

TIKKUN AMERICA

restore

Issue 17 | Tevet | January 2023

EMPOWERED BY JOY

What's Filling Your Tank?

THE BEAUTIFUL FRUIT OF CLINGING TO HIM, PT.1

Intimacy with Our Heavenly Bridegroom

HOPELESSNESS AND THE FATHER WOUND

Lessons from the Mall

CULTIVATING HEALTHY DISCIPLESHIP

Interview with a Tikkun America Leader



CONTRIBUTORS

01



SARAH CLEARY

Sarah Cleary and her husband Rich have been married since 2004 and have three vibrant children. Together, they lead “Kingdom Living Messianic Congregation” in Kansas City, KS. Sarah’s heart is committed to knowing Yeshua and helping others know Him more. She enjoys communicating God’s Word to others and equipping the saints for the work of ministry. The Lion who lives inside her is not a tame Lion, but He is good.

MAGGIE KIMBALL

Maggie Kimball serves on the worship team at Shomair Yisrael in Knoxville, TN alongside her husband Doug who serves as one of their elders. They were married in 2020 and together they have four adult children and one grandchild. Maggie is Executive Director of Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center. Together, Maggie and Doug have a heart and passion for connecting the Messianic believers in America with Messianic community in Israel.



TODD WESTPHAL

Todd Westphal and his wife Deborah are the Senior Leaders at El Shaddai Congregation in Frederick, MD. Together, they were discipled by Asher Intrater and have served ministerially at El Shaddai in numerous roles for close 32 years. Todd is the Ro’eh (Shepherd/Pastor) at El Shaddai and also serves on the Tikkun international Board and the Tikkun America Apostolic Team. One of Todd’s greatest passions is in discipling others in Yeshua for the work of the Kingdom.

MARK RANTZ

Rabbi Mark has served in full-time Messianic Jewish ministry for since 2001. In early 2013, Rabbi Rantz joined Messianic Jewish Publishers and Resources (MJPR) and served as the Assistant Editor and lead contributor in the production of the Complete Jewish Study Bible. He and his wife Kat lead Congregation Beit Hallel in Ocala, FL.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Editor-in-Chief **Benjamin Juster**

Creative Director	Amy Strom
Senior Editor	Mark Rantz
Editor	Silvie Lundgren
Editor	Jasmine Jackson
Editor	Kathleen Rantz
Content Manager	Mark Rantz
Project Manager	Amy Strom
Advisor	Lorena Juster



