything no matter what. We KNOW that He ONLY wants good for us. We KNOW it. It is part of His character. Part of who He is. He NEVER wanted bad for us at all. The first words ever spoken to a human being was The BLESSING. All those promises, all those fulfilments pointing to further/more fulfilment. Ruach HaKodesh can remind us of those. He can speak to us about the faithfulness of Adonai. He can speak to us about what Jesus enabled us to receive. He can help us frame the words of thanksgiving that show what is truly in our hearts. He won't put a time stamp on it. He will simply state how FAITHFUL Adonai is and that we can TRUST Him to deliver. Believe it. Search the Word for AMPLE proof of it. Rejoice for it. Thank Him for it. It WILL come to pass. Adonai WILL do deeds of justice and Adonai WILL judge all who need judging. Amen.

Remembrance:

1 Kings 2:1 "*The days of David came near for him to die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying,*"

David had some unfinished business. Maybe the situation hadn't been politically expedient. Maybe David didn't like the idea of how the people would see him. Maybe David had been afraid to. Who knows. But there were some people David wanted judged, and he wasn't going to be able to do it. So he tasked it to his son (who did pretty well, I must say). We can be the same way with OUR unfinished business AND we don't have to wait until we're dying. We can simply put it all in Jesus' hands. We can choose to give it up to someone else who will become responsible for it. It won't even be OUR situation anymore, but HIS. We can do it in peace, because we KNOW He is faithful. We can do it and leave it, and thank Him for dealing with it in mercy and goodness. Don't hold to these things and let them fester. Turn them over and let them be praise points. Not maliciously. Not an opportunity to get a dig in. But an honest and heartfelt thanking Adonai for taking your situations and turning them around. We don't even need to SEE it

come to pass. We can thank Him and pray for mercy for them and walk away. Unconnected. Not bitter. At peace and operating in love toward them should we see them again – because WE don't have a problem with them anymore. It's a Jesus thing now. Jesus is on the case. lean into how Ruach HaKodesh wants you to walk, talk, and act, and let the peace of the Lord take over. Isn't that one of the great things about Jesus? He takes care of things for us. What a GOOD God!

PLAIN SIGHT

who made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel.

Psalm 103:7

Adonai is not hiding for the few and uber dedicated. He is not laying down mystical puzzles to be worked at, laboured on, and only in old, old age nuggetted out into some wisdom. He is not hiding for the elite. He is not Marco Poloing for the power brokers. He hides so that we FIND Him and think about the SIMPLE journey where HE did the heavy lifting. He reverse toddlers us. Which is good, because historically we look in ALL the wrong places. It's exhausting. And there He was through it all, an elephant in the middle of the room, who we consistently missed.

“The hidden things belong to Yahweh our God, but the revealed things belong to us to know and to our children forever, in order to do all the words of this law” (Deuteronomy 29:29). Adonai revealed Himself to the people of Israel so that they would be obedient. NOT because He has a set of rules to beat their heads over (or ours). But because if we will live in covenant with Him, life becomes worth living (John 10:10). There is a level of excellence that is achieved when we live at the level He suggests. Every commandment is given in love, because He IS love. We don't have to look to anyone else to meet our needs. We won't need to bed idols or sign up with government programs. He'll look after all our needs. He'll look after us better than anyone else. That's all Exodus 20:1-2, no other gods before Him. What about Exodus 20:14, do not commit adultery? That's telling us that if we take someone else's wife, we won't be under the BLESSING. If we want a wife or husband, we need to trust completely in Him and He will get us a mate that will truly match us. Exodus 20:15? Why steal when we can go to Him and He will give us what we desire? And in abundance? Jesus said the same thing in Matthew 7:7-8 “*Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.*” Adonai showed them – and us – right from the beginning that He was GOOD and that He was LOVE and that He wanted to BLESS us. We just needed to cooperate with Him on the HOW it should be done.

So often we have forgotten that He is LOVE. That love doesn't set out to hurt or injure or maim or shame or anything. We only FEEL some of those things when we are in the WRONG. And it is US who feels it, not the loving person who makes us feel it. Correction only 'hurts' because we don't like being corrected. Adonai let us know who He was, what He was like, what He expected, WHY it was good for us, WHAT we were avoiding by cooperating (what life outside of Him is like), HOW we should do it, WHEN it was important (all the time), and held NOTHING back. He gets REALLY detailed in Deuteronomy. No matter what your position is in the Kingdom, there is something in there about what you should do and how to do it. That's not even including Leviticus and Numbers where it goes into the nitty gritty about what priesthood means, the moral laws covering all aspects of life, and why we NEED a saviour to pay the price for Sin. None of it was given to make rules and punishments. All of it was given to show what FREEDOM was like. All of it was given to show how SIMPLE it is to live in love and in covenant with Him. *"For this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too wonderful for you, and it is not too far from you"* (Deuteronomy 30:11). Praise Adonai, we're walking in the reality of it in Jesus today!

He showed Himself so that we will SEE Him, FOLLOW Him, ACCEPT Him, and humbly SUBMIT to Him. Because it is right and good. Because He IS Elohim Almighty. Our thankfulness should extend to Him making Himself real to us. He didn't HAVE to reveal Himself. He didn't HAVE to establish His ways in our lives and the lives of our ancestors. He didn't HAVE to come and teach us how it all works. He didn't HAVE to give us the freedom that He gives us. But He DID. Isn't that worth a few million praises? Shouldn't there be a point every day that we glance at the Bible or think of the people who first truly introduced Him to us and we praise Him for it? That we thank Him for it? We have a heritage available to us because He took the time to make Himself real. He didn't make us flounder around hunting for Him. He didn't make us spend centuries trying to figure out the truths and methods to transcend to His level. He came to us. He came near. He stayed where we could get to Him. He made a Way. He tabernacled with US, instead of making us discover Him (John 1:14). Isn't that something to be truly grateful for?

This covenant relationship He offers us is unique on this planet. It is the only mortal-divine relationship that is real. It is the only time the divine does all the hard work. It is the only truly loving school of thought out there. Everything else has thorns in one way or another. Every religion that humanity has developed mimics one or more of the true relationship and covenant possibilities we have in Yahweh, but twist them so that WE are the centre of it. Our efforts. Our work. Our study. Our sacrifice. But with Jesus, it is all about Him. His efforts, His work, His teaching, His sacrifice, and all through His mercy, grace, and love – all of it undeserved by us. The world gets so hung up on the ideas of what Adonai permits or what Adonai is keeping from them that they miss it completely. He holds back nothing good from us. He doesn't want us participating in anything bad. He's waiting for everyone to get the chance to truly make an informed decision about Him, and then He'll restore our environment from a broken one in which bad things happen to the perfect original in which there is nothing bad. But because it isn't RIGHT NOW and because it isn't indulging their WANTS and FEELINGS from THEIR point of view, they claim Adonai is a bunch of stuff He isn't and then run from Him.

I am grateful and thankful that Adonai revealed Himself to us. I am grateful and thankful for those who came before me and enabled me to discover Him. To notice the elephant in the room. I am grateful that He gave us Ruach HaKodesh so that I have a CONSTANT companion who is ALWAYS talking to me about Adonai. About Jesus. About the Father. Who is ALWAYS reminding me of who I am in Him. What He did. What is possible. I am grateful that He was revealed to me so that I could accept Him, make Him Lord, and walk while being corrected. Always turned back in His direction. Always having somewhere solid I can put my foot. I am grateful I don't have to manage on my own. I am grateful for everything He does and how He chooses to do it – I LIKE that He knows better than I. Life with Him is so FREEING. So JOYFUL. So FULL – and I don't do it to perfection (none of us do). There is ALWAYS more, better, and His best waiting for us.

Thank you, Adonai, for revealing yourself to us. Thank you, Ruach HaKodesh, for being the reminder of His ways. Thank you that we don't have to look blindly in the dark. Thank you that you come near to us when we come near to you. That we find you when we seek. That we can open the door when you knock. That we have what we have and

what we will have in You, through You, and because of You. Thank you, Adonai, for the GIFT of Yourself. You are WORTHY of our praise. Thank you for revealing yourself to the saints and guiding and teaching them in what to write and how. Thank you for it all. You are a GOOD God! The ONE and ONLY for me.

Remembrance:

Exodus 3:3 “*And Moses said, “Let me turn aside and see this great sight. Why does the bush not burn up?”*”

Moses knew he was meant to save the Israelites, but he tried to do it his way – and twenty years early. It didn’t go well and he ended up a shepherd in the desert. He didn’t stop looking for Adonai. Looking for his opportunity. But it took him forty years to stop running his mind and running his mouth and planning how HE was going to do it. When he was ready to LISTEN, Adonai IMMEDIATELY showed up. Moses was a STUBBORN man, which was a good thing when he got stubborn for Adonai’s ways. It was a good thing when he decided nothing but what Adonai said was worth doing. No, he still wasn’t perfect – who is? But it took a LONG time for him to let go of his education, let go of his thinking, let go of his training, and be willing to LISTEN. Adonai didn’t stop working with him. Adonai didn’t stop him from thinking of his role in life. Adonai didn’t stand in his way. Adonai didn’t punish him for his missteps. Adonai whispered. Adonai worked. And as soon as Moses was ready, Adonai lit up a bush ten feet tall on a mountainside and got his visual attention. Isn’t it a good thing that Adonai is so long-suffering? Isn’t it a good thing that Ruach HaKodesh NEVER stops speaking to us about how we can trust Jesus? Isn’t it a good thing that Adonai’s silence speaks to us as loudly as His voice? Isn’t it a good thing that we are NEVER left on our own? That He is ALWAYS there? We have SUCH a better covenant than Moses, yet how many of us are ready to LISTEN? How many of us are willing to finally put away all of the I CAN DO IT and listen to how HE CAN DO IT? Adonai is SO good to us. He NEVER gives up. He ALWAYS has a Way to get it done. And He CONSTANTLY communicated it to us. We really need to grasp and hold onto the idea of LISTENING to Him, because He has so much to say to us. So much great advice. So much freedom. So much love. So much mercy and grace. So much that we could be full of it all the time and there would still be enough to overflow from our lives into the lives of those around us. The bush is burning. The words are whispering. The path is straight and level and lit. He’s made it all ready for us. He’s made it so simple. He loves us so much. What a GOOD God!

SO VERY SLOW

Yahweh is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loyal love.

Psalm 103:8

Adonai shows anger for the first time in scripture in Exodus 32:10 saying “*And now leave me alone so that my anger may blaze against them, and let me destroy them, and I will make you into a great nation.*” He was speaking of the Israelites, the descendants of Abraham, *that He had been dealing with since He spoke to Abraham about them in Genesis 15:13* “*And he said to Abram, “You must surely know that your descendants shall be as aliens in a land not their own. And they shall serve them and they shall oppress them four hundred years.*” Exactly four hundred and forty years after that (Moses cost them forty years when he tried to do it his way – Exodus 2), the Law was given on Mount Sinai in modern day Saudi Arabia. At this point – the giving of the Law – Adonai had miraculously brought them out of Egypt with signs and wonders, showed Himself on the mountain, spoke to them in an audible voice, and spent time teaching Moses what he would need to teach the people. And they were worshipping idols because they didn’t want to wait. THAT is when Adonai showed His anger. Four HUNDRED years plus of dealing with these people, this chosen bloodline, and they were STILL going to reject Him? Four HUNDRED plus years before Adonai got angry. I would DEFINITELY agree that Adonai is SLOW to anger – especially considering this bloodline had had murderers, cruel people, adulterers, and liars among them more than once. Adonai is VERY MUCH slow to anger.

