

When the Good News isn't Good

Drash on Parashah 14; Va'era
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What if you knew that a friend of yours was an heir to a massive fortune. His life would forever change for the better. He and his family is going through great suffering, which this information would eliminate. Excitedly, you go to your friend, tell him the great news, and expect a reaction of gratitude and joy. Much to your dismay, the reaction is completely opposite. He says he does not believe you and will not listen to you. If the reaction is surprising to you, there is something you may not be taking into consideration.

"So now, tell the people of Y'hudah and those living in Yerushalayim that this is what Adonai says: I am designing disaster for you, working out my plan against you. Turn, each of you, from his evil ways; improve your conduct and actions." "But they will answer, 'It's hopeless! We will stick to our own plans; each of us will stubbornly follow his own evil desires!'"
[Yirme'yahu/Jeremiah 18:11-12]

In the midst of hopelessness, depression, and abuse, people typically do not think rationally. There is fear that can grip a person's thinking and actions long after the threat is removed. We see this with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. There are other times that a captor can win the trust, loyalty, and even love of a hostage. We see this with Stockholm syndrome. If a person has experienced severe hopelessness, to the point where they are convinced that there is no way out of their situation, they may not accept any help, no matter how good it may seem to you. This can be especially true if they also have fear, possible given to them by a third party, that conditions will get worse if they try to get out of the situation they are in. There are battered women who will refuse to turn their husband in to police. There are gang members that will not change their lives because of fear of being killed, or if they do escape the streets, they could make life worse for their friends or family.

We see mind games and brainwashing by cults, criminal leaders, and corrupt governments. We are surrounded by a perhaps have experienced some of the physical and emotional hopelessness I have described. You may have had similar circumstances to what I described, where you have tried to help a friend and they refused it for no apparent reason. What we don't realize is the hearts and minds of all those held by the chains of sin are victims of the same mind games and abuse by the greatest terrorist in the universe. Satan.

Yeshua answered them, "Yes, indeed! I tell you that everyone who practices sin is a slave of sin. [Yochanan/John 8:34]

For you keep saying, 'I am rich, I have gotten rich, I don't need a thing!' You don't know that you are the one who is wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked! [Revelation 3:17]

What we see above is the delusion that results from a mind controlled by the bonds of sin. Those who do not have a relationship are blind. They are blind to truth and righteousness. Things that make perfect sense to a Believer will be gibberish to anyone else. What Christians don't realize is that much of the Christianese that is spoken in church, might as well be Chinese to unchurched people.

Then the talmidim came and asked Yeshua, "Why are you speaking to them in parables?" He answered, "Because it has been given to you to know the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but it has not been given to them. [Mattityahu/Matthew 13:10-11]

When we live in faith toward God, we see things and understand things, by the work of the Holy Spirit that nobody else can understand. They haven't seen the burning bush that we have seen. They don't have the relationship with God that we have. Furthermore, they have often been brainwashed by the Adversary into thinking that spiritual matters, especially Godly ones, are bad, distasteful, boring, or otherwise something they don't need. With some, Ha Satan has even used churches, Believers, and Biblical truth to hurt them, making them believe you are likely to do the same. We are not the only ones to have to deal with this problem. Take a look at Moshe.

"Therefore, say to the people of Isra'el: 'I am Adonai. I will free you from the forced labor of the Egyptians, rescue you from their oppression, and redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am Adonai your God, who freed you from the forced labor of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya`akov – I will give it to you as your inheritance. I am Adonai.' " Moshe said this to the people of Isra'el. But they wouldn't listen to him, because they were so discouraged, and their slavery was so cruel. [Sh'mot/Exodus 6:6-9]

I'm sure Moshe would have thought that the news he had for the people of Isra'el was good news. They would be excited to hear the promises God had for them and their impending freedom from the Egyptians. Instead, they would not listen to him or believe him. Their hopelessness and the suffering they were enduring from Pharaoh blinded them from seeing the truth in Moshe's statements and being able to accept

them. Pharaoh also made Moshe an enemy of the people by making their work harder because of his requests for freedom. This was perhaps more of Pharaoh's mind games to maintain control over God's people.

"If the world hates you, understand that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, the world would have loved its own. But because you do not belong to the world – on the contrary, I have picked you out of the world – therefore the world hates you. [Yochanan/John 15:18-19]"

Doing God's will and being God's messenger, will often not make you popular. Just ask the many prophets of the Bible, some of which were killed, because of the messages they had for the people from God. We are not here to please men, but our King. As we eagerly seek Him, and be the light in the world we are called to be, there are some who will not like the light we give. It is like opening a curtain to a dark room when someone is taking a nap.

Most of us don't like confrontation. We also don't like rejection. Moshe experienced both of these, as did Shaul, the rest of the apostles, and Yeshua Himself. It seems we cannot build the Kingdom the way God wants us to unless we ruffle a few feathers in doing so. We are not to be purposely confrontational, but as God's ways differ from the ways of the world, friction is inevitable. This is why we need the oil of the Holy Spirit to lubricate our actions and temper the friction that takes place.

As we go about spreading the Good News in the world, we ought to take notice of what Moshe and God did to get Isra'el out of Egypt. First, Moshe listened to God and did exactly what He said. Moshe had his doubts and even pleaded on multiple occasions that God use someone else. The task was certainly daunting, and Moshe's life was constantly in peril, whether from Pharaoh or his own people. He had to obey God and trust in Him to protect his life.

Something else to note is that Moshe did not rally up the Israelites to go against Pharaoh. He told them of God's promises, which they did not expect right away, but they didn't have to. In the midst of Isra'el's captivity, God's focus was not dealing with His people, but dealing with the powers of darkness in Egypt that held them captive. Later, after he brought His people out of Egypt, he would work on taking Egypt out of His people. God's battle, and therefore Moshe's battle was with Pharaoh.

Use all the armor and weaponry that God provides, so that you will be able to stand against the deceptive tactics of the Adversary. For we are not struggling against human beings,

but against the rulers, authorities and cosmic powers governing this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm. [Ephesians 6:11-12]

Every Believer is engrafted into the Kingdom of Isra'el. God's Kingdom is a Kingdom of priests. Every priest is also a warrior. We are God's special forces. As we study His Word and perform His will, He will send us into the world to rescue His people from the clutches of the Adversary. We will end up looking for people who don't want to be found. We will warn people of danger who think they live in safety, and we will be thought of as lunatics. The Adversary may even make us out to be the enemy and our efforts may make things worse for the people God wants us to help. This will make us want to give up; however, we must continue on the mission God has given to us. It is better to make enemies of people, than prove ourselves unfaithful to God's will.

If people hate us and don't believe us, that is ok. They are not the ones we are dealing with. Their enemies, both physical and spiritual, are our main concern. As God proves Himself powerful over that which holds people in bondage, then they will begin to see the reality and power of God without us ever dealing directly with them. They will also come to experience freedom and healing and see God's light through the cracks that begin to form in their stony heart. As shackles fall off, people will see the hidden chains of sin that bound them without them ever realizing it.

"The Spirit of Adonai is upon me; therefore he has anointed me to announce Good News to the poor; he has sent me to proclaim freedom for the imprisoned and renewed sight for the blind, to release those who have been crushed, to proclaim a year of the favor of Adonai." [Luke 4:18-19]

However, now, freed from sin and enslaved to God, you do get the benefit – it consists in being made holy, set apart for God, and its end result is eternal life. [Romans 6:22]