

Personal
SPIRITUAL GROWTH
and
MATURITY



GEORGE AKALONU

PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH & MATURITY

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Use of Hebraic names of the Most High

Yahweh, Elohim, Yeshua. During our walk with the Lord, we discovered by leading of Holy Spirit how fundamentally flawed was the intrusion of Rome into the gospel from 4th Century AD. Replacement Theology led Rome to take away all Hebraic/Jewish connections as root of what is now called the Christian Faith. What He has led us to do is to call our Father by the Name He revealed Himself to Israel which is Yahweh. In the same way, rather than call our Creator by the generic title God, we find it more appropriate to call Him by the Hebraic Name he revealed to humanity through Moses which is Elohim. The name, Elohim properly conveys His Unity in Plurality as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! We also call our King the Name His Father gave Him, Yeshua as well as the Anglicized translation, Ioseus. We do this as led by Holy Spirit, not as part of the so-called sacred Names movement. Neither do we subscribe to the legalistic methods of Judaizers intent on dragging saints into the dead works and rituals of Judaism. We do not condemn or malign those who have not yet caught this depth of revelation. Please feel free to call the Most High by what He reveals to you and what you are comfortable with.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

For the first time in world history, all the signs are in place that Yeshua, Jesus is about to return! For the saint, there is no profit in engaging in wild speculations as to the exact date. We are also not called to respond in fear or apprehension. On the other hand, the return of the Lord it is going to be the consummation of our redemption! In a sense, all of us are Work-In-Progress in the hands of the Great Potter. We never are completely moulded until that day when He returns for His own who have been preserved by His grace.

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, 25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen (Jude 24-25).

Our core response to news of the soon return of Yeshua, Jesus is to grow spiritually, be ready; be watchful and commit our whole being in complete submission to Him for the purpose of completing the work He began at His first coming. Since the Lord delights only in using pure vessels, Holy Spirit is available to work out the fullness of Yeshua, Jesus in us as we willingly yield to His assignment in us.

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: (Philippians 1:6).

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. 14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation,

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*among whom ye shine as lights in the world;
(Philippians 2:12-15).*

“The proof of life is growth”. As it is in the natural, so is it in the spiritual realm. Everyone who is truly born again has a felt need to grow in things of the Spirit. For this reason, the need for personal spiritual growth and maturity is not a negotiable option but a critical need in our walk with the Lord.

Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. 18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen (2 Peter 3:17-18).

Overview of the Kingdom growth process

Religious paradigm of growth is external: people accumulate more ‘head knowledge’ of the Bible; remain stunted in their spirit-man while using arm of the flesh and ability to engage in church ‘politics’ as a means of climbing the ladders of administrative/ecclesiastical authority. With time, they become, as it were ‘Lords spiritual’ who rule the flock in a manner diametrically opposed to instructions of the King:

But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many (Matthew 20:25-28).

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In other words, carrying a title or occupying a position does not translate to spiritual growth. The reality is that rather than experience true spiritual growth and maturity, most believers actually regress to a state of works of religiosity. With time, they backslide in heart and their consciences become seared, as it were. Before long, they begin to tick off boxes of religiosity as evidence that they are grown, not knowing that they are missing the back.

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. 9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:8-9).

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. 18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. 20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body: not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh (Colossians 2:16-23).

For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise (2 Corinthians 10:12).

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For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? (1 Corinthians 4:7).

By comparing themselves with other people they deem to be less spiritual, pride and a religious spirit beclouds their sense of spiritual reality:

And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. 13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted (Luke 18:9-14).

The 5-step process of Kingdom growth

The call to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Yeshua, Jesus is made to all who will believe the report of scripture. While we would examine this process in detail as we dig deeper into this course, a snapshot of a specific transition process which is embedded into the New Covenant will enable us to have an idea of what is to come:

STAGE 1: AT STAGE OF SPIRITUAL BABYHOOD – MILK OF THE WORD IS THE MEANS OF SUSTENANCE

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At the new birth, we start out as babes in Yeshua, Jesus, needing the pure milk of the Word and to receive emotional satisfaction when pampered by leaders.

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: (1 Peter 2:1-2).

STAGE 2: WORKERS WHO JUST SERVE

Most believers after the initial infancy period proceed to be workers who just serve. They listen to instruction and obey without necessarily hearing from The Lord personally. They are content with what their leaders say and can be quite loyal.

STAGE 3: WHEN NEED FOR INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD BECOMES PARAMOUNT

Good as this state of service is, there happens to be an even better state. This is when we are no longer satisfied with what we hear leaders and others tell us about The Lord. We want to know Him and hear from Him personally. This quest leads to a state of INTIMACY of FRIENDSHIP with Yeshua, Jesus. Here is a state of deep intimacy with Him in which He reveals His heart to us, and we revel in His Presence.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you (John 15:14-15).

STAGE 4: NEED FOR 'STRONG MEAT' OR SOLID FOOD NEEDFUL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

In as much as this is a beautiful state to be in, there is even a yet more excellent state. That is the level or dimension of being in which

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we take our rightful position as sons of Elohim God! This state is where we take responsibility to execute the ordinance of our Father because we are led by His Spirit 24/7 and have no other pursuit dear to us than to be His regents on earth, doing what Yeshua, Jesus would have done, were He physically present. He rules our hearts and from submitted hearts, He exerts His influence on the world around us. To get here, we need the meat of the Word which empowers us to release ourselves to serve Elohim God unconditionally.

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil (Hebrews 5:12-14).

STAGE 5: SONSHIP

The Father has a vested interest to repopulate the earth realm with sons who mature to be like Yeshua. At this stage they want to please the Father above all else and do His will, borrowing from the pattern of King Yeshua.

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work (John 4:34).

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. (John 5:30)

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me (John 6:38).

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Sonship is the state of maturity where we grow to understand our part in the Kingdom, speak with the enemy at the gate and possess territory for the King as we complete the Great Commission, He gave to us.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Hebrews 2:9-15).

As said before, we will dwell on this fivefold transition as we get into the heart of this practical course.

In our extensive study of Course 128, the Lord addressed a good number of the things we will cover in this course. The two courses are related because understanding of our human nature is the foundation of any meaningful spiritual growth and maturity. This Course is therefore intensely practical, designed to enable participants to achieve spiritual growth. Spiritual growth produces a state of maturity in Yeshua where the results are self-evident in the life of participants. As they testify of behavioural changes, character development; attitudinal adjustments and private victories they win at the micro and macro levels, their spiritual growth and maturity

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releases the sweet aroma of the presence of the Lord in and through their lives.

Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. 15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: 16 To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? (2 Corinthians 2:14-16).

True spiritual growth leads to deeper realms of holiness, love, sacrifice, and commitment to the King and His Kingdom. In this situation, our trust in the Lord grows and flourishes. It leads to a state where the saint does not fear death or the challenges of life. It is life on the opposite road that is less travelled.

Assignment

1. Please share 3 things you learnt from this chapter. 2. What are the 5 stages of growth outlined in this chapter? 3. What personal challenge did you receive?

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CHAPTER 2

Synopsis, Babyhood and Carnality as Limitations to growth

In chapter 1, the subject matter of Personal Spiritual Growth was introduced. A key part of that introduction was the outline of the 5 stages of growth saints undergo on the journey to spiritual maturity. In this chapter we will outline the general overview/synopsis of the course. Thereafter, we will examine the root issue: Babyhood and carnality as the key limitations to growth. This course is helpful when studied as a companion resource to Course 128: Understanding the human nature.

Synopsis

This course is one of the shorter studies in the Global School of Ministry and Global Advanced Mentorship program. Nevertheless, the contents are potent resources in the hands of all saints and ministers who yearn to grow into maturity in their walk with the Lord and fellow saints. We will cover these issues, amongst others:

- ❖ Introduction & overview of the 5 growth stages
- ❖ Babyhood and Carnality as limitations
- ❖ The Charge to Grow and necessity to respond
- ❖ Understanding Difference between Righteousness and Holiness
- ❖ Ingredients for Spiritual Growth - What are the roles of The Holy Spirit, The Word of God, Suffering and other things in forging true holiness?
- ❖ Spiritual Maturity: Practical Roadmap & exposition of the transitions in Growth
- ❖ The ways of sons - principles of sonship

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It is expected that in understanding the difference between righteousness and holiness, we may receive answers to these germane questions:

- ❖ What is Righteousness?
- ❖ How is righteousness attained?
- ❖ What is the difference between judicial and actual state of purity?
- ❖ What is Holiness?
- ❖ How is Holiness attained?
- ❖ Can one progress in Holiness?

Babyhood and Carnality as hindrances to Growth

As indicated in chapter 1, religious people tend to use the wrong metrics to evaluate and determine their level of spiritual growth.

- Some tend to equate head or intellectual knowledge of the bible as evidence of growth.
- Others tend to rely on titles or positions in ‘church’ hierarchy to determine where people are.

The Bible reveals another metric which is more reliable for determining growth. This includes maturity away from what can be termed as babyhood features into an intimate, loving relationship with The Father. This is a relationship which manifests in prompt obedience to His Word and gracious disposition of love towards both saints and sinners notwithstanding external pressures.

Definitions

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Babyhood refers to the state of immaturity in Yeshua, Jesus by those who are saved. A better term is arrested babyhood syndrome which is staying stuck in a stage of spiritual life without evidence of growth or fruits of righteousness which can attract others to desire to be saved.

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able (1 Corinthians 3:1-2).

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe (Hebrews 5:12-13).

Carnality is the mindset of saints in the babyhood syndrome which involves reliance on the five natural senses: sight/Eyes, sound/Ear, smell/Nostrils, taste/Tongue and feel or Touch/Skin, to evaluate and respond to all things believers encounter. It is a miserable life because it essentially kicks away the ladder of Faith, we are called to walk in relationship with a Faith God Who is a Spirit. By so doing, Carnal saints cannot please Elohim.

(For we walk by faith, not by sight: (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good report. 3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear (Hebrews 11:1-3)

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But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (Hebrews 11:6).

Those who have no faith simply do not trust Elohim and therefore tend to fight their battles in the arm of the flesh. That is why they do not experience real victory and growth.

He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail (1 Samuel 2:9).

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God (Romans 8:6-8).

A Scriptural Survey

The Word makes it clear in various passages that there are two broad classifications of saints: natural (Carnal) and spiritual. We will need to examine a broad scriptural survey to see an overview of what the Word says of the two categories of saints, spiritual and carnal, as a basis to analyse, as the Holy Spirit gives utterance, what we need to do to grow and mature in Yeshua, Jesus the Messiah. The Lord calls on all who are His to abandon carnality and pursue spiritual growth! Yeshua, Jesus Himself laid the foundation by calling on saints to allow spiritual rather than carnal issues to preoccupy their hearts and minds: Let us read all of Matthew 6:19-34. Please take note of these definite commands:

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves

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treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Matthew 6:19-21).

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. 25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof (Matthew 6:24-34).

In the Book of Romans, there is a methodical presentation of the spiritual and Holy Spirit led life contrasted with the carnal/natural mind-led life. It must be noted that this passage is not referring to saints and unbelievers but two different kinds of believers. The

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spiritual saints are found in Romans 8:1-6, 9-17 while the carnal saints are described as an enmity with Elohim God (verses 5-8). Please read all of Romans 8:1-17.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and

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joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together (Romans 8:1-17).

As we continue to examine scriptures relating to natural (carnal) and spiritual saints, we must realize that life is the outcome of what is invested. If spiritual wisdom – the Word of God delivered with the illumination and unction of the Holy Spirit is invested in people, they will invariably grow to become spiritual. On the other hand, when people go to “church” and are fed with natural wisdom, philosophies of men and fanciful stories which titillate ears or tickle the human imagination, carnality and worldliness will be the logical outcome in their lives! In 1 Corinthians 2, we see that there are two types of wisdom. One is spiritual wisdom which comes from the Holy Spirit when He guides us according to the mind of God (verses 6-13, 15,16.) This is contrasted with natural wisdom in verse 14.

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of

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God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? but we have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:6-16).

