

Living The Life

By Faith and Family

AUTUMN: A Photographic Special

Before there is a
photograph, there is a
moment when you decide
to stop

Homemade Marshmallows

Soft, simple, and made for
a cup of warm hot
chocolate

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Not Every Silence Needs To Be Filled.

Authors Note:



I am thrilled to announce a new magazine! (Even though I've only done two.) I'll never forget the day YeHoVaH spoke through my Daddy, telling me to do a magazine. I praise YeHoVaH each day for giving me new ideas, fresh thoughts, and a family who loves me. Writing is a gift and something I cherish with my whole heart. I wish you the very best this Autumn,

F.C.

"Taste and see that YeHoVaH is good!" — Psalm 34:8

Connect with Faith C.

Website: faithcumbee.com

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Our Contributor

Hollie Gragg — The Craftitory*

Hollie Gragg is a wife, mother, creator, and part of the family behind *Celebrating The Bible*, a ministry devoted to making the Bible a meaningful part of everyday family life. Through creative projects, biblical resources, and hands-on ideas, Hollie and her family encourage others to learn, celebrate, and live out Scripture together.



A special thank you to Hollie for sharing her creativity with *Living the Life by Faith & Family*. Her contribution to *The Craftitory* brings something uniquely hands-on to these pages, and we are grateful to have her as part of this issue.

Connect with Celebrating The Bible

Website: celebratingthebible.com

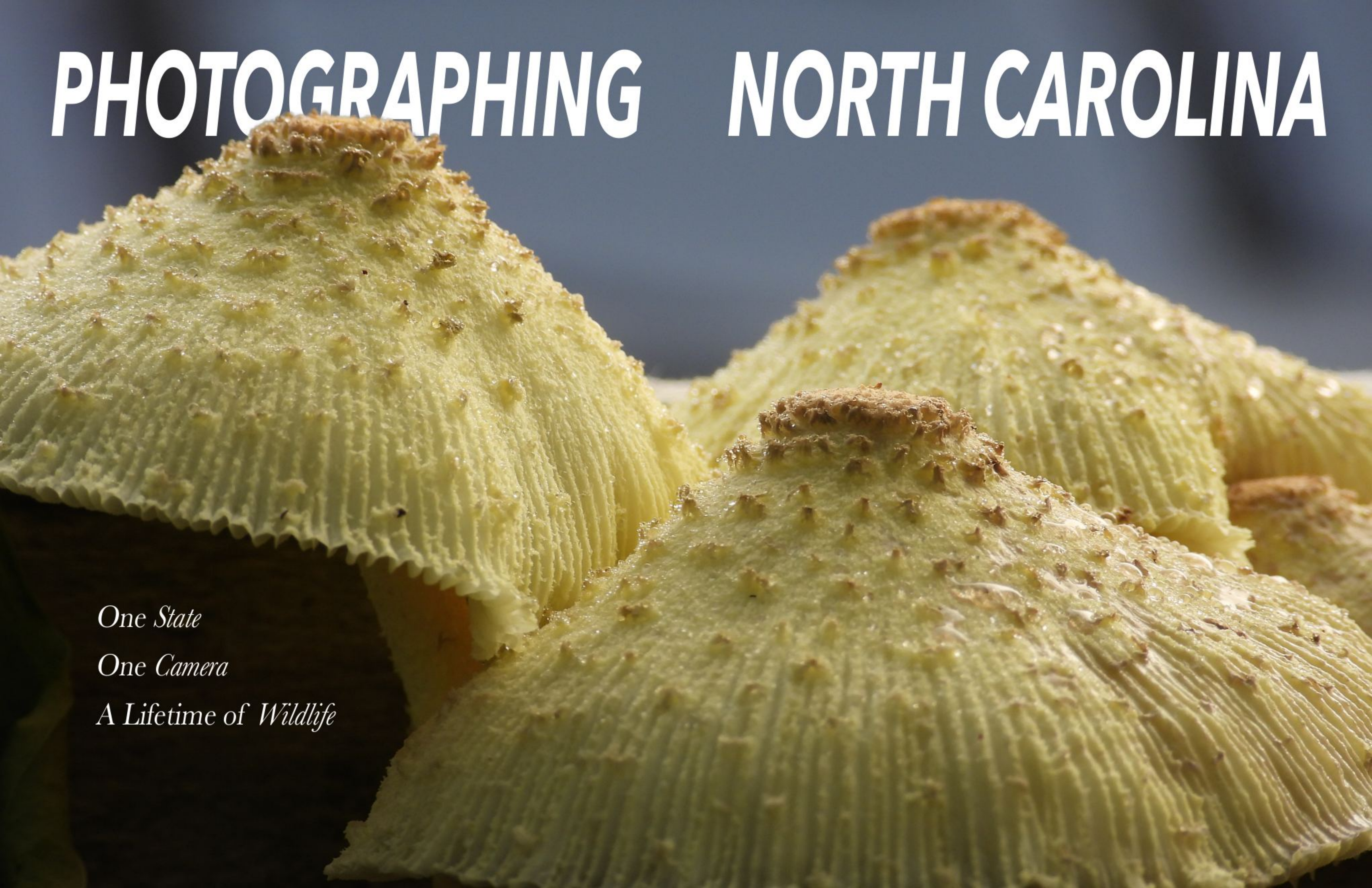
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PHOTOGRAPHING NORTH CAROLINA