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www.tikkunamerica.org

06 BE A PRISM

BENJAMIN JUSTER

11 BEING A PEOPLE EMPOWERED BY JOY

SARAH CLEARY

16 THE BEAUTIFUL FRUIT OF CLINGING TO HIM

MAGGIE KIMBALL



HELLO

ISSUE

17



**20 CULTIVATING HEALTHY
DISCIPLESHIP**

TODD WESTPHAL

21 KEEP THE FIRE BURNING

SILVIE LUNDGREN

**28 HOPELESSNESS AND THE FATHER
WOUND**

MARK RANTZ

EDITOR IN CHIEF

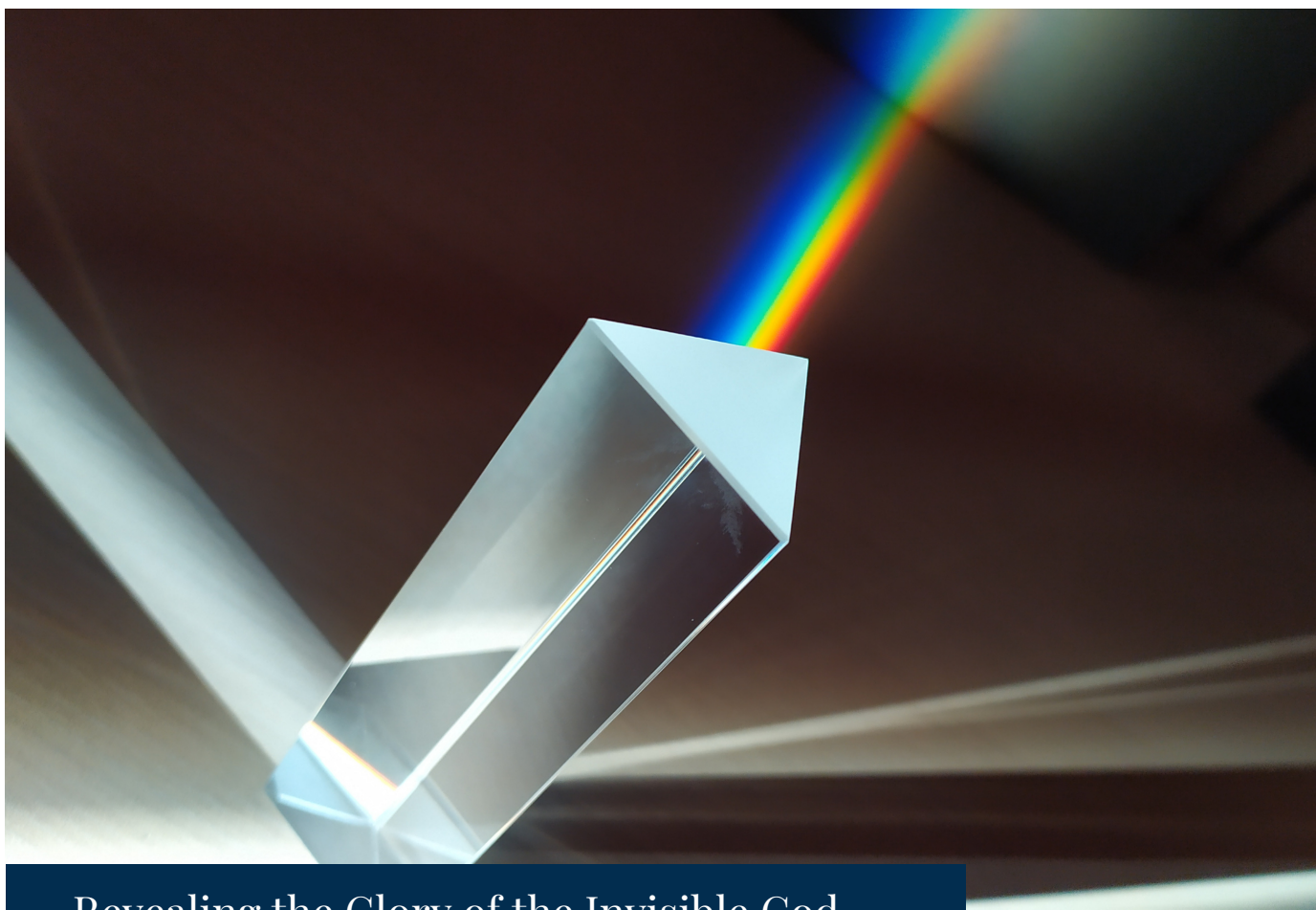
BENJAMIN JUSTER

Benjamin is the President of Tikkun America and one of the shaliach leaders on the Tikkun America Apostolic Team. Raised in the Messianic movement and a former Vice President of the UMJCY, Benjamin has a continuing passion for seeing people reach their potential in Yeshua. He holds a Masters degree in Messianic Jewish Studies from MJTI.



He served as the Executive Director of Tikkun International before being appointed the President of Tikkun America in January 2020. Benjamin's focus is on planting Messianic congregations, mentoring and releasing emerging leaders, and building unity among churches and ministries to stand with Israel today and in preparation for the end times. Benjamin and Lorena also help to lead the international teaching ministry Restoration From Zion, affiliated with Tikkun Global.

Benjamin, his wife Lorena, and three children live in Jacksonville, Florida.



Revealing the Glory of the Invisible God

Be A Prism

BENJAMIN JUSTER

As we conclude the season of light and clean up from all of the festive community celebrations, family gatherings, and joyful songs, I consider how important it is that we continue to evaluate our effectiveness of reflecting the light of God to the world.

Of course, Yeshua proclaimed, *"I am the light of the world. The one who follows Me will no longer walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*
John 8:12 TLV

And He also extends this to His followers, exhorting, *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on a lampstand so it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men so they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."*
Matthew 5:14-16 TLV

But let's go deeper. You have heard (and likely you have also repeated) Yeshua's exhortation for us to be a light. But what are some aspects of how we can effectively reflect the light of God's glory?

As an elementary student, I remember my fascination when my science teacher pulled out a small prism. He shined a powerful flashlight through it as it cast a vibrant rainbow of colors up on the wall. What a surprising mystery—even though the invisible light shone through this clear crystal, it burst out the other side into a diverse spectrum of color.

Prisms are three-dimensional objects that have triangular faces and are made from a transparent material such as plastic, glass or crystal. Because of the angle of the surfaces, they are able to refract, or bend, light in a specific way, often creating rainbows or to disperse light into its component colors.

In a metaphorical sense, prisms can symbolize the role of the believer in the world as ambassadors of the Kingdom that reveal and demonstrate Adonai's glory in the earth. We are agents of change and transformation. Just as prisms refract light, faithful disciples of Yeshua can be envisioned as refracting the light of God's love, grace and power to those around them. It is more than living as a beacon of hope and guidance to those in need—instead, we actually make visible the glory and character of the invisible God!



Be Shaped By God and His Word

A key property of a prism's ability to refract light is that it has a unique triangular shape. As disciples, we need to allow God to shape our character and personality. Before we can refract God's light outward, we need to bend and refract our thoughts and actions towards righteousness and God's will. This involves aligning one's thoughts, words, and actions with the teachings of Yeshua and in Scripture with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It requires a constant striving to be more like Yeshua and to resist the temptation to follow the ways of the world.



Live a Life of Purity

There are different materials that prisms are made of, such as plastic, glass, and crystal. The clarity and the brightness of the resulting colors is directly related to the purity of the material used. Likewise, when we pursue holiness and allow the Holy Spirit to make us pure vessels, God's light will shine more brightly through us. This is not a matter of measuring up to earn God's favor. Rather, it is an overall quality of life that is consistent with the Word of God and the integrity of values matching our behavior.