A few other scriptures are worth reflecting on as we delve into this intensely practical course. Each of the scriptures makes a case for saints to grow in grace and mature in Yeshua, Jesus. Full examination of what they say, and mean is a good starting point for our journey into the heart of this course. The first is what the Holy Spirit used Paul the Apostle to say in 1 Corinthians 3:1-10. Here Holy Spirit uses Paul the Apostle to outline some of the characteristics of spiritual immaturity or babyhood. We shall exposit on them as we progress in this study.

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? 4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? 5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But

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let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon (1 Corinthians 3:1-10).

This profound truth is fully echoed in Ephesians 4:11-16. Here, the word makes it clear that the purpose of endowing the Body of Yeshua, Jesus with the fivefold headship gifts – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers is to use them to ensure that the saints receive the complete spiritual diet needful to grow up in Him. When the saints are thus nourished, they mature to the point that they can see beyond the oratory and eloquence of men as well as charismatic manifestations to discern when flesh has taken over. This is so important in our generation so that saints will not be deceived into embracing false doctrines and unhealthy lifestyles of ministers sugar coated with sweet words.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Tell-tale signs/Evidence of babyhood in Christ

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From these readings, we can pick these vital signs of babyhood in saints.

When a saint is pre-occupied by what to eat, drink, wear, what type of job held, cars, houses while the things of the Kingdom are secondary.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof (Matthew 6:25-34).

When personal agendas are the core motivations behind what a saint does in the Kingdom. In this case, the belly can rule life of a minister.

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(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) (Philippians 3:18-19).

When a saint is ruled by the motions of the soul – emotions, attitudes; and focuses on what is seen, touched, heard, perceived, and tasted rather than what Elohim God says by His Spirit or in His Word.

When saints prefer stories and philosophies of men concerning how to be rich and successful rather than the solid Word of God.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

When a saint therefore finds it difficult to exercise faith in the Word of Elohim God but constantly buffeted by doubt, fear, worry, insecurity, apprehension.

When a saint has no faith in his/her prayers and constantly needs to “receive” prayers from a servant of God or have hands laid without reservations on the character of the person releasing the ‘impartation’.

Worse still, when a saint loses confidence in his/her ability to hear from God and constantly wants his/her life to rotate on what ministers/leaders say in prophecy or other utterances. This breeds a situation where the saint loses liberty received in Yeshua, Jesus and opens the door to manipulation, control, and charismatic witchcraft.

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When a saint is constantly having itchy ears to hear what is pleasant to the soul rather than the solid food which will build him/her up.

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Timothy 3:15-17).

The plan of Elohim God is to use various callings and gifting to impact our lives so that Yeshua, Jesus is fully formed, and we become complete and mature in Him. When a saint becomes emotionally attached to certain ministers of the gospel because of their Charismatic gifts to the point where this leads to potentially or actually divisive preference for people based on their gifts and callings, immaturity and carnality begin to frustrate the divine purpose: “I am of Paul”, “I am of Apollos”, “I am of Cephas”.

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? 4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? 5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own

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reward according to his own labour (1 Corinthians 3:1-8)

When there is presence of envy, jealousy and strife in the heart, the unity of the Body is thus decimated.

When a saint is puffed up with humanistic wisdom of certain scriptures but lacks the love filled heart which manifests Yeshua, Jesus to the saints.

Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. 2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. 3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him (1 Corinthians 8:1-3).

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. 4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be

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done away. 11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity (1 Corinthians 13:1-13).

*Dangers of remaining stuck in arrested
babyhood syndrome and carnality*

The issue of spiritual maturity is time sensitive! The end times will be a time of epic spiritual warfare culminating in a mass falling away from the truth by those who have not matured in Yeshua, Jesus. He Himself affirms that many will miss His Coming including those who claim to be Prophets.

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it (Matthew 7:13-14).

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? (Matthew 7:21-22).

Paul the Apostle spoke severally of the end times also. In the scriptures below. Holy Spirit used him to affirm, in graphic language, how spiritual babyhood will morph into extreme carnality in the end times:

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This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. 6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, 7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. 9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as their's also was (2 Timothy 3:1-9)

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

Assignment

1. Please define Babyhood and Carnality citing at least 1 scripture each.
2. Please share on any 7 of the tell-tale signs/evidence of Babyhood and carnality.
3. What are the dangers of carnality and remaining stuck in a state of Babyhood?

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CHAPTER 3

The Mystery of Righteousness, Justification, and Holiness

Let us use this chapter to crack a vital nut: understand the difference between righteousness and holiness. In so doing, we may receive answers to these germane questions:

- What is Righteousness?
- How is righteousness attained?
- What is the difference between judicial and actual state of Holiness?

The three other questions posed in the synopsis shall be answered in a subsequent chapter.

It is All by Grace!

When Yeshua Jesus died at the Cross of Calvary, the sins of the whole world rested on Him. Any sinner who is convicted by Holy Spirit to repent of Sin, believe His propitiatory sacrifice by faith in the heart and confess acceptance of His Lordship with the lips is automatically saved.

For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. 6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be

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ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Romans 10:5-13).

That is why Salvation is deemed to be by the Grace of Elohim God and drawn down by Faith, not our works.

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2:1-10).

Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work (Romans 11:5-6).

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The new creature we are in Yeshua is therefore a function of these truths that are not often emphasised enough. We are made new in Him!

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new (2 Corinthians 5:17).

This is possible because of the exchange that takes place on the Cross. Our Sins were cast on Him while the Righteousness of the Father in Him is automatically given as a gift to us!

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Righteousness cannot be earned because it is a gift of grace imparted to those who believe. Righteousness makes us stand before Elohim entirely on the merit of Who Yeshua is. He becomes our Identity before the Father.

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord (1 Corinthians 1:26-31).

Justification: blotting out the past

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As part of the Salvation package, our heavenly Father does an amazing second miracle: He justifies the saint! This simply means that He does not just accept us on the merit of what Yeshua did, He goes a step further to blot out our entire past history of Sins! In effect, He looks at us as truly as His new creation for whom old things (of the life of Satan) are passed away.

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin (Romans 3:20)

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: (Romans 3:24).

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law (Romans 3:28).

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (Romans 5:1).

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him (Romans 5:9).

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Romans 8:30).

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. 19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:18-19).

This whole process is summed up as Judicial Holiness!

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In summary, here is the deal: At salvation, a miracle of epic proportions takes place! Elohim God looks at the saved as holy unto Him and set apart for His use. A careful reading of the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians and indeed most of the New Testament reveal that while Elohim God regards us as saints according to our judicial standing in Yeshua Jesus, we are still warned against the lifestyle of sin which will cause a break in fellowship with Him. If a break of fellowship with Elohim God is sustained over a period of time, the separation that ensures will lead ultimately to a backslidden state and possible apostasy. See how the Bible describes this possibility for saved people to lose their status in Elohim.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. 7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: 8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. 9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak (Hebrews 6:4-9).

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done

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despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The remedy God has appointed for all His saints is to avoid stagnation (stuck where they are or backsliding from where they were). That solution is simply to be on a never-ending quest for growth in Yeshua, their Head in all things.

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: (Ephesians 4:15).

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; 20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. 21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you

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holy and unblameable and unreprieveable in his sight: 23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; (Ephesians 4:15)

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. 9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: (Ephesians 4:15).

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God (Ephesians 4:15).

By pressing into the fullness of Yeshua Jesus and laying hold of all the graces He purchased for us at the Cross of Calvary, we are constantly nourished with the Word which Holy Spirit uses to build up our spiritual muscles and tissues. The ensuring growth in grace makes us complete in He who is as the Head of all principality and power. In other words, while The Father sees us through the eyes of what Yeshua, Jesus did for us, He also says to us to allow the Holy Spirit to form fulness of the Saviour in us and to imitate Him.

Yeshua, Jesus Himself declared:

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Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled (Matthew 5:6).

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God (Matthew 5:8).

The idea is that we can grow to the point where we are not buffeted by every wind of doctrine by different ministers but rather come to a point where we can freely receive what our Father gives to us through different vessels in the Body and release what He puts in us. This is how Ephesians 4:11-16 describes what happens when saints are fed the balanced diet arising from the complete headship gifts of Jesus – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Summary

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The summary is this: in the mind of Elohim God, we are holy unto Him. Yet, He desires that we move beyond appropriation of His righteousness by faith to begin to walk in actual state of holiness evidenced by a mind renewed by the Holy Spirit and heart transformed by His grace. We then begin to think, speak, and act like Yeshua, Jesus because the Kingdom has taken root in us! The Kingdom of Elohim God is not a matter of platitudes but an experiential reality!

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. 19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another (Romans 14:17-19).

Basis of destructive errors

It is erroneous to take some scriptures out of context, especially the Pauline epistles and assume that once someone is saved, he or she or she has automatically secured an infallible ticket to eternity. The entire New Testament was written to provide guidance to saints on how to relate with Elohim God and man in the time of our pilgrimage on planet earth. Here is a treatise on how saints should grow spiritually so that their spirit man can spring forth to manifest the life of Yeshua.

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and

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have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. 25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Ephesians 4:17-32).

Apostle Paul proceeds to tell us another inconvenient truth: saints have a responsibility to work out their salvation with fear and trembling! While righteousness is a free gift, Elohim did not make us robots but rather, human with free will. He wants us to incline our will to His and places some degree of responsibility to maintain what has been graciously received:

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. 14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation,

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*among whom ye shine as lights in the world;
(Philippians 2:12-15).*

What Holiness is

Our response to the righteousness given to us in and through Yeshua is called Holiness. Holiness connotes two related realities:

- Conscious, wilful separation of our beings and vessels from all things that are corrupt and evil.
- Total consecration of our entire beings to Elohim as instruments of righteousness.

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God (Romans 6:13).

Part of what we will understand through this Course is how to attain to true Holiness.

Assignment

1. What is the distinction between righteousness and justification
2. Please share 5 things you received from this chapter.

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CHAPTER 4

Holiness, Sin, the Charge to Grow, and necessity to respond

Let us continue to receive light from the Word regarding Sin, personal spiritual growth, and maturity. In so doing, we need to be delivered from errors such as the eternal security theology which minimizes issues of sin.

Saints and Sin

Let us note that the default position and inclination of heart of the saint after the new birth experience (when the gift of righteousness) is received ought to be that of holiness and love which is the nature of Elohim, our Heavenly Father.

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy (1 Peter 1:15-16).

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us (1 John 1:5-10).

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My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. 6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. 7 Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. 8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. 9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. 10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. 11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes (1 John 2:1-11).

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. 4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. 5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. 6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. 7 Little

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children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother (1 John 3:1-10).

Repentance: the right Attitude to Sin.

As can be seen in these scriptures, when saints are careless or immature in spiritual life, they can stumble or fall into sin or allow themselves to be ensnared by worldly culture. This is largely due to activities of Satan who rules the earth realm through a culture of Sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:8-9).

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:1-2).

Why is this so?

Repentance is the facility Elohim has provided for saints to experience His Grace and matchless love. The doctrine of repentance is well established in both the Old and New Covenants.

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It is a fruit of conviction by Holy Spirit concerning sin and an acknowledgement of same which translates into taking ownership. This tendency moves the heart of Elohim!

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: 2 4 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting (Psalms 139:23-24).

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy (Proverbs 28:13).

Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. 10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter (2 Corinthians 7:9-11).

Repentance achieves these definite outcomes in the life of saints:

1. It signifies that the saint still has a lively conscience which can be convicted by Holy Spirit.
2. It is the clearest sign of revulsion of sin, taking ownership and responsibility, unlike Adam who ran away when he fell.
3. The Blood of Yeshua cleanses from all unrighteousness.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin (1 John 1:7).

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Conscious cooperation with the Spirit of righteousness and resistance to sin is the key!

The book of Romans provides us a vital key: as long as we are in the earth realm with presence of Satan and his hordes of demons, saints need to cooperate with the Spirit of righteousness intentionally and consciously to live right. In the same measure, it is needful to refuse to yield members of their bodies to serve as instruments of sin. Holy Spirit gives all of us Grace to make the right choices when tempted.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we

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sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? 17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. 19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. 20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. 22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In chapter 3 we ended with this description of Holiness: What Holiness is? Our response to the gift of righteousness given to us in and through Yeshua is called Holiness. Holiness therefore connotes two related realities:

- Conscious, wilful separation of our beings and vessels from all things that are corrupt and evil
- Total consecration of our entire beings to Elohim as instruments of righteousness

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God (Romans 6:13).