A close-up photograph of three fried green tomatoes. The tomatoes are arranged in a cluster, with one in the foreground and two slightly behind it. They have a thick, golden-brown, slightly textured crust on the outside and a bright green, ribbed interior. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue-grey.

One State

One Camera

A Lifetime of Wildlife

It Starts With Looking

Before there is a photograph, there is a moment when you decide to stop. Maybe it's a dragonfly resting long enough for you to see the detail in its eyes. Maybe it's something moving through a muddy puddle that turns out to be dozens of tiny minnows. Maybe it's a mushroom, a bird, an insect, or something you've walked past a hundred times before. That's where this journey begins—not with the camera, but with looking.



Behind the Lens

Okay, imagine this. It just finished raining outside. The forest floor is muddy and gunky, and definitely not pleasant for open-toed shoes. But the rain washed the trees, grass, and everything, making it look brand new. A young boy had his camera sitting near the door on a shelf. He stared at it for a long period of time. Then... "It's too muddy!" he exclaimed. "I'd never make it far, especially without getting mud in my shoes!" He turned his head in the blink of an eye. He decided he wasn't going outside. But a few blocks down, nearly a mile away, there lived another person staring out her window, wondering about her day. She was squirming so much until her mother asked, straight-faced, "Dear goodness, you won't even sit still for a second! What's on your mind today?" The young lady turned around and looked her mother in the eyes. "Oh, I just can't take it any longer! I must go outside." Her mother tilted her head in confusion. "Why?" "Oh Mama, can't you see? The earth's been

washed brand new. Yah made the rain to water and cleanse. Now, I must photograph it too!" The young lady popped off the couch, grabbed her camera, slid her boots on, and zipped her jacket tight. Her mother opened the back door. "Be careful, dear." The young lady glanced backward. "I will." She stepped off the back porch, took a deep breath, and made her way... on an adventure to be told.

Now, if we take a chance to look at these two characters and the choices they made, which do you think was wiser? There isn't a correct answer, but your opinion matters. Who would you be like? What choice would you make?

Because that matters for what comes...
next.



The Adventure

As the young lady walked, she noticed many things, but nothing that seemed of any value. She saw a branch that broke underneath her footsteps. She noticed a limb with a drop of water that was getting



ready to splash onto her camera. She gently covered her camera under her jacket as she walked beneath it. But in those quiet moments, she slowly began to ponder... *Was this really worth it? Did I make a good decision? Yah, am I even going to find...* In the middle of her thought, a branch swayed vigorously ahead. She stopped. Another sound came from the canopy above. It was a... she couldn't quite make it out.

"I must get closer," she whispered to herself. She stepped over a puddle and slid beneath a branch. The moment her eyes lifted, she saw... a majestic creature. She gasped. "That's... That's... That's a bald eagle." Bright and glorious it was, soaring overhead. She nearly forgot to photograph him. "Oh, I... I need to find stability." She sat in the mud and rested her camera on her knees. As she took many pictures, she knew she had made a good decision. "Thank you, YeHoVaH, for this bald eagle," she spoke aloud. "Thank you for helping me make the right decision."

Now, who made a good decision? The young boy could have photographed something just as spectacular. However, simply because the young lady decided to take the time to notice, that moment became an extraordinary memory—caught on camera, might I add. So, do you think she made a good choice, even though she had to sit in mud to get it? Would you do it? This lesson applies beautifully to daily life, especially in photography. The young lady decided to do something great and her mother also has something to say regarding her daughter's **muddy clothes...**