Position Yourself In God's Presence Continually

A prism that doesn't have a source of light is just a cold paperweight. In order to shine the light of Adonai's glory, you need to position yourself in His light. The moment we step out of His Presence, we cannot accurately display the components of His character. The "gospel" we promote becomes one of words rather than power. Our work of ambassadors starts in the Father's Presence and is maintained by abiding in Him throughout the day.

Disperse the Light

One way that true disciples substantiate their faith is to be a positive force in the world through acts of service and compassion. During the 2nd and 3rd centuries, a primary reason for the spread of the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire was the overall qualities of abundant love and self-sacrifice for others.

They were courageous as they cared for those affected by plagues and sickness. They gave abundantly to the poor. They were long-suffering toward those within the community.

Not only should we love our neighbors as ourselves and treat others with kindness and respect, but we should do the things that even our neighbors won't typically do. Reflecting God's glory in tangible ways testifies to His love and grace. This gives power to the message of Yeshua toward others while we invite them to experience the transformative power of the Kingdom. Overall, being a follower of Yeshua involves living a life that is passionate about revealing who God is to those around us. Just as a prism refracts light in a specific way, as believers we refract the light of God to those around them, bringing hope, guidance, and transformation to those in need.

Remember Where the Light Comes From

Finally, it is important to remember that your best efforts apart from God is only a counterfeit that will diminish or obscure His glory to others. A prism does not produce its own light. So we must maintain a humble mindset to rely on God. We do not take credit for the amazing fruit that will come when we have allowed ourselves to be shaped by Him, live a life of purity, and position ourselves in His presence. Our goal is to be obedient and available. Then the glory of the Father through us will increase all the more.



So, be like Yeshua. When He walked the earth, He made the Father visible to His disciples, to His people, and to the Nation. He modeled humble obedience, worked miracles of healing and deliverance, and perfectly demonstrated the qualities of the Father and His Heavenly Kingdom. He was like a purely refined prism that burst forth in all of the colors of the beauty of God. May you likewise be like a prism that is a conduit of God's Glory!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Benjamin Juster". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Benjamin Juster
Editor in Chief

— “ —

Yeshua was like a purely refined prism
that burst forth in all of the colors
of the beauty of God.

May you likewise be like a prism that
is a conduit of God's Glory!

— ” —



-BENJAMIN JUSTER

Being A People

Empowered By Joy

SARAH CLEARY



What are you empowered by? What's the fuel in your tank? I'd like to suggest that we are designed by the Lord to run on the powerful fuel of joy. Joy can mean a feeling of great pleasure, happiness, rejoicing, cheerfulness, or even calm delight. This is not the caricature of joy where one is always happy or never having a bad day, nor facing trials. That's a caricature of joy, not the real thing.

Real joy is relational. Joy happens when you walk into a room, and your friend's face lights up because they are glad to see you. Then your face lights up in response, and you both are glad to be together. That is Relational Joy. The deep sense of being glad to be together.

Abundant Joy and Calm Delight

Regarding joy, Psalm 16:11 reads, *"You reveal the path of life to me; in your presence is abundant joy; at your right hand are eternal pleasures."* (CSB)

In Hebrew the word for "presence" is the same word for "face." So another way to translate Psalm 16:11 is, "in your face is abundant joy".

No wonder Moses's face was radiant! If you're low on joy, you may need to slow down, and behold God's joyful face! He looks at you with a knowing, calm delight. When you turn your face towards God, His face lightens up. The Lord is glad to be with you and in turn, you're glad to be with Him. That type of joy-strength for us as believers in Yeshua is a powerful fuel.

Covered In Dirt

Joy can also be combined with other emotions. Once, when going through a trial I asked the Lord, where He was in all of it? In my imagination I could see Him, in the trenches with me, both of us covered in dirt.

He turned and looked at me, and gave me a big, bright smile. His smile was the only thing NOT covered in dirt! He was with me in the trenches of this trial, and because of that, I knew I was going to make it. The trial continued, but joy and strength renewed my heart - I wasn't alone in my trial.

Psalm 23:4 says, *"Even though I go through the darkest valley, I [will] fear no evil, for you are with me."*

We can go through anything — even extremely hard things — when we look at God's face and at one another's faces in the midst of the trial. We're glad we're doing this together. If you're in a trial, consider stopping and asking the Lord to show you where He is? Or, take a moment and notice which comrades are walking with you through this trial. Might they deserve a thank you? You're never alone. Just look harder.

Relational Joy vs. Toxic Fear

Relational joy is stronger than toxic fear. Sure, fear might fuel your tank until you get that project done, but it is not a healthy, sustainable fuel source for the long haul in our lives. Relational joy is a better fuel if you want to endure to the end. You need good friends and community. If you want good friends, you'll need to be a good friend. If you increase your relational joy, you'll increase your strength to endure hardship well. (Rare Leadership, by Marcus Warner & Jim Wilder)



When you stay connected to the Lord and others relationally while going through hardship, that relational joy will prevent the trial from becoming a trauma in your life. The trial will still be hard, but it won't be traumatic because you will know you're not walking through it alone. The Lord and trusted friends will help you process the trial. Your relational joy (being glad to be doing this together) will give you strength to endure the hardship well.