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How is Holiness attained?

It is clear that while righteousness is a gift of grace we did not earn by good works, prayer or indeed any human endeavour, on the other hand, Holiness is a conscious response to stay within the realms of intimate relationship with the Lord. In other words, it connotes movement from a judicial to an actual state of purity in thought, word, attitudes, and deeds. This is proven by the reality that the Word commands us to be Holy unto the Lord.

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy (1 Peter 1:15-16)

Can one progress in Holiness?

Saints are charged to grow in the grace of righteousness they received from the Lord. This implies a wilful decision to forsake the rising and falling (yo-yo) motions of righteousness and sin so that holiness is attained, maintained, and becomes a lifestyle.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen (2 Peter 3:18).

The ultimate state of true spiritual growth is the manifestation of the Zoe life or Elohim God kind of life. This is one in which the mortal saint has been delivered from the bondage of Sin because the Old man with its sin-prone proclivities has been check mated and put off. In this situation, the believer wears fullness of the new man as a fruit of sanctification. The fact that though one has believed in the Lord Yeshua, Jesus, a believer can still manifest negative behaviour arising from presence of the Old man or body of sin and that one can be delivered from those negative tendencies to bear fruit of Holy Spirit is clear. Let us consider a few scriptures.

But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16 This I say then,

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Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:15-21).

When the Old man-driven life of sin is rejected and the saint abides in Yeshua, Jesus, His word produces fruit of Holy Spirit who is the key driver of life!

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-25).

Remaining in Sin can lead to separation from Elohim!

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. 12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

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13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. 14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. 15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. 16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. 17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. 18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's (1 Corinthians 6:9-20).

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; (Ephesians 4:17-22).

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. 25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27

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Neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Ephesians 4:23-32).

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: 7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them 8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: 11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. 12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. 14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful (Colossians 3:5-15).

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Growth in Grace is possible when saints are aware of the presence and activities of the Old man! They do not stop there but become truly revulsed, hating sin in all forms, repenting of any manifestation, abstaining from all appearances of evil and earnest prayers to be delivered from the capacity to Sin. The response of the Father to such earnest desires to be holy in thought, word, attitude, and deed is called sanctification. It is the Lord that sanctifies with His Spirit, the Word, the Blood, and things which saints are allowed to suffer (challenges, difficulties)

Abstain from all appearance of evil. 23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it (1 Thessalonians 5:22-24).

Full outcome is a saint indeed walking in the fullness of the Light of Elohim which is a life that is holy, loving, obeying the Word of Elohim without struggle. This life of purity of heart, mind and a will that is totally inclined to seek, know, and do His will is the very reason Yeshua came on earth: to repopulate the earth realm with sons of Elohim in whom there is nothing of Satan and his kingdom of darkness.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh

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and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Hebrews 2:9-15).

Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate (Hebrews 13:12).

Assignment

Assignment: 1. Please share 5 things you learnt from this chapter 2. What is your personal take away?

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CHAPTER 5

The imperatives of spiritual growth

It is necessary to see through various vessels in the New Testament, including Yeshua, Jesus that we are charged not to remain static in our spiritual lives. Personal spiritual growth and maturity is a core lifestyle of Kingdom citizens:

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled (Matthew 5:6).

The principle was well illustrated by Yeshua, Jesus in His epic treatise that is John 15. Here, we are told that He is the True Vine, and we are branches attached to Him with the Father as the Gardener who comes regularly to see if we (the branches) are healthy and productive or stunted and wasting space and resources fed into us. The imagery of growth is very vivid here:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit (John 15),

COMMENTARY

Pruning takes off unwanted matter and creates space for real growth

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

COMMENTARY

The word has purifying and cleansing effect when consistently applied to the heart (spirit-man) and soul (mind, imagination, memory, will, emotions and attitudes)

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye,

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except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

COMMENTARY

Growth starts with knowing the Lord and clinging to Him in all situations. The saint should make no room for alternatives to Yeshua, Jesus. As 1 John 5:21 says, such things are idols.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples”.

COMMENTARY

Spiritual growth is evidenced by fruitfulness which glorifies the Father.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that

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ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples (John 15:1-8).

One of His closest disciples who stumbled many times but was determined to be all that Elohim God wanted Him to be eventually made it. Peter was later used by God to provide deep insight into how we should live to please the Master. Here is one of the great insights:

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. 15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. 17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. 18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen (2 Peter 3:14-18).

In Hebrews 5:12-14, a powerful case for spiritual growth is laid out before us. The Word makes it emphatic that those who fail to grow are in effect making themselves a liability to both Elohim God and other citizens of His Kingdom:

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who

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by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil (Hebrews 5:12-14).

As you read this intensely practical study note, please allow Holy Spirit to search you out. Are you still a babe needing just milk of word of “encouragement” even when you are out of order with God and man? Do you get offended when the solid meat and bone of the living Word of God is explicated?

Specific things we are to grow in

Current Evangelical and Pentecostal theology with its predisposition to the utilitarian gospel has made believers to chase idols of the world which sap their spiritual strength, leaving them largely hollowed out. While they get the cars, houses, business opportunities, money and all the stuff that drives their church life around their chosen messiahs, the average Christian has little or no space for hunger and thirst for holy living.

Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen. (1 John 5:21).

From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? 2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. 3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. 4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. 5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? (James 4:1-5).

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Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. (1 John 2:15-17).

Some specific virtues to grow in

The Word provides specific things The Lord would like us to grow in. All those born again are better off dwelling in the Word to receive the grace to live in the light of divine expectations based on the principle that righteousness is a gift, but holiness is a choice.

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:5-11).

Growth Objectives: The desired spiritual outcome

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It is our character which God desires to see transformed through the pilgrimage of life. Our Father wants to see us become living epistles that testify to the reality of the finished work of the Cross: a life of victory over sin! This is not to be a head stuffed with religious tomes and jargons; it is not to be the multitude of religious activity we undertake which pleases God. He is a fruit inspector, as John 15: 1-8 amply illustrate. Our heavenly Father has no use of religious attempts to please Him through sacrifices and multiplied activity. He desires fruit! Fruit comes out on the branch naturally as a result of the nature of the tree to which it is attached! In effect, when we are fully attached to Yeshua Jesus, in and out of season and give Him the right of way to express Himself through us as yielded vessels, it is only a matter of time that Who He is and His response to situations begin to show up in and through us. The song writer captured it vividly with this line “*Let others see Jesus in you*”.

Following the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in AD 70, a new kind of Temple sprung up: the heart of saints! In each heart, Holy Spirit took up active residency representing Yeshua Jesus.

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

From His residence, Holy Spirit continues and completes from inside out, the awesome transition from the kingdom of darkness and conveyance into the Kingdom of God which began on the day of Salvation.

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: (Colossians 1:12-13).

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As we said in a previous section, the Lord primarily prefers to show up in and through us through the quality of fruit of the Spirit we bear - not by how much we know of the Kingdom, how much charismatic gifts we manifest or how much money we bring for its advancement – but by how much of His character we manifest as a normal lifestyle. The Kingdom life is not what we do when we gather inside a religiously designed building of brick and mortar on certain days or hours. The fruit of the Spirit is the Holy Spirit in action, manifesting Himself in us and expressing His grace as an outcome of what is going on inside of us:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23).

If we make it the strong focus of our daily lives to yield to the inner working of Holy Spirit to express these aspects of Yeshua, Jesus through us, God will make full use of us to illuminate the dark world around us and apply us as Salt to preserve and flavour our environments. That conforms to the Word of Jesus:

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matthew 5:13-16).

Fighting one another or quarrelling over our personal understandings of what the Bible says on specific texts is therefore unprofitable! We do better if we simply live out the Kingdom as possessors not tear ourselves up as professors! Ultimately, a day is coming when the final results will be in:

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Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matthew 7:21-23).

The emphasis of Jesus is character rather than effusions of mere words or even manifestations of charisma:

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them (Matthew 7:15-20).

When we give the Holy Spirit ample space and room to develop the nature of Yeshua Jesus in us and cause Him to be fully formed in us, we are able to exhibit the attitude, character and lifestyle which decorates our witness as citizens of a superior Kingdom to that of the world around us! It is for this reason that He commissioned His disciples and indeed all of us to go forth and be His witnesses, not just preachers and teachers or just work miracles as hirelings!

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Examples: Yeshua, Jesus and Paul

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Elohim God hardly asks us to do something that has not been done before. As a full Human, Yeshua Jesus Himself modelled growth for us and showed us examples to follow. While in the flesh, He grew!

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him (Luke 2:40).

And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man (Luke 2:51-52).

He fulfilled His estate as a man! He leant obedience through what He suffered.

So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. 6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. 7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; (Hebrews 5:5-9).

He did it all, not for Himself but rather for us. He took away the power of the flesh to pose a risk to spirituality and laid the basis for the earth realm to be re-populated by sons of Elohim who walk not after the flesh but by Holy Spirit!

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom

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are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Paul the Apostle was a man sold out to the Kingdom of Elohim God and pursuit of its righteousness. Even at the latter part of His life, here is what he told the saints in the city of Philippi:

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. 2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. 3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. 4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the

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righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. 16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing (Philippians 3:1-16).

Assignment

1. Please share any 3 things you received from this chapter.
2. What did the chapter challenge you to do?

CHAPTER 6

Instruments/Ingredients for spiritual growth

In various parts of scripture, we are told about instruments and ingredients for spiritual growth. We will allow the Holy Spirit to speak through scripture and then we will summarize. As Philippians 3:1 said, there is great profit in repeating truth. We will therefore refer to some previous passages in order to bring forth the counsel of Elohim God in bold relief.

Instrument/Ingredient #.1.

The New Birth. Yeshua made it clear to Nicodemus that the new birth experience is the key to ‘see’ and ‘enter’ into the Kingdom. In other words, no true spiritual growth can take place in the life of one who is not born again. That experience is the base and foundation on which growth can take place. Those who are not born again are not part of the Kingdom, their lofty religious titles notwithstanding.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit (John 3:3-8).

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Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began (Acts 3:19-21).

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Instrument/Ingredients #.2.

Basics needed for spiritual growth by young converts. Young saints need to put off certain things such as malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, evil speaking which block the growth process.

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious (1 Peter 2:1-3).

Instrument/Ingredient #.3.

Abiding in Yeshua. No matter the strength of the waves; no matter the billows of the storm or the fierceness of the fire which you pass through, the demand of Elohim God and His Word is this: Abide in Yeshua, Jesus.

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I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

It is by abiding or clinging to the Lord that we enjoy the guarantee the fact that He will never leave us or forsake us!

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me (Hebrews 13:5-6).

But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. 2 When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee (Isaiah 43:1-2).

*Instrument/Ingredient #.4. Pruning by Elohim
God.*

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I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit (John 15:1-2).

From time to time, Elohim God allows certain situations and circumstances to come which remove unwanted weights and bring forth dimensions of His Grace and glory inside our spirit-man and soul.

Our Father also uses His appointed disciplinary process to cut of those attitudes, emotions, lifestyles, and pursuits which do not represent Him. In this way, He forges a greater degree of Yeshua in us. In effect, spiritual discipline is not an evil but an actual manifestation of the love of God for us.

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby (Hebrews 12:5-11).

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Instrument/Ingredient #.5. Sanctification by the Elohim of Peace.

A saint can only grow to the degree that he or she first violently seeks sanctification of the soul which takes away negative motions of the soul! These motions include all manner of sin which only a deeper work of the Blood can uproot vestiges of the Old man and emergence of the fullness of the new man.

Abstain from all appearance of evil. 23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it (1 Thessalonians 5:22-24).

Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied (1 Peter 1:2).

Instrument/Ingredient #.6.

The Word of God is a core instrument of spiritual maturity. For young saints, the Word of God has the same effect as milk on infants – enables them to grow well and develop (1 Peter 2: 2). For older saints, the same word has the cleansing effect of water as John 15:3 says. The water of the word cleanses the mind, taking away worldly mindsets so that the mind of Yeshua is manifested. (Romans 12:2, Ephesians 4:23, Philippians 2:5). The Word also functions like Fire to burn off chaff, Hammer to break off rocky dimensions of the human heart

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Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? (Jeremiah 23:29).