The After-Choice

Minutes passed, hours possibly! But the young lady found more and more extraordinarily ordinary things. She saw a frog jumping from a leaf! Then she saw a grasshopper nibbling on grass. She photographed a mother bird and her chicks. She even noticed an abandoned wolf's den. By the time she finished, she was pumped with joy! More gratitude kept flowing as she found more things to photograph. But once she came home and stepped onto the porch with her muddy shoes, she knew within herself that her mother wasn't going to be pleased. She knocked twice, then once more softly. "Mama, I'm home!" she called from outside the door. "Coming, dear." The young lady heard her mother unlock the door from inside. As her mother opened it, she nearly stopped. "What on earth happened to you?" she spoke, wide-eyed. "You brought nearly half the forest with you." The young lady looked at her clothes. "I..." The young lady looked down quickly. "Got some great pictures!" Her mother gave her a look. "That wasn't my question." The young lady bit her lip. "I had to nearly get in the mud

for all my pictures.” Her mother's face dropped. “Oh, Mama, please don't be mad.” The young lady slid her camera out of her bag. “I kept my camera clean.” Her mother sighed. “Alright, just please remove the boots!” Her mother pointed. “And straight to the mudroom.” The young lady bent to remove her boots, then stopped. “Would you set my camera inside, please?” Her mother paused, then broke a smile and rolled her eyes. “Yes, come on. It's getting cold out.”

So, do you think the mother handled it well? I think she did, especially if her daughter brought half the forest with her! Yep, definitely handled well. So, from the whole story, who do you think made a good decision? The young lady or the young boy? Because both matter, but each has a different outcome. Have you ever brought back half the forest with you? I know I have and I know I probably will. But now comes the part where **you can join...**

A Wildlife List

North Carolina is full of wildlife. Some of it is easy to notice—a deer crossing a field, a hawk circling overhead, or a butterfly landing on a flower. But some of it takes a little more looking. It might be a tiny insect beneath a leaf, a frog hidden beside a creek, or a bird you've heard a hundred



times but never stopped long enough to find.

So, I decided to make a list. Not a list of photographs I have to take, but a list of wildlife to look for. As I photograph each species, I can mark it down. If I photograph it again someday and get an even better picture... I can replace the old one. There really isn't a finish line. That's what makes this interesting.

Photographing North Carolina isn't about racing through a checklist just so I can say I've photographed everything. It's about learning what lives here, where to find it, how it behaves, and—most importantly—learning to notice it.



And I don't want this journey to belong only to me. Maybe you've photographed a bird outside your kitchen window. Maybe you found a salamander beneath an old log. Maybe you waited forever for a deer to lift its head or discovered an insect you'd never seen before.

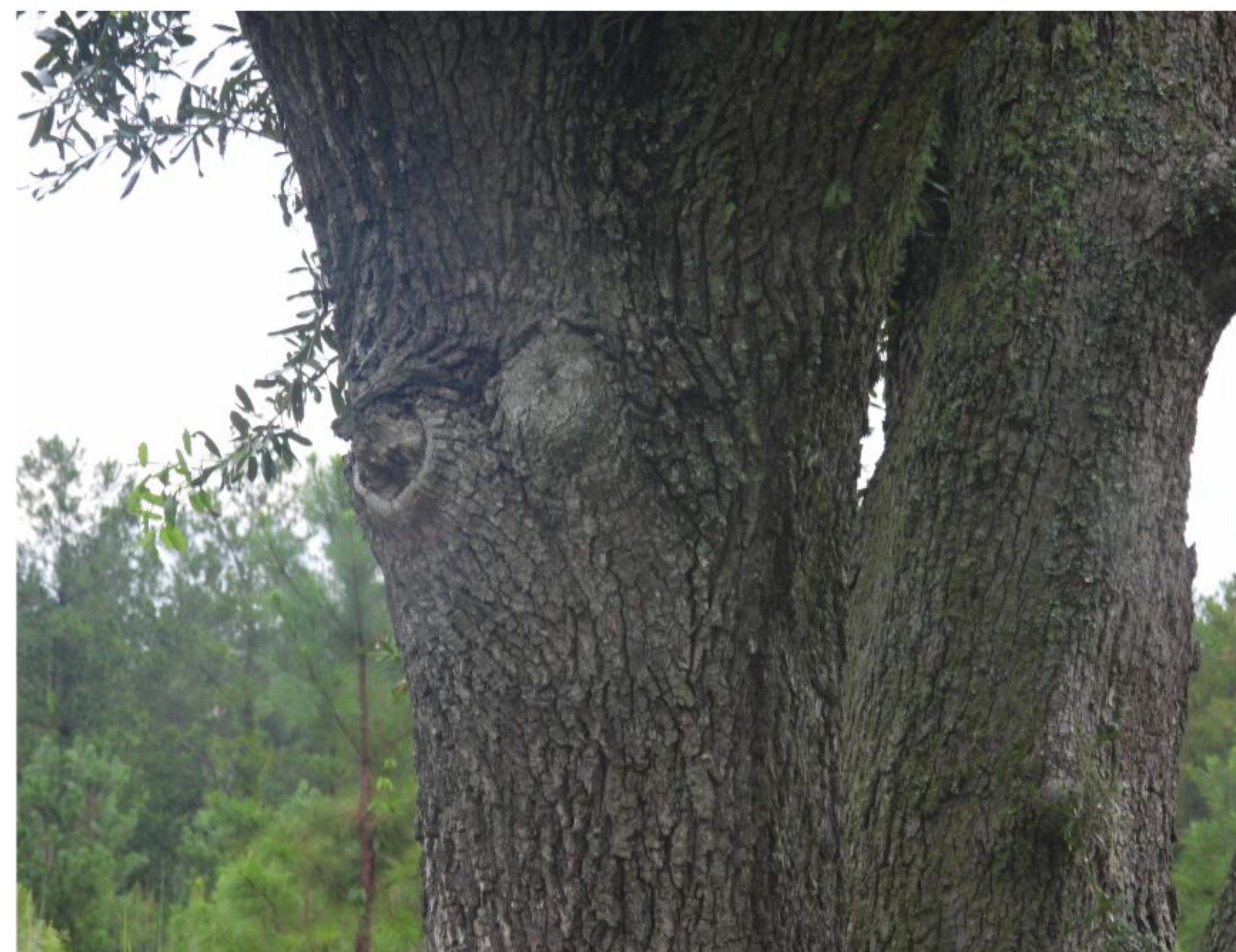
If so, **you've already started.** Grab a camera. Grab a phone. Step outside. You never know what might be waiting outside the door.