Joy As A Muscle

True joy is a muscle. And like all muscles, it actually has to be used to grow stronger. Gratitude is the daily workout to build your joy muscles. Increasing your gratitude, will increase your joy.



Find things, even little things, to daily thank God for. Find things, and even little things, to thank others for. Don't just think it, but actually say it! "Thanks" fills the tank! Stop waiting for the home run before you're grateful and celebrate that base hit! Celebrate the small victories! Cultivate and guard your face to face relationships with others. Cultivate and guard your face to face relationship with God. That relational time when you're alone with the Lord, in His Word, listening to His voice, that time is a necessity, not a luxury. You will not have enough joy-strength to endure to the end, if you don't have this regular time with the Lord. You need FaceTime with God. Write it down as an important meeting on your calendar and don't miss it. Lift those weights of gratitude and your joy muscles will tone-up nicely.



Cultivating Maturity

Cultivating a healthy and joyful soul will take time. Maturity can not be imparted. No one can lay hands on you and impart maturity. Other things can be imparted, but maturity cannot. Maturity is slowly grown, little by little, in the main and plain of life, over a long period of time.

Maturity cannot be downloaded or installed. Likewise a mature, joyful community is slowly grown within us. We must cultivate and guard a culture of honor and gratefulness towards one another in our communities and the joy-strength levels in our communities will rise. Sure it will take work, but it's worth it. It's worth putting in the extra effort to have deep, healthy, joyful relationships because Yeshua's worth it. Individually and collectively, we want to reflect Yeshua to this lost world. We shine bright and our communities shine bright, so the world will see Yeshua's face! He's so beautiful!

Let's be the kind of people that when we walk into the room, the joy levels, the strength levels, and the "we're gonna make it" levels rise swiftly in the room. That's who we are. We are people empowered by joy. 





REMINDER

We are people empowered by joy!

—SARAH CLEARY

AGREE



THE BEAUTIFUL FRUIT OF CLINGING TO HIM

MAGGIE KIMBALL

Pt. 1

I am writing this on my 50th birthday. There was a time when I was only half that old. I invite you to think back with me as I reflect ... I am 24 years old and my not-so-well-thought-out decisions have put me in a desperate situation. I'm a new single parent, but also a newly converted follower of Yeshua. Yes, I was saved into Messianic Judaism. Even so, I'm desperate: I'm desperate for healing and spiritual intimacy. I want to be fully known, accepted and loved.

You see, up until this point in my young life, I have independently and often rebelliously made every decision by myself and for myself.

It's my junior year of college, at the 4th university I had attended. I am absolutely burned out on really bad relationship choices. And on top of trying to finish school this time, I am now trying to navigate what it means to be a single parent. All of my decisions up until this point have brought me to this place of desperation — I don't like where I am or who I have become. I had relied on myself and I thought that being independent was a good thing? Until my eyes were opened.

What is the fruit of all of those poor decisions?



It is broken heartedness, bitterness, jealousy, and feelings of abandonment, rejection and utter loneliness. This is a pretty pathetic list and I was sad and miserable. Yet in the end, the sad reality was that through all of these events, I was desperately seeking love and could not see the One who was pursuing me.

Then my eyes were opened and I met Yeshua. When I first became pregnant, I was connected with someone who I was assured would give me a job, and I took the chance on their offer. Looking back, I see that this was how the Lord would begin to reveal Himself to me. I did get the job and so much more. In my new workplace I was surrounded with Bible verses on every wall. My new boss (she's now one of my best friends) carried her Bible with her everywhere, and she was reading and praying every chance she could get. She was filled with the Holy Spirit. I had never met anyone quite like her. And she started praying for me and had everyone in her church praying for me as well. One day, I was driving toward work and the Holy Spirit just fell on me. I was overwhelmed. He began speaking and I felt peace and joy like never before.

I had always believed in God, but I had never understood what salvation meant. I never understood what it meant to surrender my will and choose His, to fully repent of all of those decisions that left me feeling so terrible anyway. That day, by myself in my car, I let it all go. I came to fall in love with Him.

And He brought deep healing to my soul. Through His power and by His Spirit, I was changed in an instant. Out of my desperation, I learned to rely wholeheartedly on Him. He became my Husband and my Provider in a very dry and lonely season. But it was the desert season that would produce a gift of faith and intimacy that I still cherish today, and so much had to die along the way.



In God's great mercy, He was teaching me to surrender. Every situation — whether it was financial need, help in parenting, or encouragement — was an opportunity where He wanted me to learn to step back and allow His Glory to be revealed in His time and in His way. I learned to call out to Him for everything and remind Him of His promises: Lord, you are My Husband. Lord, you are the Father to the Fatherless. I need your help.