Canaan was not the ancestral home of the Philistines. They were aliens in the land the same way the Israelites were. Caphtor was an island of the ancient world – possibly Crete or Cappadocia, depending on who you study. Some of the Philistines are associated as being from Casluhim (also thought to be an island). The Philistines who came to Canaan, displaced the Avvim who lived there. “*And also the Avvites, who lived in villages as far as Gaza, and the Caphtorim, who came out from Caphtor, destroyed them and then settled in their place*” (Deuteronomy 2:23). They were remnant survivors from their place of origin that entered the Canaan/Gaza region at the end of the Bronze Age (when the Minoan civilization centred on Crete was collapsing, possibly due to volcanic

eruption). Adonai brought them to His Land to preserve them. To save them. But they turned on Him and despised Him. They took to the idols of the land and worshiped them. Around 1380 B.C., the Israelites started to clash with them. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon destroyed them (604 B.C.). They finally ceased to be a cultural group around the late fifth century B.C.. So they knew of Adonai, rejected Him, fought His people, and were finally judged over a period of time running about five hundred and seventy-one years at a MINIMUM. Who knows how long they knew and served Adonai before being brought to Gaza? That's still a long time.

Egypt unified around 3100 B.C. Amenhotep II ruled Egypt around 1453–1426 B.C. (high chronology) or 1427–1401 B.C. (low chronology), both of which puts him in the running to be the Pharaoh of the Exodus (it's complicated, but both dates work depending on which system of coordinating dates/calendars you use). If that's true (I personally agree), then that is over sixteen HUNDRED years from formation to a judgment which proved Yahweh's superiority in EVERY WAY to their idols. That isn't even the FINAL judgment, just A judgment. That's a LONG time. How did other empires who stood against Adonai fare? The Assyrians lasted 1,900 years. The Babylonians lasted 300 years (Old) and less than 100 (New), for a total of around 400 years. The Amorites for over four hundred. All these nations got judged – and some of them got partially judged with more judgment yet to come. Hundreds of years. Multiple generations. Adonai does NOT get mad fast. We REALLY need to stop thinking of Him as a smiter.

We could look at it in reverse as well. Jesus speaks of returning to the Earth SOON. According to Merriam-Webster, 'soon' means without undue time lapse; in a prompt manner; at once, or immediately. It has been more than TWO THOUSAND YEARS on our calendar. If Jesus said that was QUICK, then we definitely should think of 'slow' as being a long time. In other words, NOTHING you can do could stir up Adonai's anger toward you within your lifetime. Sadness? Yes. Correction? Definitely. A talking to? Most likely. But 'anger'? Very doubtful. Besides, with Adonai CORRECTING you, you don't NEED His anger. His FIRMNESS is enough to melt mountains, much less our insides. Adonai's anger is not needed in His dealings with humanity. It DOES come up from time to time, but over CENTURIES, not a few years. Adonai is SLOW to anger.

Isn't that something to praise Him for? To be absolutely and totally thankful for? Well, if He isn't angry, what is He? Compassionate. Gracious. Full of abundant and loyal love. THAT is the character of Adonai. He isn't smiting nations and bringing woes on people. That isn't His job description. Does that occur? Of course! We live in a fallen world with free will happening all the time AND we have an enemy devoted to getting worship for himself (which ultimately kills us) and when the devil can't get that he tries to destroy us (John 10:10). That ANYTHING good happens AT ALL is a HUGE testament to the GOODNESS of Adonai. The love and compassion of Adonai is what draws people to Him (John 3:17-18). Not the threat of a spiritual hand upside the head. You cannot read the Word and end up with a negative picture of Adonai – not if you pay attention to what's really going on. Most of the prophetic writings are pleas over decades and decades and decades for the people to repent in order to avoid penalties for their sins. No judgment rushes on them without warning. He even holds back judgment because the people haven't had enough of a chance. Innocents are never harmed, only those who have refused to submit and obey the ONLY one who is RIGHT and the ONLY one who gives LIFE and FREEDOM.

We have SO MUCH to be thankful for, and the truth that Adonai is NOT getting angry at us is one of them. The truth that Adonai will correct us both gently AND firmly is another. I know that I will go off course, we ALL miss it one way or another. I don't want to be four hundred kilometres into the wilds before I get a correction. I want it right away. Oh, I might not LIKE it, but I WANT it. I want to get His point of view on what sent me wrong. I don't want mine. His is a help. Mine is a welp. I am thankful that Ruach HaKodesh doesn't stop speaking to me. Even silence is LOADED with intent. I am NEVER without commentary by Him about ME. All of it based on things Jesus has said. All of it based on the Word. All of it testable, checkable, and true! I am NEVER alone. He is MORE THAN ENOUGH for me. Because He is FAITHFUL in His love for me. He is compassionate toward me. And Ruach HaKodesh NEVER lets me forget it, praise Adonai! He is SLOW to anger and QUICK to reconcile when I repent. I am SO GRATEFUL to Him. Aren't you?

Remembrance:

Proverbs 16:26 “The life of a worker works for him, for his hunger urges him.”

Adonai knew what He was doing when He created hunger. It not only fuels our work, but it brings us back to replenish. It is a WONDERFUL daily picture of what we are to be doing with Jesus (John 6:51; 7:37-39). Our hunger for the spiritual purity of Jesus DRIVES us to open the Word, seek Him in prayer, and praise His glorious name. Ruach HaKodesh is THE cheerleader of the Kingdom, ALWAYS pressing in on us to help raise the hunger up. To keep us looking where He is pointing (at Jesus). He does NOT leave us to wander empty cupboards desperate for whatever crumbs come our way. He does NOT leave us to click on Uber Eats and get whatever unhealthy but good tasting morsels the world is offering. He ALWAYS creates a hunger for the GOOD things. For things that BUILD US UP and not poison us. No pains. No hooks. No scars. Only GOOD and RIGHT and JUST things. Godly things. HIS things. Always available. Always edible. Always tasting sweet. What a GOOD God!

SOONER OR LATER

He does not dispute continually, nor keep his anger forever.

Psalm 103:9

We have free will. “*And Yahweh God took the man and set him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to keep it. And Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, “From every tree of the garden you may freely eat, but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.”*” (Genesis 2:15-17). Adonai was able to tell us that because we were like Him. “*So God created humankind in his image, in the likeness of God he created him, male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of heaven, and over every animal that moves upon the earth.”*” (Genesis 1:27-28). Like Adonai, we can make choices. We can obey Him like He asks, or we can disobey Him and not do what He asks. There are no other choices. We have the ability to make those choices. We always have. We always will. Adonai hasn’t reneged on anything. He changes not (Malachi 3:6).

The good news is that Adonai can be relied on. Trusted in. Believed. He is CONSISTENT. The bad news (from our point of view) is that WE are supposed to be like HIM. In His image and in His likeness means be like Jesus. Paul understood that (1 Corinthians 11:1). John understood that (1 John 2:6). Peter understood that (1 Peter 2:21). Jesus taught it to us (John 13:13-17). It isn’t hard to understand why we tend NOT to teach that much: our flesh doesn’t like it. However, it doesn’t change the TRUTH of it. We are to be like Him. Period. We can obey Him in this or disobey Him in this. We can ONLY accomplish it in HIM, remember? In Jesus, with Ruach HaKodesh, that’s how. Living in Jesus is the ONLY way to do it because ONLY JESUS managed it. In HIM, we get to be as HIM because He paid for sin and washed us clean of OUR sins so that we could die to the whole SIN thing and LIVE IN HIM as HIS righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). In HIM we are something, outside of HIM we are NOTHING (John 15:5). We can do it, but only can do it through Jesus. HE overcame so that WE could enjoy the fruit of His overcoming (John 16:33).

This cooperation with Jesus is SO important because Adonai will NOT “*dispute continually*“. If He asks us to do something, He expects us to do it. He will ask us. He will deal with us. But He is NOT going to argue with us. He will get someone else if we won’t. Moses tried to beg off. Jonah tried to run away. Abraham tried it his own way once. Gideon tried to beg off. Adonai asked them more than once, but He wouldn’t ask forever. The Israelites were told to clear the promised Land, but they didn’t. And He stopped telling them to. They ended up in a situation He did not want them to be in. But they insisted. It didn’t work out well. It gave them more opportunities to fail that he wanted them to have. Because He asked them to do something and they said no. He wasn’t HAPPY about it either – but He doesn’t keep His anger forever. Adonai is ALWAYS speaking to us. He WILL ask us to do things. But not forever. Are we going to obey or are we going to disobey?

What does this have to do with thanksgiving? With praise? With gratitude? Well, He gave us free will. WE will make the choice. But we are not left to stand alone in that choice. Ruach HaKodesh is there encouraging us to trust in Jesus. Jesus is there encouraging us to trust in the Father. We have His armour. We have His fruit. We have the overcoming reality of Jesus in which to succeed. None of that goes away because we are asked to do something that maybe we don’t feel ready to do. It is all there BECAUSE He has asked us to do something. We can think about it. We can. But we aren’t to waste time thinking. His asking us will turn to: ‘are you going to or am I going to ask someone else?’ He will NOT contend with us over it. He WANTS to give us the blessing that comes with obedience. He does NOT want for us to lock ourselves in the yard OUTSIDE the blessing. The benefits of obedience are MUCH MORE than we can see in the moment of the decision. It is about more than getting, it is an opportunity for WORSHIP.

Worship is blessing Adonai, plain and simple. How do we bless Him? We please Him. It is a blessing to Him. How do we please Him? We trust Him (Hebrews 11:6). When we are asked to obey, it is an opportunity to THANK HIM. We can thank Him for the opportunity. We can thank Him HE is trusting US to trust HIM. We can tell Him that we are not sure. We can tell Him we’re nervous. We can tell Him that this is stretching us to the max. We can tell Him the MOST IMPORTANT STUFF: we WILL obey and we WILL

trust Him because we have NO IDEA how to do it. That ALL we know is that He WILL see us through. It is worship. And we only have a limited time to give it. This should NOT cause dread. Instead, it should cause excitement. Eagerness. We should be on the edge of our seats, eager for the opportunity to say 'yes'. To thank Him. To worship Him. And then to rely on Him throughout the entire experience.

Remembrance:

Numbers 14:40 "*They rose early in the morning and went to the top of the mount, saying, "Here we are. We will go up to the place that Yahweh said, because we have sinned."*"

The Israelites refused to enter the Land. Adonai was NOT happy about it and said 'fine'. Since they were REFUSING to obey, He would enforce that decision. Their opportunity was over. The NEXT generation would go instead. Suddenly, they decided to go. But the blessing on the obedience was GONE. Adonai was tired of arguing with them. He REFUSED to go. They INSISTED on going and got soundly beaten. There is an opportunity to obey and when it is gone, it is gone. But Adonai is GOOD. Joshua and Caleb said YES and tried to get everyone ELSE to say yes too. It didn't work. Their lives were even threatened (Numbers 14:10). But they refused to say no. Adonai honoured that and honoured them. When the next generation went in? Joshua and Caleb were with them (Numbers 14:24; Joshua 14:6). Adonai ALWAYS honours those who say YES. Those who cooperate with Him to make the impossible possible (Matthew 19:26). What a GOOD God!

NOT WHAT WE DESERVE

He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor repaid us according to our iniquities.

Psalm 103:10

If this isn't a reason to be shouting thank you on a daily basis, no such reason exists. Adonai is not dealing with us according to what WE deserve. Adonai has NEVER dealt with us according to what WE deserve. Not to Adam and Eve. Not to Cain. Not to Moses. Not to the Israelites. Not to the Judeans. Not to Peter. Not to Saul. Not to me. Not to you. Not to ANY of us. Not even to Jesus. Jesus didn't deserve ANY negative thing, but He BECAME SIN for us. Jesus SUFFERED. Jesus DIED. Jesus got treated according to what WE deserved, not what HE deserved. He was repaid according to OUR iniquities, because HE didn't have any! Jesus was the ONLY ONE who could survive that experience long enough to pay for Sin. He got what WE deserved because Adonai had NEVER dealt with us that way. Adonai is MERCIFUL. Adonai is full of GRACE. Adonai is LOVE.