Share Your Wildlife Story

And if you want your photograph to have a chance to be featured in the next issue of *Living the Life by Faith & Family*, send it to **faith@cumbees.com** along with the story behind the photograph.

It doesn't have to be the most perfect photograph. I want to know what happened **behind the lens**. What did you notice? What made you stop? Did you wait for the moment, stumble across it unexpectedly, or come home with half the forest on your clothes?

I'll review the submissions and select photographs primarily by the **story and moment behind them**, with the photograph itself considered too. Because sometimes the best part of a photograph... is everything that happened before the shutter clicked.

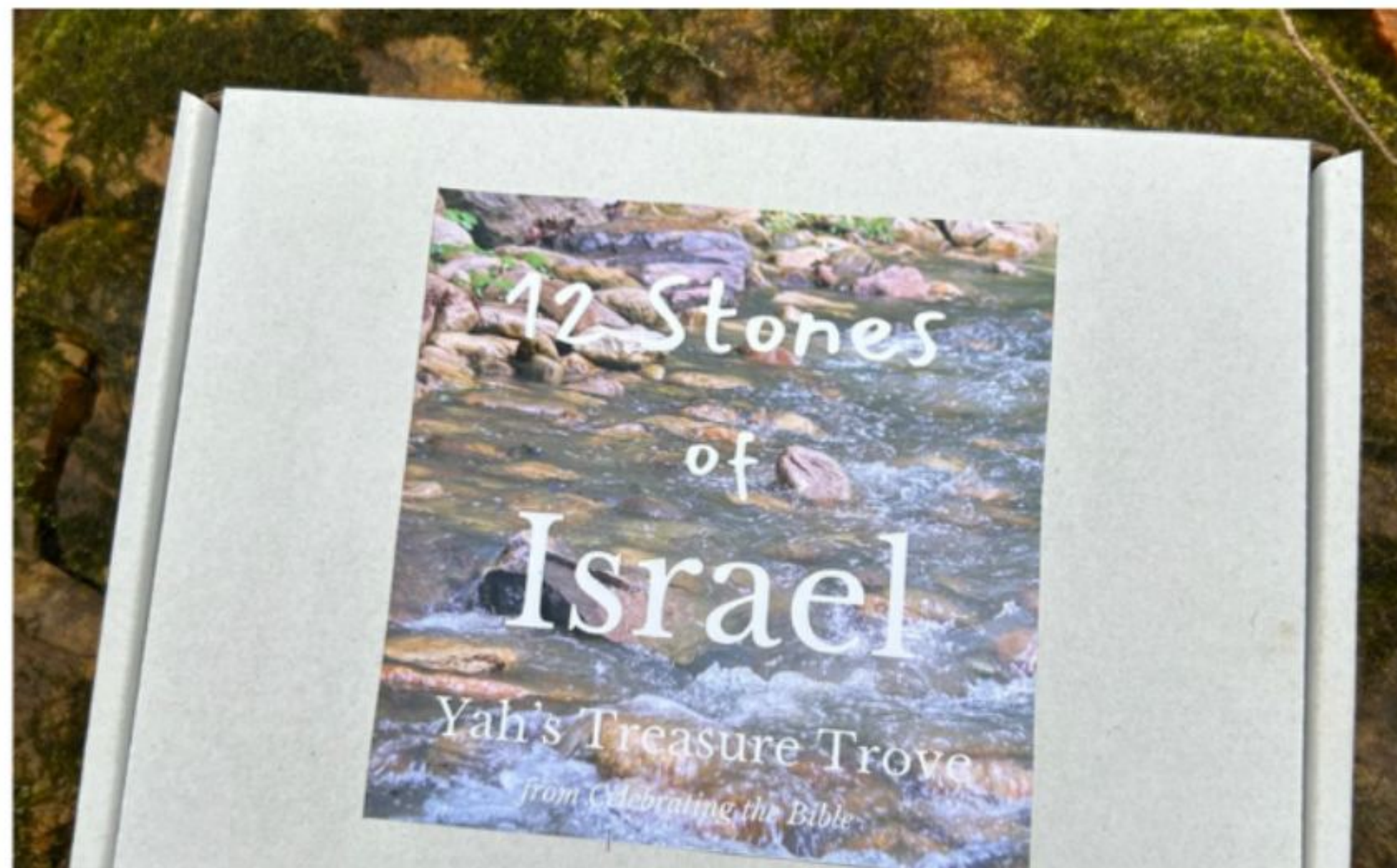




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The Seed and The Sower

By: Scott Cumbee

In the peaceful community of Riverview, after the lesson with the salt and the horses Nathaniel found himself

thinking deeply about something Grandpa Jack had said, “Our job is to lead, not to force. Just like salt makes them thirsty, seeds are planted with care.”

Now, Nathaniel held a small pouch filled with tiny seeds. Grandpa had handed it to him with a smile.

“These are for planting,” Grandpa said, “not just in the ground but in people’s hearts. Every kind word and every truth about Yeshua is a seed. Every person you meet has soil inside their heart.”

Nathaniel was excited. He walked through



the community just like before only this time he wasn’t carrying salt; now he was carrying seeds.

The first person he met was old Mr. Grumpy who sat on the porch every day complaining about the weather. Nathaniel offered a smile and said, “Yeshua loves you and He hasn’t forgotten you.” Mr. Grumpy scoffed and waved him away.

“That seed,” Nathaniel whispered to himself, “fell

on the path. The birds might snatch it up.”

Next, he saw a boy about his age named Caleb. Nathaniel shared with him the story of the horses and how salt made them thirsty for water just like his heart thirsts for his Heavenly Father.