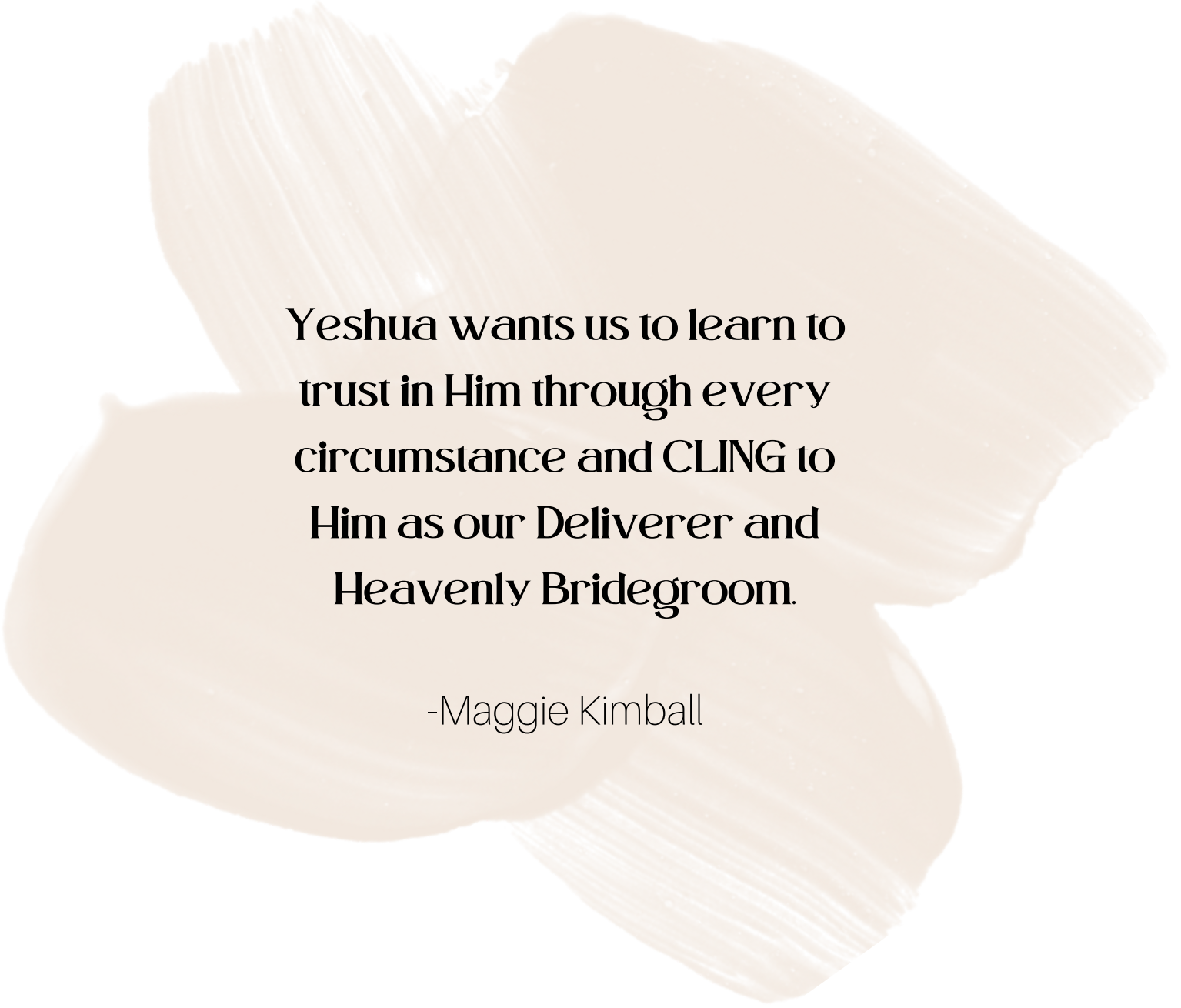
This changed everything. When I got off my throne and kept my focus on Him, I began to taste the sweet, eternal fruit which comes only from the Tree of Life, Yeshua! At one point during this season (which was 20 years long), I was laid off from my job while still a single parent. I was working on a federal grant teaching abstinence in middle and high schools (another powerful way that the Lord was leading me to trust Him). That grant was defunded on the last day of the fiscal year. I went to work the next day and found out that our funding had been cut.

The Lord supernaturally provided for me and my daughter over the next several months while I sought what step to take next and searched for an open door. That was not the most amazing part — I was planning to go to Israel in the next 6 weeks. He provided every dollar needed for the trip. Even while at the airport, people were handing us money and calling to ask if it was too late to give. I'm in tears now as I recall His goodness in that season. 

I couldn't just stop there. With my heart fully set on greater intimacy with my Bridegroom, He was inviting me, teaching me to CLING to Him. I clung to Him to be my Husband, I clung to Him to be my daughter's Father. I clung to Him for provision when I was laid off from work. I clung to Him when I was anxious, lonely and weary. During this time, He began to birth the most amazingly beautiful fruit in me. That fruit was greater faith, perseverance, greater intimacy with Him, and a fully surrendered heart that reflected more of His glory in my life. It was like the precious, pure oil that flowed from Aaron's beard. It was Him., it was all Him! That fruit, the precious oil, was more of Him. Those were some of the most difficult years of my life, but some of the best, where I felt His presence so tangibly.