"If Yahweh of hosts had not left us survivors, we would have been as few as Sodom, we would have become like Gomorrah" (Isaiah 1:9). Adonai had been telling the people of Israel and Judah to repent and turn back to Him for decades upon decades upon decades. Judgment was coming and they would pay and He didn't want them to. They – as a nation – did not. So the coals of His wrath toward Sin fell upon them. But not full force (Ezekiel 10:6-7). Adonai let it cool some before it went out onto the people. In addition, He preserved a remnant (Joel 2:32). NONE of them deserved a reprieve, but they got it (Isaiah 10:22). That's how Adonai has ALWAYS dealt with us. Adam and Eve rebelled, and He clothed them properly (Genesis 3:21). Cain murdered, but was given protection from abuse from other people (Genesis 4:15). Abraham followed Adonai's plan in his own human way, but Adonai still blessed the child of that union (Genesis 17:20). Jonah was actively rebelling, but Adonai gave Him a chance to change his mind (Jonah 1:17). None of us are perfect. None of us are qualified. None of us deserve ANY favour of Adonai. No matter how good we manage to be (and there ARE good people out there), we don't stand up in the fullness of goodness that is needed to be justified on our own merits (Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8; Ecclesiastes 7:20; James 2:10; Matthew 5:18-19).

Adonai doesn't give us what we deserve because what we deserve is death, which is the cost of sin (Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23). Sin brought death. Death is THE result of sin. Adonai didn't want to leave us there. If He had, He would have stopped interacting with us the minute we sinned and it would have been all over in a very short period of time. Instead, Adonai had a plan in place before He created ANYTHING (Revelation 13:8). Adonai moved Heaven and Earth to make sure that He didn't HAVE to judge us, but could embrace us as He always wanted (John 3:16-18). This is always how He deals with us. Story after story, person after person, there is fault and mistakes and rebellion and foolish human thinking again and again and again, but Adonai doesn't respond with what they deserve. He shows GRACE and MERCY and acts according to HIS character, not ours. He is CONSISTENT and CONSTANT in how He treats us. That's not to say He doesn't CORRECT us – He DOES (2 Timothy 3:16-17). But He TREATS us as Jesus deserves.

“He made the one who did not know sin to be sin on our behalf, in order that we could become the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). “because those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he should be the firstborn among many brothers” (Romans 8:29). “and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me, and that life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). THIS is how He treats us. THIS is how He sees us. The proof? Ruach HaKodesh. “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and the Spirit of God dwells in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16). If you read Leviticus, you’ll notice that Adonai is VERY PARTICULAR about the Holy things – whether items, sacrifices, offerings, or procedures. He hasn’t changed. In order for HIM to dwell IN US, WE have to be CLEAN. Jesus accomplished that for us. Jesus made a Way. Jesus cleansed us through and through. In the eyes of the Father, we are as Jesus is. We are NEW creations (Colossians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Ruach HaKodesh is our PROOF that we are getting what JESUS bought for us and NOT what we deserve (Ephesians 1:14).

We should be thankful that we have the ability to be in Jesus. We should be thankful He made the Way open. We should be thankful we are not getting what we deserve. We should be thankful we are sharing in the things of Adonai. We should be thankful we

were cleansed. We should be thankful we have a new nature. We should be thankful that we are children, adopted into the family of I AM. We should be thankful EVERY DAY and NEVER stop thanking Him for what He has done for us. He is SUCH A GOOD GOD!!!!

Remembrance:

John 20:27 “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.”

Thomas in that moment deserved a slap upside the head. He deserved correction. He SHOULD have believed. He SHOULD have not needed physical evidence. He SHOULD not have decided not to believe. But Jesus did NOT give Thomas what he deserved in that moment. Instead, Jesus turned it into a blessing. Into an opportunity to show more mercy and grace. THAT is the God we serve. A MERCIFUL God. A LOVING God. A God who seeks to BLESS, not punish. To ENCOURAGE, not put down. To do whatever is needed to get us to the level He wants us on, not the level we're determined to stay at. All Jesus asks is that we put our hand in His (Matthew 19:26). If we will do that, He does ALL the rest. He does the work. He does the lifting. He does the encouraging. He does the supporting. He does everything that is needed to get us to where He knows we should be because the Father showed Him that is where we are to walk (John 5:19). We're not treated according to OUR thinking, but HIS. We aren't left alone to get settled in wrong thinking. He gives us access to His mind (1 Corinthians 2:16) and His Word (Romans 12:2), so that we can be transformed by Him into what we can truly be. He is ACTIVE about it. He is DETERMINED to see us there. What a GOOD God!

USE HIS

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so his loyal love prevails over those who fear him.

Psalm 103:11

I have been doing manual-style labour for about forty years now. I wasn't that good in the beginning. I think I made more work than I accomplished. Eventually, I got the hang of it. I got better at it. And now if I say I can do it, I can do it and do it well. My children, however, are not that capable yet. Not that they don't have ABILITY. What they lack is OPPORTUNITY for practise. What I would NEVER do is to hold them to MY standards because of THEIR ability. I know they aren't READY. They can't DO IT. Adonai made the same decision about us. Before the world was created, Adonai decided that He was going to make a Way, what the Way was going to be, and that He was going to throw the doors open to EVERYONE. We weren't CREATED yet. We COULDN'T do anything. Not good. Not bad. We didn't EXIST. But Adonai spiritually accomplished it at that point for us anyway. NOT because of US and what WE could do, but because of HIM and HIS LOVE for us. THAT is loyal love. THAT is mercy. It is part of His character and He ESTABLISHED it.

Now that we're here, we can do some stuff. But the mercy was ALREADY established. That LOYAL LOVE already existed. WE are NOT a factor in it. It's like the Himalayan mountains or the Mariana Trench. They are established. We aren't a factor in their formation. They exist INDEPENDENT of us. We can choose to let them be a factor in our lives. We can dive into the one or we can climb the other. Many people have, and have died because of that choice. Adonai's loyal love ALSO exists independently of us. We can CHOOSE to let it be a factor in our lives, or we can despise it. But IF we let that loyal love be a factor in our lives, it will gain ascendancy in our lives through HIS strength. It will defeat our broken thinking. It will defeat our broken habits. It will defeat our broken actions. It will PREVAIL and gain the UPPER HAND in our lives. Adonai's loyal love are the nails that keep our old selves on the cross of Jesus (Romans 6:8).

Adonai's thinking is FAR ABOVE the thinking of the sinner (Isaiah 55:8-9). Adonai likes to give us two things where we cannot be in both at once. We cannot stand in the East AND in the West. We cannot be in the troposphere at the same time we are in the exosphere. We cannot be in the depths of an oceanic trench at the same time we are on a mountain peak. We cannot be knowledgeable and ignorant at the same time. We cannot be foolish and practical. When we put our focus and our intent into ONE thing, we cannot also put it into ANOTHER thing (Matthew 6:24). Adonai uses these terms so that we understand how SEPARATE the thinking really is. When Adonai uses 'above' or 'below' it showcases His natural and superior position. Not lording it over us, but pointing out where He is versus where we are. Kind of nudging us and saying, 'Look. You're down there. I'm up here. I have a GOOD view. Trust me. I can SEE what's coming. You can't because the mountains are blocking your view.'

Ruach HaKodesh is DEVOTED to rejoicing with us about Adonai's mercy. About each and every warning. About each and every corrective measure. About each and every direction and instruction. About each and every moment that we get to spend time together with Adonai. About the moments, minutes, years, and decades that Adonai has been personally loyal in His love toward us. The chances we have been given. The readiness to show us GRACE and MERCY when we repent of our mistakes (1 John 1:9). We can be SO THANKFUL when we think about Adonai's loyal love. How OFTEN He shows us in our lives and in our histories. It's easy to spot. And Ruach HaKodesh WILL point it out to us if we will ask and then listen. It is EVER PRESENT in our lives, so we have an EVER PRESENT reason to be grateful and to praise His Name.

Sometimes, words are hard for us. I believe that is why we have the psalms. So we can use His words as ours. They are the words we can use to say what we REALLY want to say. Psalm 136 is an entire psalm of thanksgiving for His loyal love. Because it endures. Because it is trustworthy. Because of what He created. Because of PIECES of His creation that He made. Because of how He leads us. Because of how He fellowships with us. Because of His WILLINGNESS to love us. From mighty kings to dreaded enemies, all things that rise in our lives are covered by His loyal love. Because He supplies us in all

our needs. Just BECAUSE. His loyal love is forever and I thank Him for it. The more I get His Light on it, the more I thank Him for it. He truly is a GOOD God!

Remembrance:

Lamentations 3:22-24 “*The loyal love of Yahweh does not cease; his compassions do not come to an end. They are new in the morning, great is your faithfulness*”

We can be difficult people to deal with. We can be so difficult that the Father needs a mediator to give a better perspective to Him than the one WE are presenting (1 Timothy 2:5). But even with all of that, His mercy doesn't RUN OUT. His loyal love doesn't GET THIN. Every single day, He makes it ANEW. The absolute BEST part of that is that we go to sleep at night. We are dormant during the hours of darkness. WELL, as ADONAI gave the day to His people, EVENING and THEN morning is the DAY. So when we are tired, exhausted, spent, and recovering with sleep, Adonai is starting it all over again and filling up His MERCY and LOYAL LOVE so that when we open our eyes, we've already been covered by it for HOURS and HOURS. Adonai loves us SO MUCH He covers us BEFORE we need covering. He protects our relationship with Him BEFORE we start trying to climb the fence or walk in the weeds. Adonai was ready before creation for EVERYTHING that was going to come. He is our SOURCE and CANNOT be depleted. He is MORE THAN ENOUGH, praise His Name! What a GOOD God!

VERY APART

As far as east is from west, so he has removed far from us the guilt of our transgressions.

Psalm 103:12

This is another verse where we have the opportunity to be praising and thanking Adonai for it ALL THE TIME. Every day, every time we think of Him or us, we should be grateful. If it wasn't for Adonai doing this for us, our lives would be VERY different. This action accomplished by Jesus through His sacrifice on the cross, opened the Way for us to be totally changed inside and out in a way that nothing else possibly could. We are so changed, it is like we are standing on one side of the world and our former selves are on the other. They are NO LONGER ABLE to be in the same place. We NO LONGER have what we once had. THAT is something that is worth praising Him about. THAT is something to be grateful for. This is THE foundation of our gratitude: Jesus saved us.

Adonai cleansed us. We are CLEAN. Completely, utterly, and totally. We are NO LONGER sinners. In fact, since we abide in Jesus and Jesus in us we can't automatically sin anymore EVER. *“Everyone who is fathered by God does not practice sin, because his seed resides in him, and he is not able to sin, because he has been fathered by God”* (1 John 3:9). In Jesus, all we have is Him and His new life (Galatians 2:20). The life we used to have, the sinner we were, is dead. *“knowing this, that our old man was crucified together with him, in order that the body of sin may be done away with, that we may no longer be enslaved to sin”* (Romans 6:6). We are dead to sin. It is OUTSIDE trying to get IN again (Genesis 4:7). We are NOT slaves to sin. We have a CHOICE. We can CHOOSE to NEVER sin again. It is possible IN and THROUGH Jesus (John 15:5).

That's something to praise Him for! You're not steeped in sin. You're not infected by sin. You're not stuck with sin. You are NOT A SINNER! We are NEW in Jesus. We are LIFE and not DEATH. *“So also you, consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus”* (Romans 6:11). That is praiseworthy. That should make you so grateful every single day that you cannot WAIT to thank Him for it. He is SUCH A GOOD GOD to have

done that for us! Praise His Holy Name! But wait, you say. I sinned yesterday. What are you talking about?