The Word also function like a sharp two-edged sword to pierce through all facades as well as a mirror which reveals unwanted things latched onto our spirit, soul and body so that deliverance can take place.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do (Hebrews 4:12-13).

For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed (James 1:23-25).

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love (John 15:9-10).

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you (John 15:12-14).

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And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. 33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? 34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. 35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. 36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed (John 8:32-36).

Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. 45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. 46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. 47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. 49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. 50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak (John 12:44-50).

Instrument/Ingredient #.7.

Obedience. Growth comes when we obey every word of God we learn. He does not want us to stuff our minds with the logos of the Word. Rather, He wants us to receive the rhema/revelation of the Word and set our hearts to obey. As the Lord sees our hearts, He supplies grace with which we are able to obey. Knowing and obeying the Truth has an extraordinary liberating effect on saints. Hearing the Word and not obeying it becomes judgement!

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As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love (John 15:9-10).

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you ((John 15: 12-14).

Instrument/Ingredient #.8.

Communion with God in Prayer, walking by Faith and fasting where necessary. A saint will grow better if he or she learns early the joy of making fellowship and prayer time with God a fulcrum on which the whole day and life rotate. The saint who dwells in the presence of Elohim God will invariably grow because Yeshua is formed in the place of intimacy with Him. We should back this up with a life of watching our heart, mindsets, and our surroundings so that we can walk in circumspection. Though He is the Son of God, Yeshua, Jesus lived a life wholly dependent on the Father! He did nothing without first knowing the will of the Father. For that reason, He practised and taught extensively on prayer.

And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. 2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. 3 Give us day by day our daily bread. 4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. 5 And he said unto them, Which of

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you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? 7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. 8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. 9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. 10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? 12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? (Luke 11:1-13).

Yeshua, Jesus taught clearly that there are some kinds of challenges saints will face which require that fasting be added to prayer. He also made it clear that while He is in heaven, saints will need to fast when necessary:

And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, 15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. 16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. 17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. 18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. 19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? 20 And

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Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. 21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting (Matthew 17:14-21).

And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? 19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days (Mark 2:18-20).

The journey to Calvary was soaked in prayer. As His soul was troubled, Yeshua Jesus had recourse to prayer and there He was strengthened. As soon as the Father reiterated His will, Yeshua Jesus rose up and embraced the Cross with joy:

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. 37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. 38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. 39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. 40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. 42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. 43 And

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he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. 44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me (Matthew 26:36-46).

Instrument/Ingredient #9.

Holy Spirit and His Grace: Holy Spirit is given as a gift to indwell us and guide us into all truth. He is to lead us into the perfect will of our heavenly Father which, when we know and do, we discover the joy of growth in Him. With His guidance, we enjoy the privilege of walking with Elohim God.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. 12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you (John 16:7-15).

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But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (Romans 8:9-16).

Spiritual growth is not achieved by carnal means of self-effort or ticking off of boxes of ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’.

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ (Colossians 2:8).

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. 18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. 20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye

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subject to ordinances, 21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body: not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh (Colossians 2:16-23).

True spiritual growth is ‘inside out’, rather than ‘outside in’! An often-neglected reality is that even in working out our Salvation with fear and trembling, it is Holy Spirit who works inside our beings to inspire us to will and give us grace to do the good pleasure of our heavenly Father.

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure (Philippians 2:12-13).

Instrument/Ingredient #.10.

Adversity: As the Potter, our Father knows when best to put us in the fire so that we may turn out better, not bitter. The best of gold often comes out after the metal has passed through the furnace where impurities are identified, isolated, and drained off. There are times when Elohim God uses afflictions to form/impress the character of Yeshua, Jesus in us. What He does at such times is to allow us to come to the point where we look away from other people, realize our insufficiency and thus look up to Him alone. At such times, we discover that He alone is truly qualified to be our near kinsman! Consider this picture of Paul wrestling for His intervention and deliverance from trouble until The Lord spoke that Grace was the panacea:

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And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me (2 Corinthians 12:7-9)

Assignment

1. Summarise 6 of the Instruments/Ingredients of spiritual growth
2. Which of the 10 appeal most to you as much needed?

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CHAPTER 7

Spiritual Maturity: A Practical Road Map

As we continue this practical, life application course, it is necessary to re-visit a deep spiritual concept that was first broached at the beginning. We will expand same for deeper understanding of how spiritual maturity is the logical outcome of the growth process.

As said in the earlier part of the course, most signs are in place that Yeshua, Jesus is about to return! For the saint, there is no profit in engaging in wild speculations as to the exact date. We are also not called to respond in fear or apprehension. On the other hand, the return of the Lord it is going to be the consummation of our redemption!

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Colossians 3:1-4).

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure (1 John 3:1-3).

In a sense, all of us are Work-In-Progress in the hands of the Great Porter. We never are completely moulded until that day when He returns for His own who have been preserved by His grace

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Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy (Jude 24).

Our core response to news of the soon return of Jesus is to

- ❖ Be ready.
- ❖ Be watchful and
- ❖ Act by committing our whole being in complete submission to Him for the purpose of completing the work He began at His first coming. This was the essence of the words of Jesus in Luke 19:10-27.

Since the Lord delights only in using pure vessels, Holy Spirit is available to work out the fullness of Yeshua, Jesus in us as we willingly yield to His assignment (Philippians 1:6, Philippians 2:12-15).

Personal spiritual growth and maturity therefore is not an option but a critical need in our walk with the Lord. In this lesson, we will expand on the revelation in lesson 1 concerning the various stages of spiritual life that believers are called to walk in. Knowing this truth will inspire us to welcome the divine process, press forward in growth and attain to real maturity in our walk.

*Growth in Grace and the 4 – stage transition of
saint hood:*

Growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is available to all who will believe the report of scripture.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen (2 Peter 3:18).

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The word “growth” connotes increase. Grace is a virtue we can increase in. We can increase in both mind renewal, heart transformation and in other dimensions of our walk with Elohim God. Growth is something which comes best when there is an inside out transformation by which our behaviour changes as we come into an ever-increasing understanding of Yeshua in us as the hope of glory and yield to the working of Holy Spirit and the Word on our minds and hearts.

If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; 24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: 25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; 26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: 28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: (Colossians 1:23-28).

We shall examine the four stages of growth which all saints are appointed while on this pilgrimage through the earth realm. It must be noted that as a Sovereign God, Elohim can well change the order of things regarding a particular vessel as it pleases Him. However, the uniform testimony of scriptures shows that the five-part process expounded here seems to be the experience of a vast majority of saints.

Stage 1: Babyhood

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The transition from Sinner to Saint is only valid through the process of conversion (repentance and change of mind and attitude to sin) and conveyance into the Kingdom of God. Acts 3:19; Colossians 1:12-14. This is not about going to church from childhood. It is not about being a member of a congregation or even serving actively there. Anyone who is not truly converted is not a member of the Kingdom of God and cannot genuinely grow in grace! It makes sense to ask yourself this question: am I truly saved or am I assuming I am saved? If Yeshua, Jesus The Messiah returns today, will I be among the number that have their names in the Lamb's Book of Life who will be taken up to meet with Him? At this stage of basic spiritual life, saints desire spiritual milk and are unable to understand or receive the strong meat and bones of the Word.

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? 4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? (1 Corinthians 3:1-4).

Of this type of saints, Peter says:

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious (1 Peter 2:1-3).

Indicators/Tell-tale signs

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These indicators are tell-tale signs of Babyhood.

- ❖ They are still learning the ropes, so to say and first principles of the Kingdom which are easy for them to comprehend.
- ❖ They are heavily dependent on servants of God to teach them, answer questions of life
- ❖ They have to be encouraged to come to fellowship.
- ❖ The capacity for accepting and taking responsibility is severely limited.
- ❖ These saints need praise of men for even little tasks done.
- ❖ Carnality. Carnality is the natural state of spiritual babyhood. This can be found among both young believers as well as in older saints who have remained ensconced in their soulish realms, with excessive emotional baggage that hinder their ability to grow spiritually. Because of insincerity with God and themselves, shame and fear of what people will say, many old saints who are spiritual babes have dug in, mired by their souls and hiding their true states. Unable to answer altar calls out of pride and ego, they pack many leadership councils and yet are basically babes! Babes leading babes will only lead to disaster and the results are self-evident with so much jealousies, envies, strife, vain humanistic ambitions and quest for power without character!

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe (Hebrews 5:12-13).

Stage 2: Servant hood (Serving as a Worker)

With poor exposition of the word and inadequate knowledge majority of babes/immature saints, make the transition to be servants

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in the “Church”. These saints still hold God as a surreal Being who is basically “far away”. They need to shout, scream and whine to catch His attention! This is the stage where the believer begins to serve in the Local congregation on the premise that people are needed, and they are available. More often than not, such service is not based on any knowledge of a specific call or understanding of what they are called to do.

Indicators/Tell-tale signs

- ❖ They serve Him out of duty; obeying instructions without knowing why.
- ❖ Unfortunately, this attitude of serving God without knowing why or doing so out of duty without love can be dangerous and very limiting. This is because it is the bedrock of religion and the basis of the orphan spirit which inflicted many older denominations causing preference of laws of man over the Laws of the Kingdom.
- ❖ Many people, though saved, are afflicted with this orphan spirit.
- ❖ What they know of God is limited and their relationship with Him fits this profile: a distant creator who they essentially serve out of fear of what He will do to them(punishment) if they sin or if they do not achieve certain benchmarks of ministry success
- ❖ They are therefore unable to see the reality that though God is in heaven and creator of the whole universe, He has paid the entire price for them to not just serve Him but to be redeemed from the hands of the enemy. This mindset thus equates pain, suffering, poverty, and rejection for true holiness.
- ❖ There is a tendency to serve Elohim God out of a sense of duty, not love. They behave very much like the Elder brother of the Prodigal son and are often full of envy when sinners and those they consider “carnal Christians” seem to prosper more.

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- ❖ What servants call prayer can often be properly classified as complaining. The approach to God is legalistic. You hear this kind of statements: “God you ought to bless me because I have paid my tithes”; “God, why are the unserious sisters who are even sinning against you getting married when the serious ones like me are still waiting?”
- ❖ Servant hood can lead to a mercenary attitude to the things of God. There is an inherent inability to take responsibility for spiritual things.
- ❖ Servants are faithful to their leaders only to the extent of what will profit their interests. Once they chance upon what they consider a better route to their ambitions, their loyalty shifts immediately.
- ❖ To that extent, servants are not good team members and can be full of treachery. Judas was a classical servant who hung onto Yeshua, Jesus as long as it gave him relevance. For just 30 pieces of silver, he betrayed his Master!

Stage 3: Intimacy or Friendship with Jesus

Let us bear in mind that Jesus had announced two previous transitions. The first was what He told Nicodemus in John chapter 3 that without the new birth experience mankind is engaged in dry religious observances! He was in effect saying that every human being has a choice to accept membership of the spiritual family of God as basis of walking with Him in His Kingdom or remain outside it observing dead religious rituals! The second transition was to the disciples themselves who experienced the frustrations of serving God with limited understanding of who Yeshua, Jesus was or why He came. They had dropped their fishing, taxation and other businesses and followed Him blindly. In the process, they had displayed great carnality at various times. In one case, James and John had asked for permission to call down fire to consume an entire Samaritan village because they refused them access. In another case, they tried to prevent someone from casting out demons in the name of Jesus. In another faux pas of epic proportions, James and John

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recruited their mother to lobby Jesus about their ambition to sit on the right and left of Yeshua, Jesus in the coming Kingdom Matthew 20:20 - 28. Judas betrayed Jesus while Peter denied Him 3 times. When push came to shove, all but John forsook Jesus. Yet these were the very disciples He handpicked after an all-night prayer! (Luke 6:12-16).