Yeshua wants us to learn to trust in Him through every circumstance and CLING to Him as our Deliverer and Heavenly Bridegroom.





**Yeshua wants us to learn to
trust in Him through every
circumstance and CLING to
Him as our Deliverer and
Heavenly Bridegroom.**

-Maggie Kimball



Keep the Fire Burning

SILVIE LUNDGREN

This copper and brass heart was made by Silvie Lundgren at Adat Chaim Messianic Synagogue for the 2015 congregation's annual Chanukah Art Show. Silvie explains, "The Hebrew on it reads Nes Gadol Hayah Poh 'a great miracle happened here'. Similarly, the letters on a dreidel in the diaspora read —Nun, Gimmel, Hey, Shin meaning Nes Gadol Hayah Sham or 'A great miracle happened there'." This inscription refers to the sanctification of the Temple after the victory of the Maccabees, and according to tradition is a reminder that one day's supply of oil lasted eight days

and nights to keep the Temple Menorah lit. This heart is an acknowledgement of God's miraculous work in our own hearts. He has removed our old hearts of stone and given us hearts that are alive and warm. God has brought us out of the darkness and made us children of light, filling our hearts with marvelous light and sanctifying the temples that we are. (Ezek. 36:26; 1 Pet. 2:9) As Chanukah, also known as the Feast of Dedication or Festival of Light draws to an end, remember this, and keep the fire burning in your temple (Lev. 6:23, 1 Cor. 6:19).



Cultivating Healthy Discipleship

INTERVIEW WITH TIKKUN
AMERICA LEADER
TODD WESTPHAL

BEN: Todd, you have been a long time friend and a transformational leader within our Tikkun America family of congregations. It is so good to have you with us share about how you mentor and develop people into a vibrant walk with Messiah Yeshua and how you have raised so many up to become leaders themselves. First, tell me a little about yourself.

TODD: Thank you Ben. I've been in the Frederick, MD area for over 30 years and serve as the Roeh (Hebrew for Shepherd/Pastor) for El Shaddai Congregation, founded by Asher Intrater in 1987. My dear wife Deborah and I have served this community in various roles going on 32 years. I also serve on the Tikkun International Board and the Tikkun America Apostolic Team.

BEN: How did you come to faith?

TODD: I came to faith when I was 12 years old, and grew up in a small town in Minnesota with only 750 people. Out of high school, I went into the Navy and rededicated my life at 18. And from that moment until now, I have been walking with the Lord and I'm still serving Him, even now at 58 years old.

BEN: How did you get connected to the Messianic movement?

TODD: I was in the Navy, based down in Virginia Beach. I married my wife Deborah while there. Her brother was an elder at El Shaddai Congregation in Maryland. When we would go up to visit, we would hear Asher (Keith at that time), and we would get his messages and monthly letters. Our hearts continued to be drawn to him. In 1990, we moved up to Frederick, Maryland to be part of the community. My first role was working with children and the youth.

BEN: Such a vibrant time to join this stream! So many congregations were being planted around the United States, and we were seeing so many Jewish people coming to faith in Yeshua. So, to shift gears a bit, I wanted to specifically help our audience understand more about how you mentor and disciple individuals so that they have a grounded and fruitful walk with the Lord. First, why do you feel one-on-one discipleship is so important?



TODD: The Lord in His Word gives us instructions and patterns for discipleship. In Matthew 28, Yeshua commands his disciples, the talmidim, to go out and make disciples of all peoples. The early believers had corporate gatherings in worship, small groups, community Bible studies—all of these are discipleship opportunities that we have today and that connect us to the five-fold according to Ephesians chapter 4.

Really, Ephesians 4:11-32 is a breakdown of the importance of discipleship and of how the Lord has chosen to disperse gifts to different people and to equip the body for the work of ministry—both in character development (including who they are in relationship to the Messiah), being grounded in the Word of God, and walking in the authority and power of the Holy Spirit, so we can receive impartations and times of teaching in these bigger settings. It is very important to do so.

But there is something special that happens when you sit down and you minister one-on-one to share the truth and work purposefully on growth. The discipler will get into the weeds to address specific character challenges and help them to grow into the likeness of Yeshua. I try to help them to cultivate and walk out a knowledge of their gifts as well as the character of holiness and power. I exhort them to emulate Yeshua and to run the race to attain the prize of the high calling in Him.

This takes more time and it takes more one-on-one intentionality within an environment of grace and love. Throughout my years of engagement in this process I have found that the amazing byproduct is that both the discipler and the disciple are changed and grow along the way. The one leading and the one receiving are transformed together through the process.

BEN: What are the elements that you see as most important toward creating a healthy discipleship environment, and how do you go about doing that?

TODD: There are several things that go into creating a culture individually for discipleship, especially within the context of the community. Even within the community itself there is a shared sense of the importance of discipleship. Everyone wants to see each other grow in the character and knowledge of the Lord and in the development and expression of their gifts.