It is true that we still perform sin (verb) but we are no longer sinners (noun). We have to CHOOSE to sin. It is NO LONGER automatic. We CAN – through and in JESUS – choose to never sin again. It is POSSIBLE. But it is ONLY possible when we are IN JESUS. Our thinking hasn't changed. Our patterns of behaviour are fuelled and controlled by our thinking. The more we change our thinking, the more like Jesus we become, and the less sin we choose to do (Romans 12:2). And we DO choose to sin. *"If we say that we do not have sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us"* (1 John 1:8). Sin is anything and everything that is contrary to the will of the Father. Period. HIS point of view, not ours. Period. Our feelings, observations, opinions, ideas, and experiences do NOT matter. His way is THE way. Period. Violation of that is sin. Period.

But we are not under a covenant of JUDGMENT. Jesus PAID the price for Sin. Jesus PAID for our personal sins (iniquities). We can accept His payment, acknowledge Him as Lord, and humbly submit to Adonai's will in and for our lives. We can be SAVED. We can be WASHED CLEAN. We can be TRANSFORMED. Now we are in Jesus' covenant. A covenant of Grace and Mercy, not judgment. When we choose to sin, we do wrong. Absolutely. But if we repent, get His idea on it and decide that it will be our idea on it, then we are forgiven. *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, so that he will forgive us our sins and will cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9). The thing is, as saved believers in Jesus, we do not DESIRE to sin. We sin because we fail to trust in Jesus. We sin because we let our brains follow past patterns of broken thinking. We sin because we despise the point of view of Adonai and selfishly choose our own way. We DO NOT sin AUTOMATICALLY because we are SINNERS. We are NOT sinners. There is ALWAYS a choice.

Now, I don't always MAKE the right choice – none of us do. But I am so VERY grateful that I HAVE that choice to make. That I was made CLEAN and WHOLE and HIS. That I get to live under His mercy in His GRACE. Ruach HaKodesh is ALWAYS reminding us of that. He is ALWAYS pointing out our opportunities to trust in Jesus. He is ALWAYS reminding us of who we are in Jesus (His Righteousness). He is ALWAYS reminding us it

is a CHOICE. He is ALWAYS reminding us of the tools Adonai has put at our disposal. He is ALWAYS reminding us of what we are called to do and to be by Adonai. Every day. All day long. He is our BIGGEST cheerleader. I am SO grateful for His words to me. I am SO grateful for what Jesus did for me. I am SO grateful for the transformation that Adonai made and continues to make in me. I am SO grateful for the fullness and completeness of what He started that WILL come to pass (2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 John 3:2). Praise Him for it today! It is WORTH some thanksgiving!

Remembrance:

1 John 3:2 “*Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever he is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is.*”

Moses was told that no one could see Adonai and live (Exodus 33:20). It’s true. Unrighteousness CANNOT exist in the presence of Pure Righteousness. That is an AWESOME thing. It means that although we are new creation in Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:17), and although we are being changed piece by piece into better copies of Jesus (2 Corinthians 3:18), and although we are given new life through Ruach HaKodesh constantly (Romans 8:11), there is always something left to perfect – because we are not in ourselves perfect. But when we see Jesus. When we are standing physically face to face and not in a vision, visitation, or dream. When we are really right there in front of Him, ALL the things that haven’t been perfected will EXPLODE. They will vanish. We will be INSTANTLY transformed in FULL TOTALITY into what we were always meant to be. Just one look. Just one glance. Just Him. And POW we WILL be perfected AND completed. Isn’t that awesome? Isn’t He WONDERFUL? What a GOOD God!

NOT A NEGATIVE

As a father pities his children, so Yahweh pities those who fear him.

Psalm 103:13

Today's words are not always the same as yesteryear's words. Merriam-Webster defines pity as 'sympathetic sorrow for one suffering, distressed, or unhappy'. Or the ability to FEEL pity. But the word we know as pity did NOT start as that. In Hebrew the word is 'racham' (raw-kham'). Racham means to have compassion on; to love; to find, to have, to obtain, or to show mercy to. It is a VERY different meaning. Adonai doesn't have sympathetic sorrow like a father does. Adonai LOVES us. Adonai showers us with MERCY. Adonai has compassion on us like a father has on his children. This is a LOVE verse JUST as powerful as John 3:16-18.

We know from Jesus that Adonai looks on us like a Father does his children. Jesus said Adonai meets our needs as a father does (Luke 11:11-13). Jesus said that we come to the father like children do (Matthew 18:3). Jesus said children ALWAYS have access to the Kingdom (Matthew 19:14). The Word tells us that Adonai corrects us like a father corrects his children (Proverbs 3:12; Hebrews 12:7-11). The Word tells us that those who are abiding in Jesus, living in Jesus' covenant with the Father, having been resurrected to life in Jesus, they have been adopted into the family of Adonai as children (Ephesians 1:5). We are Adonai's kids (1 John 2:28-3:1). Adonai LOVES us AS HIS CHILDREN. Adonai LOVES us JUST LIKE JESUS. That's something to be thankful for!

There is a CONDITION here. Adonai LOVES the whole world and everyone in it, both the wicked and the righteous (1 John 4:10). But Adonai ACTS IN LOVE toward those who trust Him. Who revere Him. "*I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently shall find me*" (Proverbs 8:17). To revere the Lord is to despise evil. To actively turn from it at EVERY opportunity that we have in word, thought, and action. That means we avoid evil; avoid pride; avoid an arrogant attitude; and also a vile, corrupt, and perverse mouth (Proverbs 8:13). When we actively do that, we begin to see how things REALLY are

(Proverbs 9:10). But that's hard, you say. Yes, it is. That's why Adonai treats us like a loving father treats his children. *"The Lord is not delaying the promise, as some consider slowness, but is being patient toward you, because he does not want any to perish, but all to come to repentance"* (2 Peter 3:9). His loyal love is eternally toward us. We can rejoice that He has mercy. That He IS merciful. That we are in His GRACE. And that when we choose wrong, we have a way back!

I found this quote on www.whitbyschool.org: 'Children need to feel boundaries because that provides them with security and safety, which are the foundation for emotional and cognitive learning. When children feel safe, they are able to direct their energy into engaging and exploring the world around them. If those boundaries aren't in place, that child's energy goes instead towards negative testing behaviors.' That is the WORLD saying that. How much MORE should WE AS DISCIPLES OF JESUS embrace it. There are MANY ways to discipline – some negative and some positive. We can be 'normal' with it and we can be FIRM with it. But discipline in some form is NEEDED to properly develop as children. Spiritual correction (discipline) is NEEDED to properly develop as Adonai's children and WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL FOR IT. *"He who loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates rebuke is stupid"* (Proverbs 12:1).

HOW does Adonai correct His children? It isn't with sickness, floods, disasters, and terrors. *"All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, in order that the person of God may be competent, equipped for every good work"* (2 Timothy 3:16-17). WHO corrects us? Ruach HaKodesh (John 14:26). If we won't listen to Him, He might send a fellow believer – in LOVE – to echo what He has already said (1 Thessalonians 5:11). That's AWESOME! That's proof of GRACE and evidence we are not under JUDGMENT. In the Old Covenant, prophets were sent to WARN people of what was coming. In the New Covenant, Ruach HaKodesh WARNS people of WHERE WE ARE HEADED. There is a HUGE difference there. We are ON HIS PATH. If we get OFF we'll have problems. His WORD keeps us on the path (Psalm 119:105). Ruach HaKodesh warns us when we're getting it wrong. When we're heading into the weeds. When our attitudes are in danger of helping us to make a wrong choice. He is there to be CONSULTED. To keep us in the CENTRE of His WILL. That is a MAJOR blessing!

When we obey Him, He proves His love for us. When we obey Him, he DEMONSTRATES His love to us. When we DISOBEY Him, He CANNOT demonstrate His love to us. Not because He isn't able, but because He justly restricts His behaviour to those who love Him – as demonstrated by obedience (John 14:15) – in order to motivate us to live the way that HELPS us instead of the way that KILLS us (John 10:10). He has INFINITE patience with us, His children, but sooner or later if we walk in destructive behaviour we will destroy ourselves. That's just common sense. He warns us about it. He corrects us. If we will RECEIVE that correction JOYFULLY, we will experience the massive benefits of it. He corrects us because He loves us. We accept the correction because we love Him.

“For this is the love of God: that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, because everyone who is fathered by God conquers the world” (1 John 5:3-4). That sounds like something to be VERY grateful for. That sounds like something to EMBRACE. That sounds like something to be THANKFUL for. And you know what? It IS. Amen.

Remembrance:

Matthew 11:30 “*For my yoke is easy to carry and my burden is light.*”

Does our flesh like to be told what to do? NO. Do we like boundaries and borders and restrictions? NO. Are they horrible, hurtful things that keep us from good, enjoyable, and beneficial living? ABSOLUTELY NOT! The benefits are so easy to see, it's obvious. The love He shows us when we obey – because we are in a place where we will accept it and not kick against it – is so spectacular that it is peaceful. The rest and relief from toil, from fighting to make things work, from exhausting ourselves just trying to keep our heads above water, is PALPABLE. It is SIMPLE to let Him take control. It is SIMPLE to let Him show us where to walk, where to work, and where to live. It is SIMPLE to obey. It can be difficult to break old thinking, but it isn't burdensome. It is an EASY thing to carry because it doesn't HURT. There are no pins and needles. There are no hooks or barbs. It is DESIGNED to BENEFIT and not BURDEN. He designed it that way. To help. To bring peace. To bring satisfaction. What a GOOD God!

UNIQUE DIRT

For he knows our frame. He remembers that we are dust.

Psalm 103:14

There's an old Simpsons episode where Moe Szylak the Bartender is talking about being compared to dirt. His response is golden: 'Well, I'm better than dirt. Well, most kinds of dirt. I mean not that fancy store bought dirt. That stuff's loaded with nutrients. I... I can't compete with that stuff.' It is an accurate look at humanity. We are dirt. But not that fancy store bought dirt. We're just dirt from the ground. What we are made of is not what makes us special. There's always a group of New Age-ish/spiritualist people who spread the call that we're all made of star-stuff. As if being made of the components of burning balls of gas somehow makes us 'special'. We are in and of the material we are made of NOTHING SPECIAL. "*what is a human being that you think of him? and a child of humankind that you care for him?*" (Psalm 8:4). We are dirt. What was DONE to that dirt is what makes us special.

"*when Yahweh God formed the man of dust from the ground, and he blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature*" (Genesis 2:7). Up until this point, everything in creation came forward because Adonai SPOKE. Look through the creation account. He SAID and it WAS. When it came to us, Adonai personally formed us. Himself. That is SPECIAL. That makes us UNIQUE in all creation. YES, we are dirt. But we are dirt that was personally touched by Yahweh Most High. He didn't stop there. He then BREATHED Himself into us. The Living Spirit of the Most High was put into us. That is also UNIQUE among creation. We are NOT of the animal kingdom, even if we share some characteristics. Everything living has a soul (heart, mind, personality). Only HUMANITY has a spirit. Don't let the world pull the wool over your eyes. We are NOT animals. We are NOT the same as the rest of creation. We do NOT have to behave like them and how they behave is NOT an indication of how we are supposed to. Humanity has ZERO animal impulses. Humanity has ZERO animal instincts. Humanity is on a whole other level because of what Adonai did to OUR dirt when He created us.

These are great reasons to be grateful to Him. We're not stuck in the mold we see around us. We are not stuck giving in to instincts and impulses we 'have no control over' or that have been 'developed over eons' like fight-or-flight. Humanity doesn't have a fight-or-flight system. We have a faith-or-fear system. In EVERY situation, we can either trust Jesus or go it alone. It is when we go it alone that we embrace the fallen world system and enter fight-or-flight. If we would trust Jesus in EVERY situation, having disciplined ourselves to Word up every day, worship Him every day, and keep our eyes on Him, we'd never feel those fight-or-flight symptoms. We'd experience the kind of authority in peace that Jesus had. That we were meant to have as guiding directors on this planet. Praise Adonai, we're DIFFERENT. And in HIM, we can operate as we were meant to – Amen and Hallelujah.