Caleb’s eyes lit up. “That’s cool! I like that.”

However, the next day at the river bank some boys made fun of Caleb for listening, so he pretended not to care. “Just a story,” Caleb shrugged.

Nathaniel thought to himself: that seed fell on





rocky ground. It grew fast, but it didn't have roots. Then he saw Ruthie, a teenage girl who always seemed so busy. She was carrying baskets, helping her family, and always worried about something. Nathaniel offered to help her and told her, "Even when life is so busy, Yeshua gives peace."

She smiled for a moment, but the moment passed quickly as her mind turned to her chores.

That seed fell among thorns, Nathaniel realized. It began

to grow, but worries choked it out. Finally, Nathaniel stopped by the house of Ms. Grace, a gentle woman known for her kindness. He told her what Grandpa had said about seeds and soil.

She listened quietly and then said, "That's true, Nathaniel. We need more sowers in this community. Thank you for planting something good in my heart."

Days passed, then weeks went by. Nathaniel watched



as Ms. Grace began inviting children over for stories, helping the poor, and speaking hope to the hopeless.

"That," Nathaniel exclaimed, "was good soil. The seed is growing!"

As the sun set once more over Riverview, Nathaniel sat beside Grandpa Jack.

"Some seeds didn't grow," Nathaniel admitted, "but some did."

Grandpa smiled. "That's why we keep sowing. One good harvest can feed a

hundred hearts just like the sower in Yeshua's story, so don't give up. You plant in love and leave the rest to our Heavenly Father."

Nathaniel looked at the remaining seeds in his pouch. He said, "I still have more to share."

Grandpa patted his shoulder and whispered, "Then keep walking, little sower. There's still good soil out there."

Coming next: Nathaniel meets a stranger by the road—wounded, forgotten, and afraid. Will the boy who learned to be salt and a sower now learn what it means to *serve*?
Don't miss the next story: The Good Neighbor.