When I meet individually with a disciple, I try to create an environment for an authentic relationship to grow. They know that my desire is for their best, which equates to who God has made them to be as His creation and how God has gifted them. We explore how God is leading them to use their gifts in expressing the Gospel of the Kingdom and making disciples in the context of community life, missions, etc. I seek to cultivate and support their fullness and fruitfulness and to facilitate a place for them to express that.

BEN: How do you approach the situations when the disciple is not growing or there is a breakdown of trust or a reluctance to work on the issues identified? How do you back away or release the person from the discipleship relationship?

TODD: It is difficult to give a boilerplate answer to that because every person is unique and the discipleship relationship reflects that. When I begin the discipleship relationship with someone, I establish a sense of direction that comes from them. It doesn't come from me per se, but it comes from the Lord through them. The focus of our time is in large part established by what the Holy Spirit reveals to their heart. Then, we write down what their sense is for what God wants them to work on.

When one of these standards or goals isn't being met or kept up with, I meet with them and remind them of their own desire in the Lord—it is not my desire for them as the one discipling them. This seems to help put the responsibility for growth on the disciple and his or her relationship with the Lord. They need to commit themselves to what they want to accomplish in Yeshua.

There are a small number of cases where individuals have abandoned the relationship. If I meet again with them, I remind them of their prior commitments and postpone any further meetings until there is movement toward fulfilling those commitments. Then we can meet to establish new parameters.



BEN: Do the people that you disciple typically become leaders?

TODD: Discipleship and associated ministry in that direction doesn't always equate leadership. Many times though, it is mutually connected and discipleship overlaps with leadership training.

When working with leaders, I will often go through various books together and discuss the things that stand out to them. After processing it together, we develop areas of leadership development together to both practice and refine.

BEN: How do you as an older father pour into younger leaders who may make a lot of mistakes, may feel that they are not up to the task, or have ups and downs?

TODD: It is important for us to recognize that we are older and younger fathers. We are all fathering or mothering together. Ministry is really like parenting. When you have someone that the Lord has brought to you to serve mutually together, there needs to be a lot of healthy communication. You need to talk about things before and after. It is a process. When you have young children that learn to walk and they stumble and fall along the way, the response of a good parent is not to say, "you are so stupid and clumsy." No, it is "wow, you took four steps, that is awesome!".

We disciple from the heart where we want them to get it right and to grow. Sometimes there is correction, but that is for times when there are issues of the heart or willful neglect of what the Holy Spirit is revealing to them. Philippians says that our desire when we communicate with one another is to "impart grace to the hearer."

BEN: You are passionate about the next generation. Tell me a little about the idea of generational partnership.

TODD: Well, Asher was the one who disciplined me. I was only 26 when I came to El Shaddai. He saw in me a gifting and a calling, and he began to draw that out. He modeled for me 1 Timothy 4:12, to "be an example in faith, in conduct, in purity, in deed, and in testimony."



In 1 Timothy, this was what Paul was exhorting Timothy to do. Asher was pulling these things out of me so that I would be an example in the sphere of influence that he had given me.

God calls people at a young age, and gifts them at a young age. Sometimes, the pipeline of ministry gets bogged down as we wait for someone to get to a certain place spiritually. When really, a lot of ministry happens on the job, while you are ministering and serving other people.

In Tikkun America, we gather the emerging leaders from the congregations nationally, about 70 or so who serve in their communities in different ways — elders, deacons, worship ministry, children's ministry, etc. We gather together — we call it a gathering because we meet to glean and encourage and strengthen and build covenantally across generational lines together!

BEN: That's excellent Todd. And the next Emerge Gathering is scheduled for February 2023. I encourage those 18-40 who are interested in attending to speak to your congregational leader.

Thank you Todd for sharing your heart about discipleship and fostering a healthy culture of development.



My hope is that our readers will be inspired to pursue discipleship relationships. If you have never experienced a healthy discipleship relationship, pray that God would lead you to the right people to help you. Also discuss it with your congregational leaders to explore what might work best for you.





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Throughout my years of engagement in this process I have found that the amazing byproduct is that both the discipler and the disciple are changed and grow along the way.

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-TODD WESTPHAL



Hopelessness and the Father Wound

MARK RANTZ

It was like any muggy Sunday afternoon in late August in north-central Florida. If you have ever been here, you'll know that this time of year can be sweltering and physically draining.

It was 2016 and we had just moved to Ocala, FL to serve in a local Messianic congregation.

Our new apartment had a broken air-conditioner and we were at the end of a waiting list for it to be repaired. By the second day we were drained and decided to spend the afternoon at our local mall in hopes of finding relief.

As we sat relaxing with cold drinks in the lounge area, my thoughts wandered as I watched numerous people traversing from one store to the next.

What caught my attention most was a group of teenagers who passed us at least three times or more. As they passed back and forth, the Spirit drew my attention to one girl in particular who, through her body language, revealed an empty desperation to be loved by anyone and a willingness to be wanted at any cost. This was heartbreaking to see. As I watched their final pass in front of us, both I and the teenage girl caught each other's eye. As a father myself, for that moment, compassion and a desire to protect her overcame my emotions. I now know that this was the Father's Heart within me, where in a flash I experienced a glimpse of the pain Adonai must have felt over her brokenness and her willful wandering from Him.