The disciples remained in this yo-yo state of emotion driven service until Yeshua, Jesus announced their transition to be friends. Their actions were not perfect, but their hearts were sold out to Him. John 15: 9-16. If your heart is right with God, be confident of this very thing: He Who began a good work in you will complete it before the Day the Lord will appear! Do not despair that you are not yet there! Cheer up and embrace the process Elohim God has appointed for your perfection! There happens to be an even better state of relationship we can have with God beyond serving him out of zeal. It is that of FRIENDSHIP with Yeshua, Jesus. The disciples were doing assignments given to them without question as servants. Shortly before His passion, Jesus announced their promotion and called them friends:

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. 12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you (John 15:9-15).

Indicators/Tell-tale signs

These are features of saints who have responded to the upward call of Yeshua, Jesus and made the transition to become His friends:

A deep hunger and thirst for more of God creates a crises experience which launches saints into this stage of life. That crises experience is called SANCTIFICATION or CIRCUMCISION of the Heart. Through a supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, all other passions, and yearnings such as quest for more material things, money, power, marriage, success in life are rooted out of their idolatrous hold on the heart of the saint. The saint literally taps into real grace to love God above all else!

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.²⁴ Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).

There is a deeper appreciation of the gift of righteousness which enables the saint to respond in kind to the grace and mercy of Elohim. That response of appreciation for the gift of righteousness is called holiness. We know that sin is contrary to the nature of God, is filthy, offends Him and separates us from His Presence. Since we cannot afford this for even a minute, we go out of our ways to be proactive in our lifestyles giving no room for the enemy to cause us to slip. Because our body parts are completely consecrated to God, they serve only Him and do not respond to solicitations of Satan and sin (Romans 12:1).

Saints pursuing intimacy with our heavenly Father are aware that Yeshua in us is the hope of Glory. In other words, they are aware that Yeshua, Jesus is not afar off but rather seated on the throne of our hearts. He is also resident by the Holy Spirit, right in our hearts.

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We therefore are in a heightened state of awareness of the 24/7 Presence of the Lord.

In this state of deep intimacy with Him, He reveals His heart to us and we revel in His Presence. He unfolds things to come, and we walk in the Light.

When saints are walking in intimacy with the Lord, they know the joy of obeying His commandments.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.³ For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:2-3).

As Yeshua, Jesus told His disciples, obedience to His commandments will be proof of a life of intimacy with Him!

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you (John 15:14).

Let us note that a saint walking in intimacy with Elohim God can stumble or sin. However, the active conscience is immediately pricked by the Holy Spirit, convicted, and responds by running towards and not away from God! The renewed mind knows what the Word says in 1 John 2:1, 2 and other scriptures and quickly receives reconciliation.

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:1-2).

*Stage 4: Need for 'strong meat' or solid food
needful for spiritual growth*

To grow further in the spirit, saints need the nourishing power of the whole word. We need the meat of the Word which empowers us to release ourselves to serve Elohim God unconditionally.

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil (Hebrews 5:12-14).

Stage 5: Son ship

In as much as intimacy of friendship with the Lord is a beautiful state to be in, there is a yet more excellent state. That is the level or dimension of being in which we take our rightful position as sons of God! Several times one day, God spoke to me clearly "I want sons". Our Father is looking for the fruit of the propitiatory work of Yeshua, Jesus at the Cross in the form of sons who are like Him! He came to bring many sons to glory! Yeshua, Jesus broke down the middle wall of partition which kept the saints divided according to their races; gender; socio-economic standing and denominations. When people mature to become sons, they understand the heart of Father God, relate intimately with Him, and make no provision for the flesh!

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This state is where we take responsibility to execute the ordinance of our Father God because we are led by His Spirit 24/7 and have no other pursuit dear to us than to be His regents on earth, doing what Yeshua, Jesus would have done, were He physically present.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God (Romans 8:14).

He rules our hearts and from submitted hearts, He exerts His influence on the world around us. Sons take responsibility for the estate of their Father. They speak with enemies at the gate and give Satan no room to operate!

Theology of the transition from friend to Son

The transition is through the process of sanctification of the heart followed by receiving and walking in revelation which liberates.

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (John 8:32)

If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed (John 8:36).

The mature son takes responsibility for representing The Father where he or she is planted. Revelation makes you to ignore the carnal senses and always focus on what Elohim God says and the unseen which is permanent

For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things

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which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

In this state of being, all walls of divisiveness crumble and the saint lives in the reality of the blessedness of the will of God. There is neither male nor female, white, black, Jewish nor Asian; there are no denominational walls to cling to.

Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more (2 Corinthians 5:16).

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:26-29).

And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: 11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all (Colossians 3:10-11).

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all (Ephesians 4:1-6).

We become the living reality that Yeshua, Jesus is Who He says He is and demonstrate His Character, Presence and Power anywhere we

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show up. We have no glory in the flesh in any way and neither flaunt our pedigree, education, physical assets nor do we seek any credit for anything it pleases the Father to accomplish in and through us!

But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me (1 Corinthians 15:10).

Struggle of all types cease as knowing, submitting to, and doing the will of God becomes one seamless conundrum of Kingdom life free of worry and anxiety for temporal things (Matthew 6:25-34; Romans 14:17,18).

Even though Yeshua transitioned the disciples from servants to friends, the most dramatic transition came only after He went to the Cross and paid the price of spilling His blood as the Lamb of God. At this point, a paradigm shift became the new reality: Divinity which became humanity through the incarnation had met and kissed an equal yet opposite principle – humanity could now function with a measure of divinity while still in the body and be used as vessels to demonstrate His Presence and Power by the in-dwelling Holy Spirit! That was the essence of what happened in the Upper Room when 120 saints who believed and obeyed till the very end received the baptism in and of the Holy Spirit! To make sure that no one was in doubt about this extraordinary development, the unlearned fisher men began to utter speech in the polished languages of various nations and peoples who gathered at Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost. Within a generation the new reality was sealed when the imperial Roman army led by the redoubtable General Titus sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple. The Temple was the grand epitome of the Old wine skin of religion and needed to be destroyed so that the new wineskin would come into effect. That new wineskin is the fleshly tables of the hearts of the redeemed of the Lord on which the Constitution of the Kingdom of God are inscribed with the very Spirit of the Living God!

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Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. 17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God (John 20:16-17).

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together (Romans 8:12-17).

Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: 4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ (Galatians 4:1-7).

Because of the Law of God wired into their spirit man and to which their souls have wholly yielded, sons of God are not ruled by legalism and observances of ordinances out of servile fear. They

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walk in true liberty because the truth of Yeshua they know has set them free! This is by no means the negative type of liberty called lasciviousness or giving occasion for the flesh to engage in self-indulgence! Rather, it is the life that is so imbued with the living reality of divinity that resides in the heart that sin has no room to manipulate it. It does not co-mingle with anything of darkness in the thought process and hence enjoys a life that is wholly wired to please the Father.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1).

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:13-16).

Revelation is a central currency of the Kingdom of God. Having therefore an understanding of what happened at the Cross has an extreme liberating effect on the saint. The truth of the victory of Jesus over Satan, Sin and Evil at the Cross is something that births the faith to press into the living reality of full redemption.

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (John 8:32)

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed (John 8:36).

In a real sense, sons have appropriated fully, their identification privileges with Yeshua, the Ultimate Son through Whose death the earth realm can be re-populated by many more sons.

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But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham (Hebrews 2:9-16).

They understand what the death of Jesus at the Cross means.

Assignment

1. Please summarise what you learnt from each of these 5 stages of growth and cite at least 1 relevant scripture for each.
2. What is the impact of this lesson on you?

CHAPTER 8

Sin, Repentance and What-aboutism

Standing as a giant against Personal Spiritual growth of saints is a tool Satan uses against all – male and female, young and old, regardless of race or religion. It is called SIN. It makes sense therefore for us to gain a working understanding of this critical adversary. Sin is Satan’s chief tool to prevent human beings from reconciliation with Elohim and therefore to keep them separated from Him. Sin is also Satan’s chief weapon to make the Faith of saints of non-effect. Satan is the spring and source of ALL sin. From the day he sinned as arch angel Lucifer in the courts of heaven which led to his expulsion, Satan has been SIN incorporated (Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28). Right from that day, one of his principal acts has been to take as many beings away from relationship with Elohim. It is believed that one third of angels were deceived by him.

In the earth realm, Satan demonstrated what he would do until end of time when he successfully deceived Eve and Adam to doubt Elohim and disobey His express command.

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them

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both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. 8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. 9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat (Genesis 3:1-13).

Definition and concepts of sin

Sin is any disobedience of the express word of Elohim concerning how humans should live in the earth realm. The concept of sin is truly expansive and incorporate these features: First, to do what one is not supposed to do – Sin of Commission. Second, to fail to do what one was expected to do – Sin of Omission. Sin includes impurity in thoughts in the mind and secret purpose of the heart such as lust.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart (Matthew 5:27-28).

Sin also includes attitudes, dispositions, words, and lifestyle which pollute hearts and minds of others such as impure speech, seductive

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dressings, or other tendencies which glorify Satan, dishonour Elohim, and weaken the faith of others.

For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. 22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 6:20-23).

The list of named sins in the Bible is truly expansive and we may outline them in a specific lesson. Contrary to the assertion of many preachers of the new plastic cross, the New Testament does not give any one a pass to live or remain in Sin after Salvation. On the other hand, Yeshua specifically declared that the New Covenant has higher standards of spiritual excellence than the Old which was based on religion and its tendency to externalization of rituals meant to please Elohim.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. 21 Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his

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brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift (Matthew 5:17-24).

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. 29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: 32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery. 33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: 34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: 35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. 36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. 37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. 38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: 39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let

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him have thy cloak also. 41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. 42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. 43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? 47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? 48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:27-48).

The end or consequence of all Sin is death or separation from Elohim. On this side of eternity, the separation is spiritual. Once life is over, the separation is physical and eternal. When we are born again, the Lord gives us a precious gift: transition from a life of separation from Him to one in which we receive the benefit of Yeshua's death at the Cross of Calvary which is reconciliation with our heavenly Father.

It is handling of the word craftily for anyone to use any scripture to justify eternal security for a sinning Christian.

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this will we do, if God permit. 4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the

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world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame (Hebrews 6:1-6).

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10:26-31).

The Grand Remedy for all Sin

The grand remedy for Sin is the sacrifice of Yeshua at the Cross of Calvary. Repentance requires Sinners who are convicted by Holy Spirit, believe that He took away their sins and place their faith for Salvation on Him to walk away cleansed and re-created.

But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him

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shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Romans 10:8-13).

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new (2 Corinthians 5:17).

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

For those who are born again, the Lord provides grace to live in victory over Satan, Sin and his seductions and temptations. This He does by releasing grace for saints to recognise his wiles and devices and push back, just as Yeshua did in Matthew 4:1-11.

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices (2 Corinthians 2:11).

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (Ephesians 6:11).

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world (1 Peter 5:8-9).

The Lord has given a promise that in such battles, He will not leave saints to their own strength but will always make a way of escape.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it (1 Corinthians 10:13).

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Moreover, the Lord has given various promises that He honours repentance.

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whose confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy (Proverbs 28:13).

What makes repentance effective?

When it is sincere - acknowledging the corrosive nature of the Old Man, though one is born again. This leads the believer to seek deliverance from the Old man and its impulses/proclivities towards sin.

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. 25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working

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with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (Ephesians 4:17-31).

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: 7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. 8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; (Colossians 3:5-9).

When it is activated by genuine heart felt understanding of and godly sorrow for Sin.

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter (2 Corinthians 7:10-11).

When it is persistent, accepting nothing short of total deliverance.

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you

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an expected end. 12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. 13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:11-13).

When what is sought is the full manifestation of the new heart in everyday life - thought, word, attitude, emotion, deeds in those who desire to be possessors, rather than professors of the Kingdom.

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:23-24).

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Ephesians 4:32).

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. 3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them. 8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: 9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) 10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. 13 But

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all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. 14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. 18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; 19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; 21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it (Ephesians 5:1-25).

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. 4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail;

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whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity (1 Corinthians 13:1-13).

Interestingly, the reality that a person can have as it were a new heart from the Lord was part of what Elohim declared to Israel through Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will

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give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them (Ezekiel 36:25-27).