An Autumn Poem

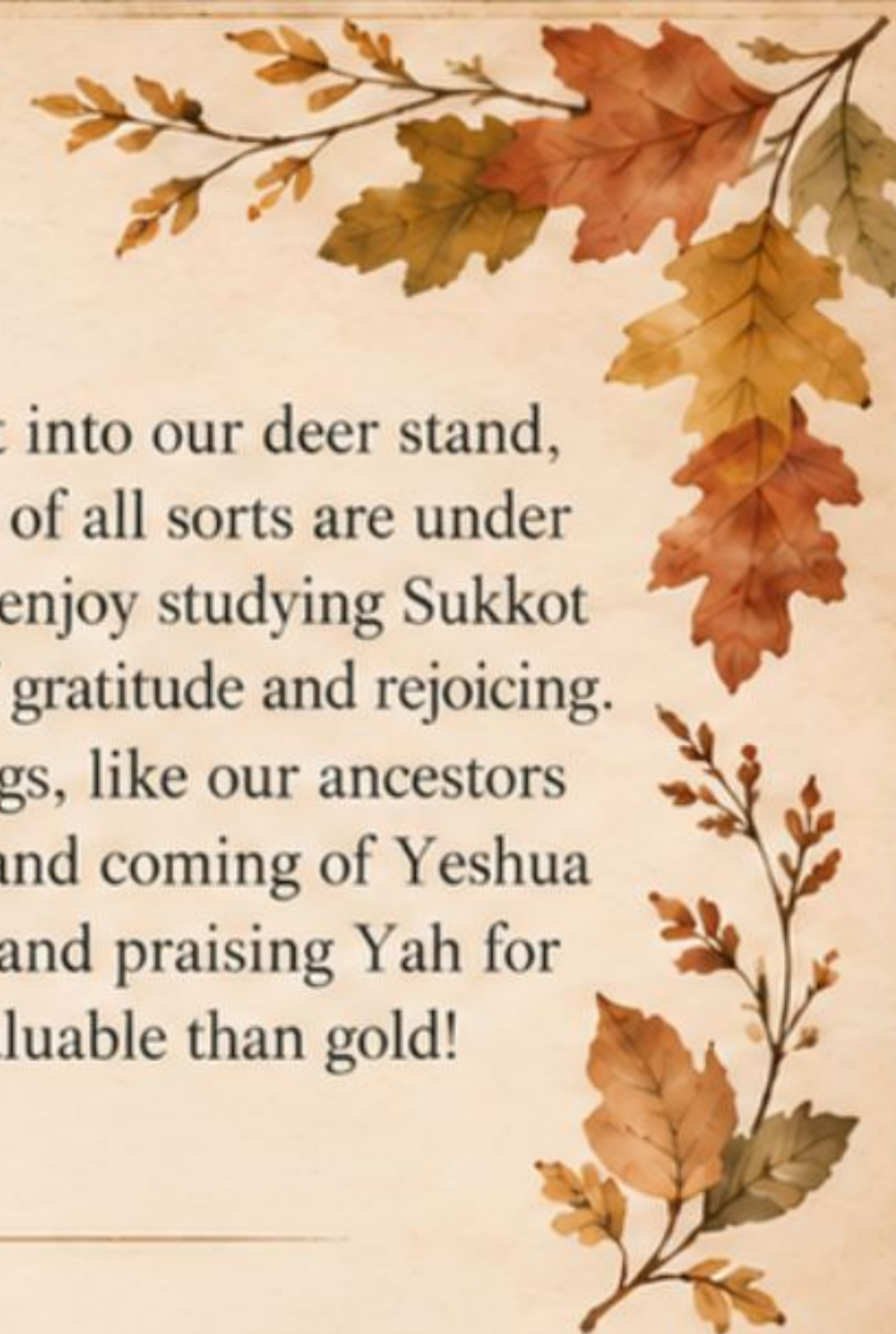
Autumn Hopes Up
(2026/7/9)

Honestly, I am getting so excited for autumn. I try not to think about it and stay focused on each day, but it just won't leave my mind! People may think that it's because of my birthday, but that's not really the full truth. I love autumn because, well, I don't know how to put it into words, but I know what it feels like.



Every morning is crisp like an apple, every evening like a sip of tea. Day by day, it gets even better, from watching the golden hours of noon to the life of trees growing dormant. There's beauty all around. The leaves crunch under my boots as I walk step by step.

Branches break, and deer rise to their feet at the sound.



From personal experience trying to get into our deer stand, such a thing as "be quiet," when leaves of all sorts are under your feet, doesn't really exist. I tend to enjoy studying Sukkot and Thanksgiving too, mainly because of gratitude and rejoicing. Those days remind me of so many things, like our ancestors who ventured to this land, the history and coming of Yeshua the Messiah, our King. Giving thanks and praising Yah for everything He has given me is more valuable than gold!