As soon as this occurred, she quickly turned to look the other way, but not before her face revealed shame and profound emptiness. In that moment God revealed to me both her hurt and the depth of the Father wound that resided within her. The Lord showed me that this precious little girl would likely give anything; even to the harm of her own dignity and self-respect if it meant that she would be accepted by this young man who cared nothing for her, who only saw her as an object or as "something" he might use.

So troubled by what I had witnessed, I immediately went into prayer. As I prayed, I asked, "Lord, what are you



showing me here and what do you want me to do? Before I could even finish praying, He spoke, *"My son, what you are seeing here is the spirit that grips your community, it is a spirit of HOPELESSNESS!"*

Sadly, this is not a localized problem for our city, but instead has spread throughout our nation like an uncontrolled wildfire. Recent studies reveal that 18.6 million children in America, grow up without a father in the home, forcing them to find approval and validation in all the wrong places - whether it be a deep

need for belonging leading to many being bound by sexual confusion, promiscuity, drugs, violence, and even gang activity. Adjacent to our 18.6 million fatherless, statistics also confirm that those who come from broken, fatherless homes are 20% more likely to be arrested and incarcerated at a young age, thus setting off a cycle of a life of crime - and the root of it all is the fatherless wound!

For us as believers, such details might seem daunting, causing one to feel powerless or ill-equipped. Yet, in our questions, we cannot forget that God alone is the one who can change a generation and it is through us that He desires to bring about lasting transformational change unto eternity.

Prayer, Action, and Cooperation with the Holy Spirit

In His coming to earth, Yeshua took on flesh, submitted to the Father, and in humility took on the role of a servant. (Phil. 2:6-8) Although being God, Yeshua emptied Himself and fully submitted to the Father's will. In John 5:19, Messiah reminds, *"... I tell you that the Son cannot do anything on His own, but only what He sees the Father doing."* In the same light, we as followers of Yeshua must seek every day to listen to and learn how to cooperate with the leading of the Holy Spirit. This is done primarily through a life of prayer for the broken and asking the Father to give us His heart for the hopeless, abandoned, and fatherless.



Of the importance of prayer, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel in *Man's Quest for God* reminds,

"The issue of prayer is not prayer [instead], the issue of prayer is God!"

As we learn to cooperate with the Spirit and intercede for the broken, God will not only transform and equip us, but He will also send us to declare freedom to the captive and outcast. In the end, cooperating with the Spirit works and transforms us so that we might be the answer to our own prayers!

Gaining the Father's Heart and the Wounded Healer

Secondly, prayer is intended not only to transform and heal the one for whom we are interceding, but also to change us first and send us to declare the healing power of Yeshua to the lost, hurting and broken world. In essence we must gain the Father's Heart if we hope to see the father wound healed in the lives of others. Many who are trapped in sin and brokenness have often been "preached at," and shamed for their wounds; without receiving the hope that true freedom and deliverance is possible. Although we cannot whitewash sin or pretend it does not exist, our emphasis must first be in identification as Wounded Healers who point to Yeshua as the only one who carries and heals our pains and sorrows and delivers us from ourselves.



(Isaiah 53) To emphasize this important point, Henri Nouwen in his classic *The Wound Healer* rightfully questions,

"Who can listen to a story of loneliness and despair without taking the risk of experiencing similar pains in his own heart ...?"

We must never forget that as we gain the Father's Heart, we become equipped in God's Spirit to bring God's healing to the father wound for both the individual and for a generation. Like our Suffering Servant Yeshua, because we too have been wounded and doubly restored, Adonai gives us the ministry of reconciliation and healing to those who have yet to find freedom.

It is because of our healed scars and wounds that we too can point to the one with nail-pierced hands. Without our own wounds we could never be effective for His Kingdom.

Wounded Healers Proclaiming Healing to the Nations

Finally, in our call to proclaim the Good News to all nations. (Matt. 28:19) Rav Sha'ul questions,

"... How can they call on someone if they haven't trusted in Him? And how can they trust in someone if they haven't heard about Him? And how can they hear about someone if no one is proclaiming Him? And how can people proclaim Him unless God sends them." (Rom. 10:14-15a, CJB)

Yet to this questioning of our Shaliach, the answer is obvious - that we have heard the word of Yeshua, our Wounded Healer and as Wounded Healers we too are called to proclaim Him to all the world! God is waiting on us to heed His call and go to the hopeless and the fatherless. Will you listen to God's Spirit, and choose to emulate Yeshua our Wounded Healer by being a Wounded Healer yourself; offering hope to the broken? I'm going, will you go with me? 



The image features a minimalist still life composition. In the foreground, a lit white candle sits on a square wooden candle holder, which is placed on a rustic wooden shelf. The background consists of a plain, light-colored wall. Bare, dark branches of a tree or shrub are visible, extending from the right side of the frame towards the center. A white rectangular box with a subtle drop shadow is positioned in the middle of the image, containing the text.

God is waiting on us to heed
His call and go to the hopeless
and the fatherless.

-MARK RANTZ



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