Anyone seeking this degree of spirituality must be delivered from What-aboutism. What-aboutism is the tendency to be fixated on what ‘the other person’ or others are doing or not doing relative to the call for spiritual growth and maturity. How other people, you are in human relationships with, choose to interpret scriptures or respond to this call for personal spiritual growth and maturity is ultimately their business with Him and should not in any way affect your quest for perfection. The Lord and His word do not permit us to judge them for Him, dislike or hate them because Elohim is able to package a pathway to their perfection which is not disclosed to you. This principle is especially effective when spouses, friends or brethren experience strains in their relationship. For spouses, the principles in Ephesians 5, Colossians 3, 1 Peter 3 are explicit and no humanistic wisdom or worldly interpretation should justify emphasis on what the other person did or didn’t do. Where there are issues, the Lord requires the more spiritual to obey His word, embrace the grace for patience, endurance, and longsuffering and treat the other spouse like a Cross permitted by the Lord!

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but

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nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband (Ephesians 5:22-33)

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them (Colossians 3:18-19).

The Lord places the onus on the more spiritual to invest in restoration of the less!

What-aboutism illustrated

Peter and John

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. 20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? 21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. 23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto

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him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? 24 This is the disciple which testified of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true (John 21:18-24).

Peter was distracted from promptly following Yeshua because he was overly concerned about John who was not called to the same experience. Yeshua rebuked him for that mindset.

Martha and Mary

Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word 40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. 41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: 42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her (Luke 10:38-42).

Martha was inflicted by Whataboutism when she complained of Mary not serving like her! Spouses, siblings, blood relations, brethren in Church; leaders and followers can be engaged in whataboutism without realising it. There may be a carnal under current of “who blinks first”. In so doing, couples can, for instance forget that Elohim is present in His Omniscience and Omnipresence and that the laws of marriage were given by Elohim and obedience should be unto Him, not unto the spouse.

Whataboutism is the grand culprit behind the tendency to judge one another rather than forgive, intercede, and give charity the space to cover deficiencies. The cure for Whataboutism is to understand

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and embrace the role of the more spiritual and a heart of fervent charity in all relationships:

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. 3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. 4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another (Galatians 6:1-4).

When saints refuse to obey, they resort to finger pointing and become Judges of each other leading to systemic sin and potential falling away.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. 2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. 3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? 5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye (Matthew 7:1-5).

Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. 12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? (James 4:11-12).

And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8).

Outcomes of thorough sanctification

The saint who seeks personal spiritual growth is on a quest to be like Yeshua: live above Sins of thought, word, attitude, emotional eruptions, and deeds which are contrary to holiness and charity. This is why the grand desire is to come to a place of true spiritual growth and maturity: True holiness with cleansing of spirit, soul, and body from all uncleanness. And, Deep heart transformation, manifested as Agape or pure love. This lesson does not give any saint license to refuse exhortation, correction or godly discipline in a congregation or ministry. There are different principles governing spiritual discipline in the Household of Faith. No believer should remain in sin that grace may abound.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? 17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness (Romans 6:1-2).

Assignment

1. Please share 5 things discussed in this chapter
2. Explain what you understood concerning What-aboutism.
3. What point(s) were most relevant to your needs?

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CHAPTER 9

Benchmarks of Spiritual Maturity - The Ways of Sons

At this stage of our study, we need to apprehend a number of practical benchmarks of spiritual maturity. The idea is to have a practical guide with which to determine, through mirror of the Word, where we are on the journey of personal spiritual growth. The manifestation/presence of these 21 benchmarks therefore offer solid evidence of maturity.

Revelation and Faith:

Sons of Elohim receive revelation knowledge of the deeper mysteries of the Kingdom and walk therein by Faith. This revelation establishes what was, is, what will be or is to come. Their lives are thus anchored on the fresh insight they gain into the mind of Father concerning state of their lives relative to the soon return of Yeshua, Jesus as well as their role in preparing saints and the world for that hard reality. It pleases the Father to unveil mysteries of the Kingdom to them in a way not given to other believers or humans.

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (John 8:32).

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God (1 Corinthians 2:4-5).

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: (1 Corinthians 2:7).

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man,

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save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? but we have the mind of Christ ((1 Corinthians 2:10-16).

This is why sons of Elohim live by Faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). That is also why prayer is not a temporary activity but their very lifeblood of communion with the Father (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Luke 18:1).

Understanding: Revelation becomes life transforming when it is properly understood from the Father's rather than human point of view. Because their hearts are free of agendas and self-pursuits, sons are able to grasp the heart of Father God.

And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. 12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. 13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand (Matthew 13:10-13).

Death to self:

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All sons can ever be in their walk with the Father on this side of eternity are hinged on the fact that they choose to die in order to live with and for Him! They are dead to self-ambitions; vain pursuits and the fancies of this world have no grip on their souls.

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20).

Total Consecration to seek Elohim God, His Kingdom: and its righteousness:

With death to self, their eyes are single/focused, and their hearts totally sold out to pursuit of the Kingdom and its righteousness (Matthew 6:25-34). Interestingly, sons never arrive. Like Paul, in they are in a never-ending quest to be all that Elohim God has ordained them to be.

But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for

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the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:7-14).

Absolute Trust in Elohim God:

This translates to trusting Him as sons trust their fathers to take care of everything about them. When those expectations are not yet manifest, as good sons they do not throw tantrums or pity parties. They just “know” that daddy will take care. They therefore rest in His love! In this way, they are delivered from anxiety, worry, self-help/arm, of the flesh and rather enter into His rest.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths (Proverbs 3:5-6).

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. 10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. 11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief (Hebrews 4:9-11).

They know that though in the world, they are not of it. Sons avoid entanglement with the corrosive influence of this world. They accept the reality that though they are citizens of nations in the natural, they are firstly citizens of the eternal Kingdom of Elohim God. They realise that as Yeshua prayed to the Father, they are preserved in order to impact the world as catalysts of transformation.

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. 11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name:

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those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth (John 17:9-19).

Yet, He has not asked us to live monastically, isolated from the world. Rather, His strategic plan is to embed us into our environments as change agents just like the salt and light of Matthew 5:13-16 and the leaven Yeshua spoke of.

Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened (Matthew 13:33).

It all starts with recognising the need to not love the world and desist from allowing its culture to corrupt and overwhelm us (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; James 4:1-6; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 Timothy 2:4).

Lifestyle:

Sons live spare! They do not find pleasure in the toys and fancies which drive the multitude and babes. Because of this, they discover the blessedness of owning nothing! They live like Yeshua, Jesus and other sons who are now part of the Church triumphant! Sons realize that He is our perfect model.

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Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:3).

The Father can therefore entrust sons in the marketplace with wealth of the Kingdom since Money has lost its grip over such people and can be properly used as a servant.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; 19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

Experiential Manifestation of the Kingdom in the now.

Yeshua, Jesus made it clear that while His Kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36) and would be manifested in the future (Acts 1:4-11), yet those who have become its citizens have the Kingdom in their hearts (Luke 17:21). For this reason, they learn the blessedness of cultivating the Kingdom life and guarding their hearts with all diligence lest any other thing crowd out what is so precious! Instead of sloganeering and throwing about the word “Kingdom”, they know of it experientially as they enjoy a vibrant relationship with the Father which manifests in the indwelling spirit of righteousness; peace with Him even in the midst of external pressures and joy in the Holy Spirit which gives them strength from within.

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men (Romans 14:17-18).

Such sons are a sight to behold as they are strong, stable, assured in Christ and bold as lions!

Integrity and Character.

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Sons understand from the Word and the indwelling Holy Spirit that they are called to manifest and represent Yeshua, Jesus in all situations. They allow Him by the working of Holy Spirit and through circumstances to work out the full measure of Yeshua, Jesus into their lives. They know that they are called to a level of righteousness which exceeds that of the religious leaders and hypocritical religious world Matthew 5:20. Because the Laws of the New Covenant and DNA of Elohim God, which is wired into their hearts, the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7 becomes the standard frame of reference for behaviour during their pilgrimage on earth.

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. 14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain (Philippians 2:12-16).

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. 13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14

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Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: 16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. 17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king (1 Peter 2:9-17).

Discipline and Order which makes unity possible.

Sons are disciplined people who know and understand principles of order. They do not recognize fellow sons after the manner of men (age, gender, wealth, height, etc). The truth is that they know no one after the flesh.

Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more (2 Corinthians 5:16).

Rather, they know fellow sons by the Spirit! They are led by the Holy Spirit to know the spiritual assignments of other sons and recognize those Elohim has given scope of responsibility or vastness of revelation that is greater than theirs. While they are secure in what is committed to them, they joyfully align with those other sons, keeping rank without loss of face. Thus aligned, they rally together under the banner of the King of Kings, Yeshua, Jesus and synergize to release the quantum of spiritual energy needful to take territories assigned to them jointly. 1 Chronicles 12:38, Joel 2:7, 8. In this way of proper alignment, unity is possible.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one,

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even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me (John 17:20-23).

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (1 Corinthians 1:10),

Intimate relationship with Elohim God in a new dimension.

Sons enjoy a whole new level of intimacy in their relationship and walk with our heavenly Father! He is no longer a vague surreal unknown God to them. He is no longer an object of carnal religious devotions. Rather, Elohim God comes alive in them as a Father Who is loving and caring. The term ‘Abba’ encapsulates this reality of an intimate Father-son relationship! With Yeshua, Jesus, He is not just a far-off Saviour. Yeshua Jesus comes alive as a model, near Kinsman, friend and in a sense that is deep and yet profound, an Elder Brother! John 20: 11-17. In effect, we are now sons of Elohim, just like He is!

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ (Galatians 4:4-7).

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing

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many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings (Hebrews 2:9-10).

The reality of Yeshua Jesus is that in Him, divinity became humanity so that humanity will receive and walk in a measure of divinity! Yet, this is not the kind of blasphemous concept of the pseudo-kingdom preachers who deny the divinity of Yeshua, Jesus. It is rather the reality of accepting our adoption as sons of Elohim with the elevated spiritual profile it confers on us.

Empowerment.

Sons deliberately and actively cooperate with the Holy Spirit to use them as instruments of empowering the flock of Yeshua, Jesus. They do not treat the flock as their own but as a sacred trust committed unto their care to impart with wisdom and grace of His word and anointing of Holy Spirit. This continues to the degree that they mature, discover, and take their place as active, functionally relevant parts of the Body of Yeshua, Jesus. When sons are in fivefold ministry, they invest all of the grace of God, anointing of the Holy Spirit and revelation they have received to point people to the ultimate Son, Yeshua, Jesus! They therefore reproduce disciples in ministry and teach saints to produce disciples. They invest time in transitioning the disciples to become ministers of the gospel through the process of training, equipping, activation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and calling and end up releasing such people into ministry to serve the Lord and His Kingdom. No one stays in their ministry as a “member” of the congregation. Their concept is that saints are rather functional members of the Body of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Christ according to Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-32; Ephesians 4:7; 1 Peter 4:10,11 which is their guidebook for ministry. Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 5:1-6.

On the part of the saints, they do not know preachers after the flesh but by the Spirit! They do not join ministries on their own accord, out of personal preference nor are they moved by effusion of passion in preachers or their charismatic manifestations! They know, according to the Word that those things can be deceptive. They

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therefore are mindful of who speaks into their lives, who lays hands on them and who are their covering. Sons therefore seek the counsel of the Father as to who He has ordained to be the vessel to empower and release them!

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. 21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matthew 7:15-23).

Understand the Mystery of the Church.

True sons will never be among the company who speak evil of the Church. They know that the Church is a reality of the Saints Militant and Triumphant with Yeshua Jesus as the Head. Because they have this revelation, they know and take their place in the Body and discharge the grace and revelation granted them with all diligence to other saints and humbly receive what is granted other vessels. They therefore do not build “churches”. They do not participate in the worldly business called denominations which essentially divide the Body and put it into a permanent state of strife. They understand that there are 4 types of ‘Church’: ‘church, of Humans, ‘church’ of Satan; the hybrid/mixed ‘church’ and the Kingdom Church which belongs to Yeshua, is His Bride and Body. Sons do not split hair

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over what they do not know. They go to the Word and whatever is not in the Word and contradicts the word they treat with a healthy skepticism until the Holy Spirit confirms otherwise (Deuteronomy 29: 29).