All this uniqueness and personal touch by Adonai really drives home the first part of this verse. He KNOWS us. He knows us better than anything or anyone COULD know us. He knows more than the physical bits that together make up our form. He ALSO knows our imagination, mind, and works. He knows our thoughts (Romans 8:27) and our purpose (Job 23:10). He knows EVERYTHING about us. *"Indeed you created my inward parts; you wove me in my mother's womb. I praise you, because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works, and my soul knows it well"* (Psalm 139:13-14). He knows us and that is not something to hide from or avoid. It is something to celebrate and encourage (Psalm 139:23). Why would we want to spend hours and hours of conversation (prayer) with someone who was unable to truly understand us? Isn't it better to talk to those who really GET us? Even better then is talking with the One who knows us better than WE know ourselves. What a great thing to thank Him for! What a great relationship to be grateful for!

Adonai knows us and Adonai gives us GRACE and more GRACE because of it. We aren't held to a standard that we cannot keep. Jesus did all the hard work for us. Jesus accomplished what needed to be accomplished. And Ruach HaKodesh is with us to remind us of that. Of who we are in Jesus. Of what He did. Of what WE are capable of IN HIM. What a GREAT GOD we serve! What a great Way He has made open for us to know Him! How WONDERFUL that He never forgets our limitations, never asks for more than

we can give, and enables us to accomplish everything He calls us to in Messiah Jesus! The gratitude we feel from these things should rise up within us as praise every day. Stir yourself up and let it rise as sweet smelling incense to the One who crafted you so intentfully.

Remembrance:

Psalm 78:38-39 *“But he was compassionate; he pardoned their guilt and did not destroy them. And many times he turned back his anger and did not stir up all his wrath, for he remembered that they were flesh, a passing wind that does not return.”*

We serve a MERCIFUL God who loves us and looks out for us. He wants us to be where He created us to be. But we miss it. We don't remain in Jesus. We get into our own selfish thoughts and ideas. We hear, but don't obey. We stop up our ears and refuse to hear. We harden our hearts. These are things we do. Because we fell from where we were supposed to be. That's why Jesus made the Way open to us. That's why the Father gives us everything we need to succeed. That's why Ruach HaKodesh encourages us, guides us, and corrects us. It is all to overcome what we let ourselves become: broken humans. But Adonai NEVER forgets that. He NEVER lets Himself forget it or treat us differently than we are capable of. Even in the covenant of judgment (the Law), He did not EVER give ALL His wrath toward Sin fall on the people. He ALWAYS held back. He ALWAYS showed mercy. He ALWAYS had grace. No matter what they DESERVED, they never got it. He is MINDFUL of us. He truly is a God who LOVES us. He is a God who makes a WAY for us. He is a God who GIVES us our place and doesn't make us earn what we cannot earn. He REMEMBERS and extends GRACE and MORE GRACE to us each and every day. From His LOVE for us. What a GOOD God!

RESILIENT

As for man, his days are like the grass. As the flower of the field, so he blossoms.

Psalm 103:15

I really like this verse. There are several ways of looking at it, depending on which other scriptures you line it up against. There is the place it resides within the psalm. There is the place it sits against some of Jesus' teaching. And there is the place it sits on its own in symbology. There might be other ways of looking at it, but those are the three that I see.

Contextually, it clearly is speaking of the temporariness of humanity. Compared to Adonai, we are mere blips. Within the context of human civilization, we are short-term creatures. This is a statement of fact and also a warning. We can easily get caught up in our own magnificence. In our longevity. In our ability to rise to the top of the pyramid and hold our place there. But these are NOT great comparisons. This is NOT a good way to value our lives. One man of God tagged it to 2 Corinthians 10:12 *“For we do not dare to classify or to compare ourselves with some who commend themselves, but they themselves, when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, do not understand.”* Very applicable. We need to avoid letting our pride puff us up out of proportion to the actual truth (Proverbs 16:18). Compared to the wicked/ungodly, Adonai is so vastly superior it can barely be grasped (Isaiah 55:8-9). Compared to the righteous/godly, Adonai is STILL VASTLY SUPERIOR to the point where we can KINDA grasp it (1 Corinthians 1:25; Job 42:2-6). It is a GREAT reminder of WHY we hold to Adonai's point of view and renew our minds to HIS way of thinking (Romans 12:2). He is ABOVE ALL THINGS and simply the ONLY ONE who is correct about EVERYTHING. We are INCONSISTENT, but HE is ALWAYS consistent (Isaiah 40:8). He is THE ONLY foundation that we can live life on SECURELY.

Looking at the serve on its own and the symbols of grass and flowers, it is ALSO a really great verse. Grass seems to have been designed to spread. It gets everywhere. It's really

hard to keep out. And there is a resilience to grass that is almost unheard of in the rest of nature. Wild fires can come and decimate thousands of square kilometres, but once it passes GRASS is the first thing to start sprouting. It can stay smallish and scraggly (like crabgrass). It can rise tall and tough (like elephant grass). It is found ALMOST everywhere on the planet. This sounds a LOT like what WE are meant to do: multiply and have dominion (Genesis 1:26-28). However, unlike humanity – which is meant to steward and develop the earth – grass tends toward the fallen nature and tries to dominate everything. It's only when we live according to the Word that we manage to be productive AND not dominating (1 Peter 1:23-25).

Then we get to flowers. Have you ever seen a field of wildflowers? There in a sea of green or yellow grass there are pockets of vibrant colour. They really stand out. Visible for kilometres and kilometres. And they lend a vibrancy of life to their surroundings. Insects are flying around, feeding, pollinating, and spreading seeds. One of my favourite roads to drive on is lined every summer with purple wildflowers (I think they are Western Mountain Aster). With just a SMALL bit of colour, they TRANSFORM the environment that they are in – and also can transform the MOOD of humans (because in their beauty our spirits recognise the handiwork and glory of Adonai – Romans 1:20). We also are meant to be spots of colour in the field of humanity. The spark that brings a spiritual recognition that there is something in us that they want. A VISIBLE difference. A VISIBLE witness that there is something more about living in Adonai's Way. A show of LIFE in a sea of entropy. A light in their darkness (Matthew 5:14-16). This verse is both a reminder of what we are and of what we are supposed to be. If we AREN'T a spot of beauty, we are failing to trust in Jesus. If we aren't a visible witness, we need to get back to doing things His way – Ruach HaKodesh is always speaking to us and telling us about the course corrections we need to make. If we listen – consistently – training ourselves to check in, we can spend more time ON the path than SEEKING the path from the weeds. Amen.

Finally, Jesus spoke to us about flowers and grass. *“And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe the lilies of the field, how they grow: they do not toil or spin, but I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was dressed like one of these”* (Matthew 6:28-29). Jesus is acknowledging the temporariness of humanity. He is also speaking of how glorious the natural world is in that it shows the glory of Adonai. If the natural world can

do that, how much MORE should we who believe show His glory? “*In the same way let your light shine before people, so that they can see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven*” (Matthew 5:16). “*Therefore become imitators of God, as beloved children*” (Ephesians 5:1). Jesus is the SOURCE of our blossoming (John 15:5). Adonai also uses grass as a symbol of REST – especially the rest we have in Jesus (John 14:27; Matthew 11:28; Hebrews 4:9). We see that in Psalm 23 and Psalm 23 fulfilled in John 6:10.

What does all this lead to? Great thanksgiving. Apart from Adonai, outside of our life in Jesus, we are withering grass and fading flowers. No matter how great we think we are, we’re nothing compared to Him. We’re temporary. But in Jesus, connected to HIM, we are SO MUCH MORE. We live His REST. We show HIS glory. We are clothed and taken care of and thrive. Storms and seasons may try to decimate us, but in the OVERCOMER we start growing again. We can’t be put down. He is MORE THAN ENOUGH to give us a harvest EVERY TIME. He made us seeds, and in Him, we CANNOT stop growing. We are IN HIM abundant life. Isn’t that worth a few hallelujahs?

Remembrance:

Matthew 12:8 “*For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.*”

Jesus is the LORD of the Sabbath. The HEAD of the Body. In HIM we have access to the Sabbath. Not a DAY or a weekly EVENT, but an entire way of being. Adonai RESTED after Creation because He had completed everything that needed completing. It was all ready. We were created and could LIVE in HIM. Then we rebelled. We threw it away. We decided to be LESS THAN. In Jesus, we have the opportunity to live in the Sabbath again. To LIVE abundantly IN HIM. We can’t do it outside of Him because only HE lived perfectly and was therefore perfected. We are resurrected into HIS life, not OURS. He IS the Way. But it was made available to us. So that we could have REST. No TOIL. We work in Him, rely on Him, look to Him, worship Him, thank Him, and learn from Him. In EVERYTHING we can give thanks because we can bring Him into EVERYTHING. He’s willing to come to where we are and make it like where He is. We can COOPERATE with that, and make pockets of Eden crop up in this world. As proof that He IS the Way, that He IS True, and He IS Life. So that everyone can see. And everyone has the opportunity to choose Him.

No limits. No gatekeeping. Just JESUS right there, available for everyone. What a GOOD God!

ROOTED

When the wind passes over it, it is no more, and its place knows it no longer.

Psalm 103:16

This verse can be depressing without realising what it rests on. Remember context. The last few verses and the next few verses provide the platform this verse rests on. On its own, it shows how temporary and fragile we are. Just wind passing over can cause us to cease. To be forgotten. To end. We can easily be lost in the passage of time. A futile scrabbling about in the mud. Muck to muck. Dust to dust. Done and gone. That IS life outside of Adonai. But the platform this verse rests on shows us so much more, so much victory, and so much to be grateful for.

“I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—this one bears much fruit, for apart from me you are not able to do anything” (John 15:5). In Jesus, we have life and purpose and abundance and joy and everything that is worth anything of real value. *“If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown out as a branch, and dries up, and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned”* (John 15:6). Outside of Jesus there is nothing of lasting value, nothing worth doing, no purpose, darkness, and a lot of futility. We will have lost our place – like the devil before us (Revelation 12:8). Lost in the wind of the words he throws around (Ephesians 6:11). Because our PLACE, our PURPOSE, is to bring Adonai glory (1 Corinthians 10:31; Proverbs 3:6). When we know our place, thanksgiving bubbles up out of it.

“what is a human being that you think of him? and a child of humankind that you care for him?” (Psalm 8:4). We’ve looked at that question before, but it is a PERFECT compliment to this verse. What IS a human being when it is passed over by wind? What is a child of humankind when it doesn’t even know its place? When it spends ACTUAL TIME asking ‘why are we here’? I think THAT is the most baffling thing of all to angels. That we spend

ANY TIME trying to figure out why we are here. What our place in creation is. Inanimate objects have figured it out better than we have (Psalm 19:1). Animals have it figured out better than we have (Revelation 5:13). WE – the top of the ‘ol food chain – WE spend time wondering. I think the basis of that wondering is the selfish flesh actually asking: ‘how can we find a place to inhabit without submitting to anyone or anything?’ It’s ironic that only the glory of Adonai within us (created in His image and likeness) that gives us any real worth (because we’re dirt apart from His breath), but that perceived worth is the source of our selfish pride – which is broken and twisted because it isn’t OUR glory, but HIS within us that we are perceiving in the first place.