I truly enjoy this autumn season. I could go on even more. You'd just be sitting here for another hour or two listening to my view (even though that is fun). Like autumn leaves fade away, so does a good story come to an end.



"Taste and see that YeHoVaH is good..."
— Psalm 34:8



Autumn Leaf Garland

By Hollie Gragg

The coolness of Autumn beckons you outside and you find yourself collecting leaves. As you examine each leaf, you notice intricate details such as serrated or smooth edges, beautiful veining patterns, tiny insect nibbles, and colors that effortlessly blend together. The colors in your hand are vibrant and you desire to preserve them! Remind yourself of the Creator and His majesty by gathering a few simple materials!

Materials:

- glycerin (sold online and at big box stores)
- warm water
- 2 baking pans
- Autumn leaves (without holes or curled, dry edges)

Pour 2 parts glycerin and 1 part warm water into a baking pan and gently stir. Soak your most favorite leaves in the mixture and place another baking pan on top to keep the leaves submerged. Allow the leaves to soak for 3-4 days before gently blotting them dry. Create an Autumn leaf garland using twine and your newly preserved leaves!

A Note from the Craftitry:

Leaves may darken over time, so look to use bright vibrant leaves for best results. Consider finding a stick covered in lichen and use it to create a mobile to hang from the ceiling by using twine to tie the leaves at various heights along the stick. Tie equal lengths of twine to either end of the stick, joining them together above the stick in the shape of a triangle. Hang the mobile from the ceiling by the knot at the top of the triangle and enjoy watching the leaves dance in your home! I like to spray small pinecones with a cinnamon essential oil and add them to the mobile along with the leaves! It brings so much joy to my home!





Homemade Marshmallows

Soft, simple, and made for a warm cup of hot chocolate or roasting on an open fire.

Ingredients

- 4½ tablespoons beef gelatin*
- ¾ cup filtered water*
- 1 cup raw honey*
- ¼ cup filtered water*
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract*
- Pinch of salt*

Directions

1. In a large glass mixing bowl, add the beef gelatin and ¾ cup water. Stir well, then set aside and allow the gelatin to bloom.
2. Prepare the honey mixture. While the gelatin is blooming, add ¼ cup water and 1 cup raw honey to a saucepan. Stir lightly. Place the saucepan over high heat and watch it closely—it should begin boiling within about 2–5 minutes.
3. Get everything ready. While the honey mixture heats, plug in your mixer and prepare a baking dish with a sheet of parchment paper. Have everything ready before the honey reaches a full boil.

4. Pour and whip immediately. Once the honey mixture reaches a raging boil and begins to foam, pour it into the bloomed gelatin and start the mixer immediately. Do not allow the hot mixture to sit with the gelatin. The quicker you begin whipping, the better the marshmallows turn out.

5. Whip until fluffy. Beat continuously at full speed to incorporate as much air as possible. Shortly after whipping begins, add the vanilla and a pinch of salt. Continue whipping without stopping until the mixture transforms into a creamy white

foam and begins forming firm peaks while still remaining spreadable. This usually takes around 16 minutes, although it may take anywhere from 10–20 minutes.

6. Spread quickly. As soon as the mixture reaches the proper consistency, turn off the mixer and immediately spread it into the prepared dish. Work quickly—the marshmallow mixture will begin setting.

7. Chill and cut. Place in the freezer for 90 minutes. Remove, flip onto a cutting board, and slice into your desired marshmallow size.

Enjoy!



Note: Store the marshmallows in an airtight container in the refrigerator to keep them from drying out or absorbing moisture. You can coat them with powdered sugar, but I personally don't—I've found that it can cause a puddle of syrup to form at the bottom of the container.

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CUMBEES FAMILY

Summer 2026 | ISSUE 1

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by Faith and Family

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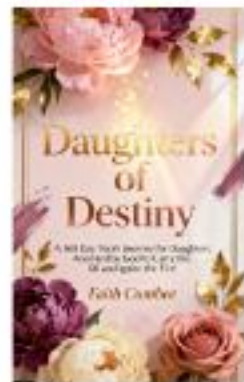
Faith Cumbee

The Sabbath Case

Put Tradition on Trial

Scott & Amanda Cumbee

ON THE SHELF NOW



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A still life photograph featuring two large, light-colored antlers resting on a colorful, patterned rug. The rug has a complex geometric design in shades of red, orange, green, and white. In the background, a red and white striped fabric is draped, and a small, white ceramic figurine of a ship with a red and white striped hull is visible. The overall composition is warm and autumnal.