Understand the Kingdom, live it out, preach and demonstrate it.

True Sons have a proper, Holy Spirit inspired understanding of the Kingdom as expounded in the Holy Scriptures. They know the King; they know that though all humans were created by Him and for His pleasure, not all are subject to Him in the present life (His Dominion). They also understand that the domain of the Kingdom comprises all creation. They understand that in this present life, citizens of the Kingdom are ruled by the Constitution which is the Holy Scriptures. They know from the Word that though they are physically in this present world, they are not of it and cannot be caught up with its fancies. They realize that Yeshua, Jesus preached the Kingdom and wants His people to receive it in their hearts and be His Ambassadors to the dying world. They therefore preach the gospel of the Kingdom as a lifestyle. They invest in equipping the saints to walk in the full authority of the Kingdom so that they will be the Light of Yeshua, Jesus the Messiah to illuminate the darkness around them and like Salt and preserve their environments from corruption. In spite of these, true sons know that the real deal of the Kingdom will occur when He returns to set up His earthly rule from Jerusalem the City elected by God and ruled at first by King Melchizedek, a Christophany or physical manifestation of the ageless Yeshua.

Understand the Mystery of election of Israel and the covenant of Abba with Abraham.

True sons walk in this critical revelation that the covenant of Elohim God with Abraham in Genesis chapters 12, 15, 17 and 22 is an enduring one unto the end of time. They also realize that because of the spirit of religion and hardness of heart, The Lord concluded Israel in unbelief for a season and turned to the gentiles to raise a people who were not His people at first. They realize that while

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Yeshua, Jesus will take away His precious Church from the earth for a season, He will return to earth basically to rescue Israel from the final holocaust planned by the anti-Christ and world powers. Elohim God will be true to His covenant during the Great Tribulation and ensure the salvation of all His elect of Jewish origin. The coming of Yeshua, Jesus will consummate the programme which began with Pentecost and its aftermath: to make of the two – Jews and Gentiles – one new man: the remnant of Elohim God! Full details of the mystery of election of Israel and role of Gentiles before end of the age are articulated in Romans 9,10,11; Ephesians 1,2,3.

Responsibility.

Saints take full responsibility for the Father's business on earth. Sonship confers on them the privilege of guarding and defending the charge of Yahweh to dress and keep it Genesis 1:26-30.

And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it (Genesis 2:15).

The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men (Psalm 115:16).

They do not keep quiet when wolves manifest to ravage the flock of Yeshua, Jesus through false doctrines or cunning craftiness of men to deceive. They do not commit the sin of indifference like the people of Meroz:

Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the might (Judges 5:23).

They rather behave like the Good Shepherd, Jesus and are willing to be persecuted, ridiculed, conspired against, and even martyred for the sake of the Sheep (John 10:1-18).

Active Co-labourers with Jesus in Intercession and spiritual warfare.

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True sons are active co-labourers with Yeshua, Jesus. They do not just preach for sinners to be saved. They go further to announce with clarity the coming Kingdom of God when all violence, disease, death, crises will cease. They know that the global peace and good life universally desired by all humans shall only come to pass when Yeshua, Jesus returns to rule and reign on planet earth! They preach this coming Kingdom with passion and all zeal. Yet, they do not live in monasteries in the present! They are actively engaged in ensuring that pollutions of their environment and nations by sinners and human governments are interceded for and repented of through representational repentance. They stand in the gap for their peoples and nations pleading their cause for the mercy of God.

Dwelling in the will of The Father.

Son ship therefore connotes a state of taking responsibility to know the perfect will of Elohim in all situations; Knowing the will of God, they take responsibility to do what Yeshua, Jesus would have done if He were physically present. The will of Yahweh is thus their dwelling place!

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work (John 4:34).

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me (John 5:30).

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me (John 6:38).

Understanding the times.

Sons understand the times which dramatically affect their world view as to what is most needful.

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And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. 13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof (Romans 13:11-14).

Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. 18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; (Ephesians 5:14-18).

Attitude to the Great Commission.

Sons operate with a sense of spiritual urgency to complete the Great Commission. Knowing imminence of return of the King, they lay hands on the plough and do not look back in the primary Kingdom business of reconciling the lost to the Father and discipling peoples, cities, and nations. In so doing, they realise the global scope as given and do not stop until the world is impacted.

Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. 36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. 37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. 38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other

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men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours (John 4:35-38).

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:18-20),

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. 19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. 20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen (Mark 16:15-20).

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come (Matthew 24:14).

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Love is the principal motive and propellant of their lives.

Love of The Father and other humans drives their lives and ministries/services. They know that Love prevails over all else.

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Master, which is the great commandment in the law? 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets (Matthew 22:36-40).

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (John 13:34-35).

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. 3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; (Ephesians 5:1-3).

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. 4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether

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there be knowledge, it shall vanish away (1 Corinthians 13:1-8).

Assignment

1. Please briefly summarise 12 out of the 21 ways of sons
2. Which of these points were particularly relevant to your current need?

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CHAPTER 10

Divine-Human Partnership

As we continue to study this vital subject, it has pleased Holy Spirit to bring forth what can be considered a game changer. Any saint struggling with proclivity towards sin and sinfulness who opens the heart and mind to receive this lesson can walk away with insight truth that empowers. Very well did Yeshua declare in the Book of John the correlation between Truth and Liberty:

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (John 8:32).

This unique creature called man

Of all the vast, innumerable creation of Elohim, man stands out as the Crown Jewel, created in His image and likeness.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life,

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I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. 31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day (Genesis 1:26-31)

Whereas He spoke the vast majority of creation into being, it pleased Elohim to practically give effect to His Words by personally creating man just as a Potter works on clay. Let us be reminded of both the purpose and practical outworking of the process:

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7).

Elohim created humans for a loving relationship. To this end, the creature was designed to worship the Creator in spirit and in truth.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:21-24).

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created (Revelation 4:11).

The spiritual snag

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From a human point of view, two aspects of the human nature can be considered as potential spiritual snags. They are:

- 1. Presence of the Conscience.** As proof of the exalted nature of humans, Elohim blessed them with a conscience. This is moral police of humans and the grand restraining factor which enables them to distinguish between what is good and bad; what is pure and impure; what is holy and what is unholy. The normal state of the conscience is something Satan wages a long war to distort, subdue, or 'kills' it in order to de-sensitize to the holy standards of Elohim. The unrelenting attempts of Satan to show believers things that defile through the eyes and invade the mind with negative pictures is well known to many by experience. Those who do not guard the loins of their mind as Peter exhorts will, over time, find certain unholy thoughts, words, and actions as acceptable and normal.

The way saints keep their conscience alive determines the state of their sensitivities to the Divine presence and desire for Holy relationships with Him.

And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void to offence toward God, and toward men (Acts 24:16).

I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost (Romans 9:1).

I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; (2 Timothy 1:3).

If the conscience is alive and lively, the human would recognise and be repelled at the fiery darts which Satan throws as suggestions to defile the mind and heart, overcoming them with the shield of faith.

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Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked (Ephesians 6:16).

As indicated, where the conscience is injured, bruised, or damaged, its sensibilities will be degraded. Where the conscience is dead, Sin will become the new norm in the one who is supposed to be a believer. This suggests spiritual death.

Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: (1 Timothy 1:5).

Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: (1 Timothy 1:19).

Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience (1 Timothy 3:9).

Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; (1 Timothy 4:2).

Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled (Titus 1:15).

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water (Hebrews 10:22).

Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly (Hebrews 13:18).

For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully (1 Peter 2:19).

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It is noteworthy that the conscience is the instrument which Elohim will use to judge those who lived before Yeshua was incarnated.

For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) 16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel (Romans 2:14-16).

And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, 4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? 6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. 7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. 8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. 9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst (John 8:3-9).

- 2. Presence of the Will.** Humans were not created as robots or zombies who just follow and do whatever their creator wants. Rather, Elohim had an exalted purpose to birth sons in the earth realm. He therefore created Humans with a will so that they can live as responsible free moral agents. Ultimately, it is the will which gives effect to all motions of the spirit, soul, and body as well as solicitations of Satan. Where the will is in alignment with that of Elohim in any matter, holiness is given practical effect. Where the will is contrary to Elohim, Sin is the outcome.

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Yeshua taught and demonstrated the reality that the surrendered will is the key to living the Holy life He Covenanted to these powerful choices which show us the way to please our Father. While in the Incarnate state, He purposed in His heart to love righteousness and hate iniquity.

Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows (Hebrews 1:9).

This strong inclination of the heart was given full effect by the choice He made to seek, know and do only the will of Yahweh, His Heavenly Father in ALL things.

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work (John 4:34).

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me (John 5:30).

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me (John 6:38).

Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; 9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Hebrews 10:7-10).

Yeshua's submission to and alignment to the perfect will of His Father was unto death as the events of Gethsemane revealed

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Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. 37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. 38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. 39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. 40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. 42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. 43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. 44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me (Matthew 26:36-46).

In effect, though we are humans, we have the capacity to embrace the Divine-Human partnership which will ensure these practical outcomes we receive Elohim's gift of righteousness in Yeshua;

We embrace the gift of Righteousness of Elohim in Yeshua when we accept Conviction of Holy Spirit, repent of our Sins, are justified and live as His new creation

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the

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prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

As believers, we have the capacity of grace to yield our members as instruments of righteousness. By the same measure, Grace enables us to have strength to refuse solicitations of Satan and any seduction designed to make any part of our being an instrument of unrighteousness.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?(Romans 6:1-3).

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?

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God forbid. 16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? 17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness (Romans 6:11-18).

Instead of giving room for the ‘fish in water’ theory of those who excuse Sin, we switch on our conscience and will, inclining them to full alignment with the holy Standards Elohim set for the redeemed: a life above the paygrade of Satan and therefore holy 24/7.

Knowing that the core issue is the presence of the Old man and its ugly motions of sin well documented in various scriptures such as Galatians 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 6:1-20; Ephesians 4:17-31; Ephesians 5: 1-7; Colossians 3:5-9, we incline the will towards Yeshua for the deeper work of Grace called sanctification. Earnest prayers of faith touch heaven and a deep cleansing occurs:

Abstain from all appearance of evil. 23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it (1 Thessalonians 5:22-24).

The outcome of sanctification is holiness or purity of heart, mind, emotion and will.

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted (Matthew 5:3-4).

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled (Matthew 5:3-4).

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But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy (1 Peter 1:15-16).

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. 4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. 5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. 6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. 7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. 11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. 14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. 15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down

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our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. 19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. 20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. 21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God (1 John 3:1-21).

We take ownership for any slip, stumble, or outright sin by failing into the hands of a Gracious Father in genuine, heartfelt repentance

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:1-2).

In this Divine-Human Partnership, Elohim supplies GRACE for all the afore-mentioned processes to saints who are humble to desire His help. He is more than willing to release Grace for us to make progress in spiritual life and grow.

But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. 9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up (James 4:6-10).

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This chapter is released with a prayer that Holy Spirit will breathe life on it and use same to perfect all who will study.

Assignment

1. Please summarise this lesson in a way that captures all the 4 points above
2. What is the impact of this chapter on you as a person?

CHAPTER 11

Danger of lack of spiritual growth

Before we get to the end of this course, it is needful to consider two subjects. The first examines dangers that await saints who do not heed the divine instructions to grow as articulated in this course. The final lesson will focus on blessings for those who obey and grow. As usual, we will resort to the King James version of the Bible which we deem as one of the most reliable and agenda free translations of the Bible.

Progression of spiritual deficit

Inability or unwillingness to grow spiritually results in a life which heads 'south'. These are the negative progressions:

Stagnation – this is the spiritual state where growth is not just stopped but leads to a life which, as it were stagnates at a particular state.

Backsliding – this is one where the believer begins to go backward into systemic sin.

Apostasies – this is a 360 degree turn from believing in Yeshua and His Blood sacrifice for Sin to one in which unbelief takes over until faith is renounced.

Potential consequences on this side of eternity.