The knowledge that we are useless on our own is very freeing. Yes, we can make beautiful things. Yes, we can exhibit wonderful character. Yes, we can create an artificial system to function within and then thrive within it. But it is ALL paper tigers without Him. It isn’t a shadow on a cave wall, it is the shadow THAT shadow is casting. That doesn’t SOUND very victorious, I know. But it is a source of GREAT gratefulness in my life. If I know NOTHING, I can take solace that HE knows everything. If I can’t make anything productive, I know that HE is the source of productivity. If I am USELESS, then He – as my Source – is where I get EVERYTHING. I don’t despair that I am grass waiting to be blown by wind. I can put roots in Him, look to Him for all I need, and live within HIS embrace. I am thankful I have a reason to put my false pride in its place. I am thankful that I have a reason to put out my selfish self-centeredness. I am thankful I can RELY.

When we were little kids, we didn’t know anything. We didn’t know algebra. We didn’t know how to change a tire. Cook a meal. World history. We knew nothing. But then we were taught. By family, friends, neighbours, the educational system. We were taught so much, we do it automatically now. We know how to function. We don’t need to ask how every time something approaches now. My son recently answered a phone for the first time. He hadn’t grown up with a phone on the wall. Or in a household where we got a lot of calls. He pressed the button and waited for something to happen. Didn’t say help. Didn’t make a sound. Just listened and waited. He had to be taught to say ‘hello’. Well friend, it happens the same way with Adonai. If we will answer with a hello of praise and thanksgiving, He will teach us EVERYTHING (John 14:26). He’ll teach it through Ruach HaKodesh, and we’ll learn it so well that it will become automatic. Not so we can stop

learning, but so Ruach HaKodesh can teach us even more. It's more than being grateful. It's being EXCITED to be in Him. It's being EXCITED to spend more time with Him. I am SO grateful to Him. Aren't you?

Remembrance:

James 1:5 "*Now if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask for it from God, who gives to all without reservation and not reproaching, and it will be given to him.*"

It can be embarrassing to have to ask to be shown something. We don't all have the same backgrounds. Some things will be second-nature to one person, but brand new for something else. We can be very old when we first learn some skills. And it can be embarrassing to have to admit we don't know how to do something. But with Adonai, that is NEVER an issue. Ruach HaKodesh is THE teacher and the IMPARTER of information. The Word is just letters on a page until we get revelation knowledge about what it means. Until Ruach HaKodesh teaches us what He wrote and why. This isn't NEW information or NEW revelation, it's getting LIGHT on what was already there (Luke 24:45). We do NOT need to be ignorant. We do NOT need to be embarrassed. We can ASK and then RECEIVE (Matthew 7:7-8). He hid nothing FROM you or me. He hid it FOR you and me. What a GOOD God!

NEVER THE END

But the loyal love of Yahweh is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to their children's children,

Psalm 103:17

This is a promise that acknowledges our fleetingness on this Earth based on the eternal character of Adonai. The last three verses have touched on the passing nature of our physical existence in fallen bodies – the result of our rebellion against Adonai (Genesis 3). As long as death exists, our meat suit is going to perish. It wasn't meant to be like this, but it temporarily is like this. Since it is, we live briefly and then pass. What good then, would our praise to Adonai be if it is all so fleeting? Flickers of match flames in the night? No. Adonai's eternal nature enables so much more. Our praises to Him, our genuine gratitude of thanksgiving, produces a harvest reaching beyond our own brief lives – no matter how long they are – into the lives of our grandchildren. THAT is something to be grateful for!

"He who is good will leave an inheritance to his grandchildren, and stored up for the righteous is the wealth of a sinner" (Proverbs 13:22). We often look at this as good people leaving a physical inheritance for their grandchildren, and that IS a good thing to do. But it ALSO speaks to the principle of thanksgiving and gratitude toward Adonai – which is a GOOD attitude to have. When we have a good attitude of gratitude to Adonai, it AUTOMATICALLY leaves an inheritance for our grandchildren. It is not a carrot on a stick, a bribe to get you to be thankful. It is a proof of the Kingdom. Because EVERYTHING in the Kingdom is about other people. The Kingdom is SELFLESS and not SELFISH. This is THE thing that the devil got wrong. He thought ME and when he did, he lost his place. As soon as we put ourselves in the foreground, we lose. When we put others first – especially Adonai – we gain. *"For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain"* (Philippians 1:21). When we do it the Kingdom Way, we can't lose for winning.

Adonai does NOT forget our relationship with Him. Adonai does NOT forget the sacrifices of praise that we bring to Him. Instead, He HONOURS it and us. *“But I will not take all of the kingdom from his hand, but I will make him a leader all the days of his life for the sake of David my servant whom I chose, who kept my commandments and my ordinances”* (1 Kings 11:34). This statement that He was acting toward them for the sake of what David did (versus what THEY did), is NOT a standalone statement. You see it all throughout the records of the Kings of Israel and Judah. Again and again, Adonai shows mercy because David loved Him. Because David worshipped Him. Because David repented before Him. David’s godly behaviour – and he was far from perfect – made a difference in the lives of not only his children and grandchildren, but in his nation for CENTURIES to come. THIS is the eternal nature of Adonai’s favour. In fact, because of David, we got Jesus. Jesus was the fulfillment of the covenant with David which was an extension of the covenant with Abraham. And Adonai treats believers in Jesus according to what JESUS did, not what THEY do (Psalm 103:10).

Ruach HaKodesh reminds us of this principle. He helps us to stir it up within us. Realising WHO WE ARE IN JESUS: *“He made the one who did not know sin to be sin on our behalf, in order that we could become the righteousness of God in him”* (2 Corinthians 5:21). We don’t simply get to make it into Heaven. We get to enter into the KINGDOM. That means living, working, resting, and existing INSIDE THE BLESSING, not just being BLESSED. Adonai loves ALL His creation. Adonai blesses ALL humanity (Matthew 5:45). We get to be SO MUCH MORE in Jesus. We get to be SONS and DAUGHTERS of Adonai (John 1:12-13). It’s so easy to forget this. That’s why we hear about it constantly from Ruach HaKodesh. That’s why He is always showing us what we could be. Always asking us why we’re not trusting Jesus in the circumstance that we are in. He is ALWAYS pointing to Jesus, because it is IN JESUS that we have victory. That we overcome. That we get to become MORE THAN WE ARE – John 15:5.

Knowing that we can be transformed in and through Jesus should be a source of thanksgiving in our lives. A foundation of gratefulness. But KNOWING that because of the eternal nature of Adonai, the BLESSING He extends to us He will extend to our children and our children’s children AT A MINIMUM should make us shout for joy EVERY time we think about them. We’re not only preparing ourselves, but all those who

come after us. We are working at a spiritual homestead interconnected with all the other believer's spiritual homesteads to create a spiritual megalopolis of BLESSINGS and FAVOUR all from the simple act of treating Adonai the way He deserves to be treated. Nothing special. Nothing extra. Just interacting with Him the way He has asked us to. The way He has shown us to. Giving Him honour and glory because He is Yahweh Elohim Almighty. THAT is the reason we worship Him. And that is the reason He honours it. Heartfelt gratitude ALWAYS attracts BLESSING. Love creating in us love which draws more love which makes for an abundant life for us and those after us (3 John 2).

Remembrance:

Deuteronomy 28:4 "*Blessed will be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your livestock, the calf of your cattle and the lambs of your flock.*"

This world is built on a foundation of fear of loss. Anyone connected to it worries. What will happen to me? What will happen to my kids? What will happen to my possessions? It is inevitable. It is the reality of life outside of covenant with Adonai – no matter how godly your behaviour (Job 3:25). Which is why Adonai established a covenant with Abraham. He KNEW that Abraham would teach his children about the proper way to worship, follow, and obey Adonai. "*For I have chosen him, that he will command his children and his household after him that they will keep the way of Yahweh, to do righteousness and justice, so that Yahweh may bring upon Abraham that which he said to him*" (Genesis 18:19). That was important because if Abraham's children and grandchildren didn't worship and follow Adonai, it would have been a WASTE of BLESSING. Adonai knew he would bless Abraham's kids and grandkids. But if they didn't know HIM, it would be wasted. They wouldn't walk in the fullness of it. How could they listen and obey in order to have a successful life if they didn't know Him? Abraham's faithfulness in teaching Adonai's ways to his kids and grandkids paved the way for the BLESSING to be an ACTIVE part in their lives, not a PASSIVE anointing. It paved the Way for them NOT to worry. Not about their families. Not about their possessions. It paved the Way for them to not have to worry about their lives. Instead, they would be able to TRUST their Shepherd. FOLLOW their Shepherd. BELIEVE their Shepherd. And live lives far exceeding the circumstances they found themselves in. Adonai is forward-thinking and wants us to be as well. If we will trust and believe Him, putting Him first and humbly

submitting to Him, He WILL take care of not only ourselves, but our children, our grandchildren, our possessions, and our property. What a GOOD God!

MAINTAIN INTENT

to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his precepts,

Psalm 103:18

Yesterday we spoke of the loyal love of Adonai and the righteousness He shows to the children of the children of those who love Him. Today continues that idea and reveals a WONDERFUL detail about the character of Adonai. He is a covenant keeping Elohim. Once He makes a covenant, He KEEPS it. There are around eight THOUSAND promises in the Word. He hasn't forgotten a SINGLE one. Our ability to walk in His Way is resolved in covenant with Him. Or more accurately, we have been given entrance into the covenant that Jesus struck with the Father and the Father struck with Jesus, His Son. Adonai made several covenants with humanity, but we failed to keep them perfectly. They were all shadows of THE covenant, HIS covenant, which is kept perfectly between Jesus and His Father. We get access. We get the privilege of standing in Him. And in that standing, we gain the ability to remember to do his precepts. We gain the ability to accomplish. We gain the ability to be faithful. We gain the ability to walk where He says walk. It should be a foundational shout of gratitude in each of our hearts.

The BLESSING comes through that covenant. Protection from POVERTY (in ALL its forms) comes through that covenant. The fullness of the GOODNESS of Adonai becomes visible and experiential through that covenant. It is now ALL about that covenant. The NEW covenant with BETTER promises and a BETTER foundation. *"Look, the days are coming," declares Yahweh, "and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their ancestors on the day of my grasping them by their hand, bringing them out from the land of Egypt, my covenant that they themselves broke, though I myself was a master over them," declares Yahweh* (Jeremiah 31:31-32). *"But now he has attained a more excellent ministry, by as much as he is also mediator of a better covenant which has been enacted upon better promises"* (Hebrews 8:6). We are living in the reality of that covenant now. Jesus made the covenant and we are not only allowed, but encouraged to walk in it. But a covenant must be KEPT. It cannot only be experienced.

The great benefit of the new covenant that MAKES it better is that JESUS takes care of the KEEPING. JESUS kept it so that we don't have to. What WE have to do is stay in Jesus. If Jesus is the keeper of the covenant, and the benefits of covenant are only available to those who keep it, then we need to stay in Jesus to stay in covenant. That would be depressing IF Adonai hadn't made the Way FOR US. He gives us the tools. He gives us the strategy. He gives us the pattern to follow. He guides us, leads us, teaches us, and corrects us. He empowers us with authority and dominion. He enables us to engage HIS character and HIS characteristics. He gives us His words to put in our mouths. He really and truly makes it all available and plain for us. It is too simple to get wrong without someone intentionally leading us astray. He has done it all so that all we need to do is remain in Him (John 15:5).

We should be VERY thankful for that. It's wonderful. It's merciful. It shows us SO MUCH Grace. We should all have hearts FULL of gratitude for what Jesus has done. But how do we DO it? How do we stay in Him? Through remembrance. We have to consistently REMEMBER what He has done and what He makes available to us. We have to consistently remember our place in this covenantal arrangement. If we don't, we run the risk of being sidetracked. Of being mistaken. Or worse, of thinking it is OUR efforts or OUR merit that gets us into a relationship with Adonai. It doesn't. WE aren't worthy of it. We ONLY get to step into this covenant of grace through TRUST IN JESUS. *"Therefore, because we have been declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God"* (Romans 5:1-2).