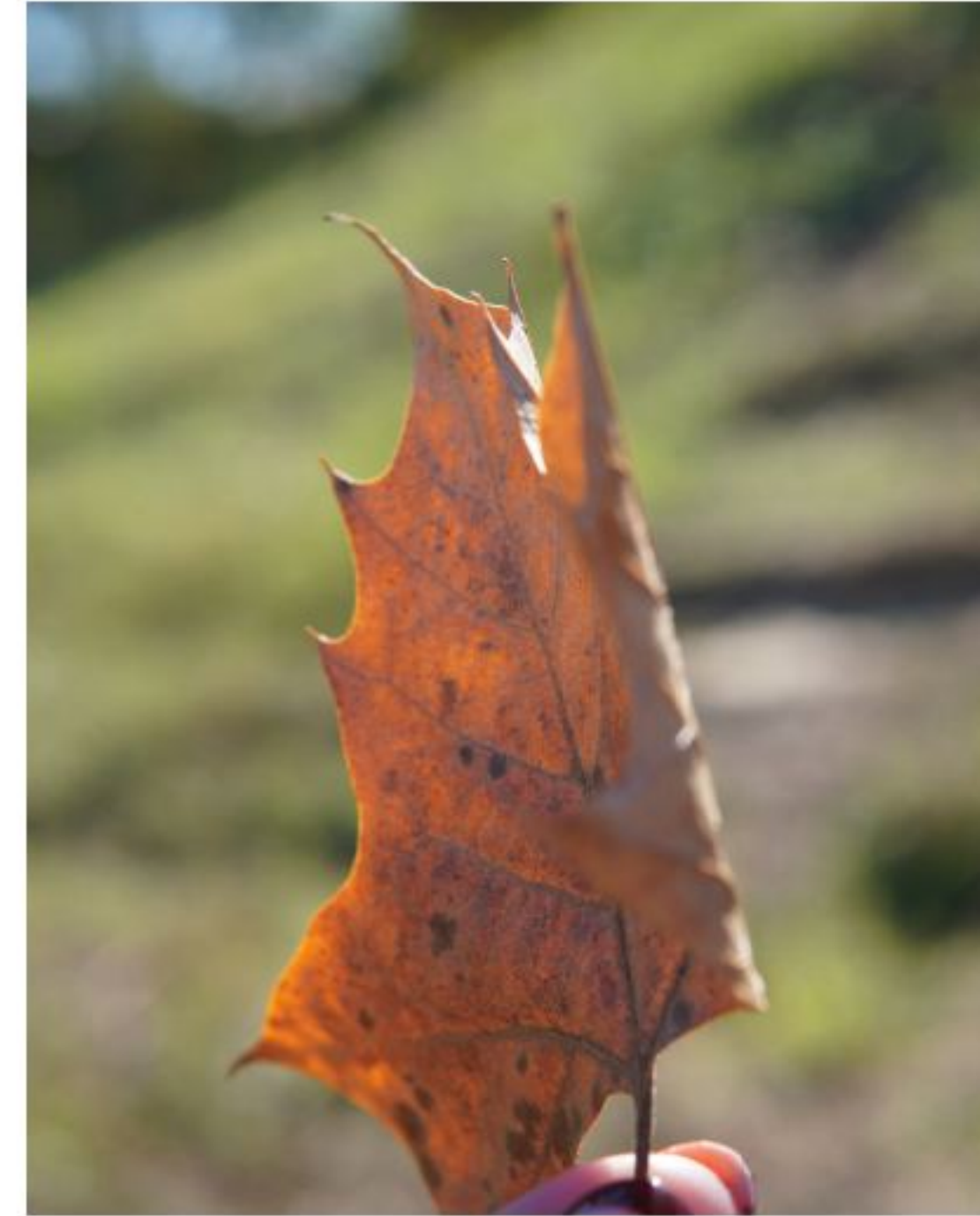
AUTUMN

A Photographic Special

Autumn is found in the little things—the changing leaves, cooler days, family gathered round, and ordinary moments that somehow look different this time of year. From praising Yah in the little things to giving thanks for each day, these photographs have accumulated into a small collection of those moments.

We present a photographic...

Autumn Special!







Until Winter...

Every season prepares the way for another.

Autumn leaves us with crisp mornings, evenings gathered together, changing woods, and reminders to give thanks for what YeHoVaH has provided.

Soon, the last leaf will fall.

The woods will open wide.

Frost will settle over the fields.

And another season will begin.

There are still stories to tell, moments to capture, and ordinary days worth remembering.

We'll see you there.

Winter 2027