Potential consequences in eternity

Let us examine what the Holy Scriptures say of these states, in no particular order

Foundation in the Old Testament

The things written about Israel in the Old Testament are precursors to dealings of Elohim with the Church as these scriptures affirm:

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. 7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. 8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. 9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. 10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it (1 Corinthians 10:1-13). (Deuteronomy 28:1-68).

First things first

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All stagnation, backsliding and apostasy have a common root which is negative attitude to the Word. Where the word is esteemed highly, it is very unlikely that a believer will get to a place where they stagnate, backslide, or fall out of faith.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:17-20).

One can either build spiritual life on sand or on the rock of His word!

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it (Matthew 7:24-27).

Here are specific warnings about not growing

The whole of the gospels provides us a manual for Kingdom life which should guide the life of saints who do not want to miss it. The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7 are particularly

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instructive. Within those verses are clear warnings of dangers of negative conduct. The Pauline Epistles deal extensively with Kingdom life. Let us take a survey of some passages.

Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, 18 And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; 19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, 20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. 21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? 22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? 23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? (Romans 2:17-23).

Carnality leads to strife

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? 4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? 5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that

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watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. (1 Corinthians 3:1-9).

Saints are not to take other saints to court

Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? 2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? 4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. 5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? 6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. 7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? 8 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren (1 Corinthians 6:1-8).

Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) (Philippians 3:17-19).

Contribution of James

James 4:17 (KJV) 17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

The contribution of Peter

In one passage, Peter warns those who do not press into perfection risk sliding back to their old life:

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:3-11).

Dangers of Sin

On this side of eternity

The uniform testimony of scripture is that a life of sin is toxic and injurious to holistic wellbeing of saints. Sin is corrosive and destroys health (immorality for instance can lead to sexually transmitted diseases and premature death).

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Those who refuse to grow deny the saints the benefit of what Elohim would have accomplished through their vessels. They may end up as vessels of dishonour who are fit for destruction!

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil (Hebrews 5:12-14).

When Sin is normalised in the Church, the outcome is what is described here:

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world (1 Corinthians 11:23-32).

In eternity: the danger of eternal separation from Elohim

The ultimate danger of remaining in sin (stagnation) or backsliding and apostatizing is that it can lead to ultimate separation from Elohim in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone. This will be a sad but avoidable end for one who was formerly a Christian. Entering in at the wide gate, walking on the Broadway and ministering while disconnected from the Lord is self-delusion/deceit. It will end badly.

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. 15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. 21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matthew 7:13-23).

Kingdom work done outside the Master Plan – combustible elements will be destroyed while one ‘squeezes into eternity with no rewards.

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed

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how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire (1 Corinthians 3:10-15).

*Destruction awaits defilement of the Body which
is temple of Elohim*

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? (1 Corinthians 3:16).

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. 12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. 13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. 14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. 15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an

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harlot? God forbid. 16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. 17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. 18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's (1 Corinthians 6:9-20).

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:13-21).

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this will we do, if God permit.

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4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. 7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: 8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. 9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak (Hebrews 6:1-9).

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10:26-31).

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (Revelation 21:7-8).

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And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life (Revelation 21:27)

And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. 11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. 12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be (Revelation 22:10-12).

For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie (Revelation 22:15).

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. 20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus (Revelation 22:18-20).

Final Point. There is need to be radical about not giving Sin space to rule the believer.

The quest for the Kingdom should be so overwhelming that no one should give space for Satan to knock them off. One should be willing, if need be, to enter the Kingdom maimed than to miss it with the whole body.

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And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell (Matthew 5:29-30).

And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. 43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. 45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. 47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: 48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched (Mark 9:42-48).

Assignment

1. Please summarise the main thrust of this chapter
2. Please cite 5 scriptures which touched you most.
3. What is your main take away from this chapter?
4. What will you do with the lessons in this chapter?

CHAPTER 12

Rewards for spiritual growth and maturity.

The whole Bible can be safely considered a book of rewards! From the Old to New Testament, there are several scriptures which promise rewards to the obedient, holy, and faithful. In this chapter we will examine a few of them within the context of the course.

*Maturity and ability to distinguish separation
from isolation*

The more mature saints are in the Lord, the more they are aware that with Satan as its god, the world is a formidable foe to be engaged with caution and wisdom. They are to avoid the snares of the world which is hinged on Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the eyes and pride of life.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.¹⁷ And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever (1 John 2:15-17).

The attractions of the world inspire lust which is a corruption of Faith.

From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? 2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. 3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. 4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?

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whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God 5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? (James 4:1-5).

Mature Saints as Catalyst of Transformation in society

Maturity enables saints to understand that though they are separate from the world, they are not to be isolated but rather preserved from the corrosive effects of the world.

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. 11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth (John 17:9-19).

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The strategic purpose of the Lord is to preserve them for impact upon their generation as catalysts of transformation.

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matthew 5:13-16)

Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened (Matthew 13:33).

The Promises of Yeshua, Jesus for those who grow and mature

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy .8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. 10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven:

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for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you (Matthew 5:3-12).

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (Matthew 6:25-34).

Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? 28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's

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sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life (Matthew 19:27-29).

Two dimensions of Blessings in Eternity

Those who grow to the point of maturity are to expect two dimensions of rewards in the hereafter.

Rewards of ruling and reigning with Yeshua in the Millennium

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. 18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God (Romans 8:16-19).

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years (Revelations 20:4-6).

Rewards in all of eternity

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One of the most exciting rewards that all saints who grow in grace and mature can expect is the reality that they will escape eternal damnation and rather live in pleasure with their heavenly Father in all eternity.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes (Revelations 7:17).

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. 6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son (Revelation 21:1-7, 22-26).

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. 24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. 25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall

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be no night there. 26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it ((Revelation 21:22-26).

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. 5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. 6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. 7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book (Revelation 22:1-7).

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. 13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. 14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city ((Revelation 22:12-14).

The Resolve to grow, mature and hit the mark

Paul the apostle was a man who Yeshua arrested dramatically in Acts 9. The former enemy of the gospel proceeded to make a 360-degree turn to become not just champion of the Church, but more

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importantly, he was elected to be the Master builder of the Kingdom Church. Let us draw substantially from his approach to spiritual growth and maturity.

His passionate quest to obtain

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that

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for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. 16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. 17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample (Philippians 3:4-17).

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself ((Philippians 3:20-21).

Paul kept his eyes fixed on the eternal rewards and was certain of breasting the tape, by Grace of the Lord.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

Assignment

1. Please outline two rewards those who engage in personal spiritual growth can expect on earth.

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2. Please outline two rewards those who mature spiritually can expect in eternity.
3. Please write an essay of about 500 words on the revelations you received from Course 120: Personal Spiritual Growth and Maturity.

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COURSE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. What should be the response of the spiritually mature to the return of Yeshua.
2. True or False: Spiritual Growth is a critical need not a negotiable option.
 True False
3. List and briefly explain the 5-stage Kingdom growth process identifying the features of each.
4. True or False: A title or occupying a position indicates you have grown spiritually.
 True False
5. Detail the outcome of those who compare themselves to others they deem less spiritual.
6. Which of the following is not an outcome of true spiritual growth?
 Deeper realm of holiness
 Deeper realm of love
 Arrested Babyhood Syndrome
 Commitment to the King and His Kingdom
7. What are two ways religious people measure spiritual growth and what is the result of each?
8. What is the biblical metric for spiritual growth and why is it superior to religious metrics?

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9. Please provide your understanding of Babyhood and Carnality
10. What is the difference between carnal and spiritual growth? Support your response with a minimum of three scripture references.
11. Which of the following is not a tell-tale sign of babyhood?
 - Itchy ears to please the soul
 - Ruled by Holy Spirit rather than the emotions
 - Personal Agendas
 - Preoccupation with physical or social needs
12. What are the dangers of babyhood syndrome? Why is it important to recognize them?
13. Please summarize the difference between Righteousness and Holiness
14. True or False: Salvation is by our works not drawn down by Faith.
 - True False
15. What is the 2nd miracle Elohim does as part of the Salvation package? Provide a brief summary of your understanding of Justification.
16. Explain how it is possible for a saint to avoid stagnation in their spiritual growth.
17. True or False: It is my responsibility to work out my own salvation.
 - True False

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18. Please provide the biblical definition of Repentance and support your response with a minimum of 2 scripture references.
19. Briefly summarize the three (3) outcomes of repentance.
20. Explain how growth in Grace is possible.
21. Summarize the process of spiritual growth and the evidence that growth has occurred.
22. Select 2 of the Instruments/Ingredients for spiritual growth and detail the following: a). What is the instrument/ingredient? b). When does it occur in the growth process? c). What is the evidence of the instrument/ingredient? d). What is the outcome of possessing the instrument/ingredient?
23. True or False: Growth occurs when we obey the Word of God we have learnt.
 True False
24. Which of the following is not a core response to the eminent return of Yeshua?
 Be watchful Be prayerful Hide your talent
25. True or False: Spiritual growth and maturity is an option not a need.
 True False
26. True or False: It is not possible for a saint walking in intimacy with the Elohim to stumble.
 True False
27. Which of the following statement is true of a mature son?

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- Worry and anxiety is present during struggles
 - Is a living reality that Yeshua is who He is.
 - Represents our Father where planted.
28. Which of the following statements is true?
- Stagnated Spiritual growth is a tool used by Satan
 - Sin is a tool Satan used to cause stagnated spiritual growth
29. Explain your understanding of Sin prior to this course and how that understanding has changed as a result of this course.
30. What Is “What-aboutism” and why is it important to understand in order to grow spiritually.
31. True or False: The onus is on the less spiritual to invest in the restoration of the more spiritual.
- True False
32. Detail the characteristics and responsibilities of sons of Elohim.
33. True or False: Elohim create humans to follow their own will
- True False
34. Explain your understanding of the Divine-Human Partnership.

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The curriculum includes 41 modules and is divided into five courses consisting of basic and advanced courses. The basic courses are foundational Christian doctrines and beliefs, based entirely and completely on the bible as well as practical principles and practices concerning Ministry and how to fulfil same.

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Module 2: Course 105: The 9 Fundamental C` s

Module 3: The Ultimate Three: Faith, Hope and Charity

Module 4: Course 107: Grace

Module 5: Course 113: Spiritual Gifts: What, Why, How.

Module 6: Course 120: Personal Spiritual Growth and Maturity

Module 7: Course 136: Divine Perspective of Purpose

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Module 6: Course 122: Women in Ministry

Module 7: Course 123: Rewards of the Faithful

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Module 3: Course 128: Understanding the Human Nature

Module 4: Course 129: Critical Adversaries

Module 5: Course 130: Prayer, Fasting & Spiritual Warfare

Module 6: Course 134: Apostasies, Heresies, Errors, & the Pseudo-Gospel

Module 7: Course 125: Finances and Stewardship in Elohim's House

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Module 3: Course 137: 7 Letters from Heaven

Module 4: Course 143: Apocalypse Decoded

Module 5: Course 139: Completing the Unfinished Reformation

The curriculum is released free of charge to saints worldwide who are willing to utilise the courses to empower other saints by training

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them to function as the Royal Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek. In some parts of the world, Bible Schools have requested and received the curriculum which they use for training. A great company of saints have been trained and ordained through the process worldwide and serve as mentors to saints participating in the Master Class

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Strategic Kingdom Leadership
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All that Yeshua Jesus Said and Did
Kingdom Oriented Church Growth
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Personal
SPIRITUAL GROWTH
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If you need just 1 book to challenge you to grow in the Lord and become stable, secure and ready for His soon return, *Personal Spiritual Growth and Maturity* is it! This slim volume of just 12 chapters takes you through a piercing work of the Holy Scriptures as Sword of the Spirit, Mirror of Life, Spiritual Hammer which breaks rocky hearts, Fire which burns off chaff and Lamp which illuminates darkness.

In a way no other book does, the case for all believers to stop drinking milk of 'promises' and rather start eating meat of the Word which ensures growth beyond babyhood is made. The need to be whole and pure in spirit, soul and body is established through the distinction between righteousness as an unearned gift and holiness as an intentional, willful response of the saints to withhold their vessels from Satan and all evil while consecrating same to Elohim God for His sole use.

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