We maintain remembrance of these things because Ruach HaKodesh REMINDS us of them (John 14:26). It is through HIS ministry that they prey on our minds so often. His reminders remind us to be so VERY thankful to Adonai. His reminders help frame our gratitude to the One who deserves it. Reminding us of the great steps Adonai took when He didn't have to. He could have waited a few years and seen us all die out. Instead, He took steps to be alongside us. To tabernacle among us. To make the Way open to us so that we could come back. Come back to where we belonged. To REMEMBER what it is we are and who it is we are in the image and likeness of. I am grateful for every reminder –

although my flesh is not always happy with the timing. I am grateful for every correction – although my flesh is never happy being corrected. I am grateful that I will NOT forget. That I WILL remember what Adonai has laid down for me and I WILL walk in it. I know that Ruach HaKodesh reminds you of the same. I hope you will be just as grateful and pray that you will choose to put your feet squarely in the centre of His Way.

Remembrance:

Malachi 3:16 “*Then those who revered Yahweh spoke with one another. And Yahweh listened attentively and heard, and a scroll of remembrance was written before him of those who revere Yahweh and ponder his name.*”

Adonai doesn't need to write things down to remember them. Yet He has a book of remembrance where He has written a record of everyone who reveres Him and meditates about Him. He has written our very names on the palm of His hand (Isaiah 49:16). Adonai has no need for these memory aids, but He uses them. Not to remember, but to CHERISH. He writes them in order to show US. So that when we stand before Him, He can show us each and every time that He noticed us. That He took JOY in us. Every time we pleased Him with our trust (Hebrews 11:6). Adonai LIKES to remember us, and He knows that us remembering Him is even more important. That's one of the reasons we were given Ruach HaKodesh. To teach us the methods Adonai uses to cherish us in order that we learn to cherish Him. So we won't lose out on the benefits. So that WE won't stop pondering Him. So that the BLESSING will be ever present in our lives. What a GOOD God!

HUMBLY SUBMITTED

Yahweh has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.

Psalm 103:19

Yahweh IS Elohim Almighty. The ONLY true Elohim there is. His throne is in the unseen realm. It cannot be stormed. It cannot be overthrown. The devil couldn't even keep his own place in the heavens – with the help of a third of the angels – much less challenge anyone for any other position (Revelation 12:7-8) – and that was against an Archangel not even a member of the Godhead. Adonai rules. PERIOD. And His rule is over EVERYTHING. There is NOTHING exempt.

This means (among other things) two basic things. First, although we are given free will and do not have to obey, there WILL BE an accountability for everything we do. Second, if He chooses to, He could replace any part of things with any other part of things. Adonai can promote those He chooses to where He chooses. That isn't to say we don't have choice in the matter (we cooperate WITH Him, we're not dictated to BY Him). But if the time has come for a particular wicked scheme to fail, it will fail. Adonai doesn't control everything that happens, but Adonai can make anything happen. Yeah, it gets confusing, doesn't it? Well, that's one of the reasons we have scriptures like this. It frames something we can understand in a way we can understand it, without seeking to reveal everything or explain how everything works. The human mind seeks to understand everything, because it runs into human thinking a lot and a human can understand a human. But once we choose to deal with Adonai, that doesn't work. We can't understand Him without training and revelation in understanding His love (Ephesians 3:14-19). And we also can never forget that He doesn't OWE us an explanation for ANYTHING: HE is Elohim Almighty. Period.

Our thanksgiving then comes from our trust in Jesus about our belief in His words: "*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6). Jesus made a Way for us to get into HIS covenant. "And

he took bread, and after giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” And in the same way the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for you” (Luke 22:19-20). Belief and trust in that covenant enables us to enter into it, humbly submitting to Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. “But what does it say? “The word is near to you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim), that if you confess with your mouth “Jesus is Lord” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses, resulting in salvation” (Romans 10:8-10). What great reasons to be thankful!

Ruach HaKodesh reminds us constantly that we can trust this. That we have a right to believe this and our belief will not be in vain. Because Jesus is THE FINAL AUTHORITY. Period. There is NO OTHER WAY. No matter what humans think. No matter what humans choose to believe. THIS is THE truth. Period. Sooner or later EVERY SINGLE HUMAN BEING, ORGANIZATION, RELIGION, and GOVERNMENT will acknowledge that. *“Therefore also God exalted him and graciously granted him the name above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven and of those on earth and of those under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”* (Philippians 2:9-11). This is a wonderful reminder. It's hard to look at a government program, a vote for the other 'team', a decision that comes down against our beliefs, and NOT feel powerless. WE might be powerless, but Adonai is ANYTHING BUT. We can take heart in that TRUTH. Adonai is MORE THAN ENOUGH.

Sooner or later, they all must bow. Sooner or later, the consequences of their decisions will come about. Sooner or later, Adonai will bring things to pass that will not be pleasant for the wicked (Great Day of the Lord, anyone?). If WE do not keep our eyes on Jesus and our ears glued to what Ruach HaKodesh is saying, we might let ourselves get caught up in the anxiety, terror, and despair of the wicked (that's the wicked on purpose, not the sinner who doesn't know better yet). We need to listen for His voice. Listen to His reminders. Listen to His promises. And then to apply them. Taking heart that whatever we are facing is temporary. That whatever is coming against us is subject to a higher power. As I heard one man of Adonai say, the judge is our Father and our lawyer is our brother, so the opposing council doesn't have a chance.

When we submit to His authority and right and good and just, we have a Heaven and Earth full of reasons to praise His name. We have hundreds of reasons to be grateful to Him. To see the light at the end of the night. The dawn breaking His righteousness everywhere. It is freeing and it is joyful. Thank Him today for who He is and what He does. He knows the end and shared it with us: He wins!

Remembrance:

Isaiah 45:23 "*I have sworn by myself; a word that shall not return has gone forth from my mouth in righteousness: 'Every knee shall kneel down to me; every tongue shall swear.'*"

This is also found in Romans 14:11. Adonai Himself has spoken this. His Word is inviolable and eternal. It NEVER returns void (Isaiah 55:11). He can be trusted in FULL. Adonai was declaring the Messiah and the authority of dominion that the anointing of Messiah carries with it. Jesus has stepped into that place. He was the only one found worthy to do so (and there were some in the cosmos REALLY TRYING to get in there) – Revelation 5:8-14. Before Jesus, we ALL kneel – even those who love Him dearly (Revelation 1:17). It is because of His majesty, glory, and authority. The GOOD news is that we who are fellow heirs will be taken by the hand and brought to our feet. The GOOD news is that we are protected and cherished and looked for. The GOOD news is that we will never be condemned and have NOTHING to fear. In HIM we are made righteous as He is. In HIM we are victorious in spite of how circumstances look. In HIM we are protected and guided, governed and corrected. Loved. Very, VERY loved. What a GOOD God!

IN IT TOGETHER

Bless Yahweh, you his angels, you mighty heroes who do his word by obeying the sound of his word.

Psalm 103:20

Angels are – from one point of view – nothing special. There is a cult around the idea of angels. Angels this and angels that. Your child dies? Becomes an angel. Angels speaking and angels guiding. Angels, angels, angels! From OUR point of view they are powerful and look majestic – but it is because they are reflecting the Glory of Adonai and are doing His Perfect Will. If they were to disobey (like the devil and his angels did), they would NOT look majestic without deceit and they would NOT be powerful. Contrary to the world's entertainment industry, demons and fallen angels are NOT powerful. Any Jesus-believing child is more powerful. Angels are impressive to us, but they are simply obedient servants to Adonai Most High.

Angels do what Adonai says and Adonai spoke the entire Word. THAT is what angels listen to. The Perfect Will of Adonai. In cosmological hierarchy, angels were below humanity who were created right below Adonai (Psalm 8:5; Genesis 1:26-28). But WE FELL. We are out of our place. Yes, in Jesus we get authority and dominion back, but it is HIS authority and dominion we are using, not our own in ourselves. I suspect that ship has sailed and when we are completely perfected before Him in Heaven we will STILL be using Jesus' authority and dominion – it's just that we will be perfected and live/operate in it perfectly. Until we get to the point that we have perfectly been perfected, we will not be in our proper place. Until we are in our proper place, angels will seem to us to be above us. We are not in the perfect will of Adonai at all times. They ARE.

"But to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit down at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." Are they not all spirits engaged in special service, sent on assignment for the sake of those who are going to inherit salvation?" (Hebrews 1:13-14). Angels are ministers sent to serve us. But they serve at the behest and command of

Adonai, NOT US. Like Adonai, angels are not our whipping boys. They are not at our beck and call. We cannot get them to do anything we want. Like ANYTHING. They serve Adonai and obey His Word. Period. Jesus could have commanded angels to save Him from the ordeal of the crucifixion (Matthew 26:53). He didn't. And they didn't lift a single feather to help Him. It was NOT according to the Word. It was NOT the will of the Father. They do what Adonai says. Every. Time. Anyone teaching you to 'send your angels' will teach you that you will only be able to 'send' an angel to a task if it is in the Word and Adonai is backing you. Those are the only conditions in which an angel listens.

Adonai does not come down in physical form to do things here. He sends angels (Exodus 23:20). They are His ministers to accomplish His will. They are tools in HIS hands. We don't NEED them to tell us things – we have Ruach HaKodesh. We don't NEED them to heal or perform miracles – we cooperate with Ruach HaKodesh. But there ARE things that are appointed to angels to do. They operate in the unseen realms. We do not. But we do not command the angels, Adonai does. When Adonai appoints an angel to do a task, He might let us cooperate with Him by saying 'go' – but we are not the ones giving the instructions. We are not saying how to do a thing, only cooperating with Adonai that this is the time that thing can be started. We are not in control. Think of servers in a formal dining room. We don't train them, pay them, tell them how to do anything, or any of that. We ask for a refill, give permission for them to take our plates or bring the next course, and that's about it. Angels are the same deal. Within the rules of the formal dining room we can give permission, but only because someone ELSE is running the show, training, paying, providing, and setting the rules for everyone. We don't give permission/orders out of OUR authority. We cooperate with what the One with the authority wants to have happen.

So how are angels a praise point? Because Adonai is in control! I am grateful they listen only to the Word (the spoken Word that became written Word – Jesus Himself). I am grateful Adonai is the one calling the shots and giving them their assignments. I think it is cool that we can release them when Adonai tells us to, but I am GRATEFUL I am not the one giving the assignments. I get too much wrong. I lack the full picture of what's going on. And I get too full of feelings to trust my judgment all the time. Ever been cut off while driving? Or had someone push you around? Would you have shown perfect

compassion, perfect patience, and perfect kindness in that situation had you had the authority to direct angels? Or would you have been asking for some smiting? Me, I am grateful I am not in control of these things. When I think about it, I can thank Adonai for what He has set up and how.

Remembrance:

2 Timothy 3:16-17 “*All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, in order that the person of God may be competent, equipped for every good work*”

The WORD is what corrects us. Jesus is the Word made flesh (John 1:14). Both in written and spoken form. Ruach HaKodesh uses it to correct us, to guide us, to teach us, and to remind us of who we are in Jesus. Of how we are supposed to be trusting Him in all things and in all ways. Angels are still sent to tell us specific messages, but Ruach HaKodesh speaks to us about all things. We don't get revelation from angels anymore because we have the Word and we have Ruach HaKodesh living within us. Why would Adonai go a step backward? Why send an angel to reveal a new mystery when He had Jesus come to speak, had Ruach HaKodesh write Jesus' words down (the Bible), and then had Ruach HaKodesh take up residence within us where He is constantly and consistently speaking to us about the deeper things of Adonai as well as giving commentary on everything that has been said and written so far (1 Corinthians 2:10; John 14:26)? If ANYONE claims to have a further revelation of Adonai and it came from an angel? It is not to be trusted. Jesus said things were FINISHED, not that a sequel was on the way. They are incredible creatures, but the WORD is the treasure that can renew us to Adonai's point of view (Romans 12:2). The Word is what we can love and follow and consume with impunity. I am so very grateful that we have such a powerful tool and guide – as well as a personal relationship with the author for when we need things explained. He truly does not hide, but reveals Himself to us in the fullness we can handle now (and in greater fullness later). What a GOOD God!

DO IT

Bless Yahweh, all you his hosts, you his attendants who do his will.

Psalm 103:21

This verse is celebratory but also a directive. All of us should bless Adonai because Adonai DESERVES to be blessed. It is an aspect of His character. He is WORTHY to be blessed by humanity. But as it relates to US, we need to look at WHO should bless Him. Specifically who. In the end, EVERYONE will acknowledge Him as Lord and Elohim Almighty (Romans 14:11; Philippians 2:10-11). This will not bless Him. Acknowledging a truth isn't the same as embracing a truth. What blesses Adonai is our heartfelt gratitude as shown by our trust in Him and belief that what He says is true (Hebrews 11:6). It is a very SPECIFIC group of people who can do that effectively.

Who are His HOST? It isn't just angels. It is also believing humanity. The attendants to His Will who obey Him. This is most vividly portrayed when John was in his revelatory vision and saw an angel. *"And he said to me, "Write: Blessed are those who are invited to the banquet of the wedding celebration of the Lamb!" And he said to me, "These are the true words of God." And I fell down before his feet to worship him, and he said to me, "Do not do that! I am a fellow slave of you and of your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."'"* (Revelation 19:9-10). And again a little later: *"And I, John, am the one who heard and who saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed these things to me. And he said to me, "Do not do that! I am your fellow slave, and of your brothers the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"'"* (Revelation 22:8-9). Angels and humans are in the same boat. The boat of service to Adonai. We are both part of His hosts. Angels are the Host of Heaven. Believers are the Host of Earth. Our ultimate positions (they ministering spirits and we the body of Messiah Jesus) aren't on the table of this issue. In this issue (worship and blessing Adonai with it), we are on the same side and the same level. EVERYONE and EVERYTHING that isn't Adonai is on the same level. HE is the one worshiped in trust and belief. WE are the ones worshipping in trust and belief.

We are supposed to be WORSHIPPING Adonai. We worship in more than some songs and statements. We worship in actions and words. In thoughts and lifestyles. In everything we do and the MOTIVATIONS for why we are doing it. Our HEART INTENT is just as important as WHAT we are doing. Doing the right thing for the wrong reasons won't work. Doing the right thing the wrong way also won't work. Only doing the right thing for the right reasons in the right way will work. Adonai is NOT QUIET on this. He speaks again and again and again throughout the Word. He shows us not only HOW to be honest in our intent, but WHY it is important – to US, not to Him. It is clear that He doesn't NEED this, but that WE do in order to gain all the benefits of life that He wants us to have (John 10:10).

We CANNOT properly worship Adonai if we are not actively trying to bring about His will. We can say anything we want to. We can hold onto any doctrine we want to. But if we are not focused more on bringing His will to pass than OUR will to pass, we are not walking in the right direction or the right way (Psalm 119:105). Jesus made His focus as a human being as doing the will of Adonai (Matthew 6:9; John 5:30, 12:49; Luke 22:42). We are to do the same (1 Peter 2:21). This is not always easy. And it often takes real soul searching (mind, heart, and personality) before we are willing to agree with what Ruach HaKodesh is telling us. Ruach HaKodesh constantly reminds us of what Jesus has told us. He is constantly reminding us of what Adonai has told us He wants. He is constantly telling us about the benefits and warning about the consequences of not seeking and then putting into practise Adonai's will. He is our guide and teacher, our corrector and leader. We are never without His encouragement. We are never without His teaching. We are never without His revelation. Sadly, we do not always listen. But this verse is an exhortation to us about what our ability and privilege really is: to do the Father's will and worship Him while doing it.

Remembrance:

Psalm 119:105 “*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*”

The world can be a DARK place. It is full of negativity and ignorance. At the same time, it has pools of LIGHT and KNOWLEDGE in it. How do we navigate it? How do we avoid the pitfalls while ensuring that we engage with the positive? How do we bring light to the darkness and knowledge to the ignorant? The Word. The Word actually does the work. Jesus wrought the victory. We are simply walking it out. Walking it on lit up pathways with flashing arrows pointing us in the right direction. It is a bright, obvious path that only gets CLEARER the more time we spend in the Word. The more we listen, the more we hear. The more we absorb and really think about, the easier it is to walk in the right way. He helps us every step of the way, standing beside us hand in hand. What a GOOD God!

'IN ALL' MEANS ALL

Bless Yahweh, all his works, in all the places of his dominion. Bless Yahweh, O my soul.
Psalm 103:22

As we come to the close of the anthem of gratitude, we find a final exhortation from Adonai to each and every one of us. Who is to bless Adonai and His UNIQUE, HOLY, and RIGHTEOUS point of view (which motivates all He does and commands)? Everyone who exists under His Lordship. Everyone who gives Him dominion over their lives. Not slaves in the sense of being under dominating dictatorship, but those devoted to remain humbly submitted to His perfect will and viewpoint. The souls of these people (the hearts, minds, and personalities) WILL bless Adonai with worship from gratitude and in thanksgiving. Like the sun gives light and water makes wet, these people make worship from the gratitude they have to BE these people.

This psalm is book-ended by our relationship with Adonai: "Bless Yahweh, O my soul, and all within me, bless his holy name" in verse one at the beginning and "Bless Yahweh, all his works, in all the places of his dominion. Bless Yahweh, O my soul" in verse twenty-two at the end. Among other things, it shows that we need to have ALL of our lives submitted to Adonai in order to worship Him with ALL that is within us. That, of course, is the journey. A journey in desperate need of Ruach HaKodesh and all the guidance, teaching, comfort, and correction that He embodies and has available to us in our lives (John 16:5-15). Every day there will be something new that He brings attention to. As we read the Word and think about what it is saying, we get shown how we can properly apply it to our lives. As we read the Word, Ruach HaKodesh shows us how He is trustworthy and can be believed. As situations come up, Ruach HaKodesh talks to us about how we can trust Jesus in that situation, how Jesus already has a solution, and the place(s) in the Word that the solution is based on. Piece by piece, day by day, this process makes us more and more like Jesus. "*And we all, with unveiled face, reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory into glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit*" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

This verse is also a call to trust in Adonai when we have no explanation and we do not understand what is happening. We are called to worship Him in gratitude for what He does in ALL HIS WORKS. It does not guarantee an explanation. It does not guarantee understanding in the moment or even afterward. It DOES guarantee that Adonai is working according to His character and His point of view. In that, we can trust. Look at all the signs and wonders He performed in the bible. Read the accounts and recognise how often He did NOT explain Himself. Think about all the myriad ways He had to do any given thing. In every case He chose specific actions in, around, or through specific people. It has been THOUSANDS of years and we are STILL trying to figure out what He meant by what He did. Each and every time, though, we can see that He DID work and He DID bring about what He SAID He was going to bring about. He IS trustworthy – even when we don't understand. So when we DON'T understand, we can STILL be grateful and STILL praise Adonai with thanksgiving in our hearts.

‘Oh my soul, my mind, my heart, and my personality? Be GRATEFUL! Express with thanksgiving the love you have for Adonai. In every corner of all your thoughts, get His Light! In every plan, scheme, idea, and consideration, listen to His revelation knowledge! Rely on the Word to test everything you hear! Use the Word to frame every thought, action, and word. Humbly submit and choose holiness. Yearn after Adonai in total surrender and complete obedience from head to toe. Every cell. Every everything. Bless Adonai in thankful worship for who He is, what He has done, all that He gives, and all that He says, shows us, and speaks into us. His Way is THE Way and soul? We're going to dance before Him with sure feet and joyful singing every step of it. In, through, and because of Jesus our LORD, we will get to the end of our journey with the same smile on our face that we had at salvation. Amen and Amen. Oh my soul? BLESS ADONAI!

I hope you join me today and every day in doing just that. Bless Adonai!

Remembrance:

Isaiah 46:9 “*Remember the former things from a long time ago, for I am God and there is none besides me, God and there is none like me,*”

One of the many reasons we have been given the Word is that it records all the things we need to know about Adonai. Not everything there IS to know. Not everything that He may tell us. But all the things we NEED to know and NEED to teach others so that THEY ALSO will know. He is hiding in plain sight. His character. His attitude toward us. His love, mercy, compassion, and grace toward us. It is all there in an easy to find place. He is unique and He wants us to understand that. We NEED to understand it if we hope to understand the love Jesus has for us. Adonai does things VERY different; than humanity does. It takes some thinking and meditating on. It takes some seeking and digesting. But He makes sure we have the Way to do that. He is our constant companion, our loving father, and our beloved betrothed. There is no aspect of Him that we are exempt from learning about. Each and every once proves His love for us, the rightness of worshipping Him, and gives Him the glory He truly deserves. It is transformational to us and a joy to Him. And it is all right there waiting to be discovered. What a GOOD God!

EPILOGUE

And I will give a new heart to you, and a new spirit I will give into your inner parts, and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give to you a heart of flesh. And I will give my spirit into your inner parts, and I will make it so that you will go in my rules, and my regulations you will remember, and you will do them.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

Adonai doesn't leave us to walk alone. We are not struggling, crawling over broken rocks and shattered glass. We are hand in hand with Him. We are repositories of His goodness. We are temples where Ruach HaKodesh abides. We have the right and the obligation to choose holiness simply because He says we should. Not only to obey Him but also to benefit us. It's a TRUTH that when we do things Adonai's Way, things work better. When we stand on what He says, agree with His point of view, and walk how He says to walk, we enjoy relief from poverty. Not poverty as a monetary value, but poverty as the LACK which is the way of this world. No, Adonai is about ABUNDANCE (John 10:10). Not abundance solely interested in your bank book, but abundance as the absolute opposite of a poverty that takes identity, health, role, and in the end life itself (3 John 2). Adonai is a God of LIFE and He wants us right in the middle of it in every way possible.

We have a myriad of reasons to be grateful to Him in every arena of our lives. Using His words or using our words, we should be able to stir ourselves up to real intentful thanksgiving when we think about them. Remember that He is there every step of the Way, empowering and equipping us IN, THROUGH, and BY JESUS in order to see us live the lives He wants us to live. Abundant lives in our souls, spirits, and bodies. Lives dedicated to glorifying Him for all He is and all He does.

What a GOOD God!

"Bless Yahweh, O my soul, and all within me, bless his holy name. Bless Yahweh, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits: who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with loyal love and mercies, who satisfies your life with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. Yahweh does deeds of justice and judgments for all who are oppressed, who made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel. Yahweh is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and

abundant in loyal love. He does not dispute continually, nor keep his anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor repaid us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so his loyal love prevails over those who fear him. As far as east is from west, so he has removed far from us the guilt of our transgressions. As a father pities his children, so Yahweh pities those who fear him. For he knows our frame. He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like the grass. As the flower of the field, so he blossoms. When the wind passes over it, it is no more, and its place knows it no longer. But the loyal love of Yahweh is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to their children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his precepts. Yahweh has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. Bless Yahweh, you his angels, you mighty heroes who do his word by obeying the sound of his word. Bless Yahweh, all you his hosts, you his attendants who do his will. Bless Yahweh, all his works, in all the places of his dominion. Bless Yahweh, O my soul" (Psalm 103).

Live every day from a place of gratitude and you will find that every day you are standing in a place of total, absolute, and Jesus-centred VICTORY! Amen and Amen!