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Ego and Insecurity



By Asher Intrater

In over 40 years of dealing with leadership challenges and decisions, I've noticed that in most of the problematic situations, the discussion is only partly objective and mostly subjective. The subjectivity comes from many different angles, but the most problematic are **ego** and **insecurity**. Our ego tends to cause a blind spot. Our insecurity tends to cause over-sensitivity.

When a person's area of ego overlaps with his area of insecurity, the result is a very dangerous situation of miscommunication. The person can't see the problem because of his ego; he doesn't want to deal with it because of his insecurity.

If it is just a question of ego, the person can humble himself. If it is just a question of insecurity, the person can exercise faith. When the two overlap, even the smallest disagreement causes an explosion of hurt, mistrust, anger, betrayal, division, etc. This ego and insecurity loop can destroy relationships and communication in government, business, ministry, and family.

Even Yeshua's top disciples struggled with the same psychological conflicts. **"Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest"** (Luke 9:46).

To cover up the "gap" in relational and communication breakdown, each person tends to develop a "narrative" in his own mind. He begins to "tell himself a story" describing what has happened. That story usually depicts the other people as perpetrators and himself as the victim. *"This is unfair! I want justice!"* That's what both sides are telling themselves in their own narrative. At that point you are heading for a collision.

"Asher, are you telling us that most leadership problems are actually personal communication breakdowns based on ego and insecurity?" Well, yes.

So, what is the solution? Justice won't help when the narratives have been poisoned and perverted. The only answer is for us to become like Yeshua. Jesus-like investment of grace is the only thing that can reach the roots of ego and insecurity.

The cross gives us the ministry of reconciliation (**2 Corinthians 5:18**). We can stand in the gap where relationships have broken down (**Ezekiel 22:30**). We can forgive those who have done us wrong (**Luke 23:34**). We can act in integrity and stand by our word, even to our own disadvantage (**Psalms 15:4**). We can pray for those who have spoken wrongly about us (**Matthew 5:44**).

Faithfulness in the midst of a difficult situation can provide an opportunity to build trust. Generosity of heart can touch the other person at their point of dysfunction. *(Ahh, this is much easier to say than to do!)*

Yeshua's crucifixion gave us reconciliation with God. Our living a life like the cross can give reconciliation with others. **His crucifixion** is not only our atonement; **it is also our example of leadership that solves irreconcilable differences and heals those around us.**

Ultimately only the grace of God in Yeshua's sacrificial love can heal the root problems of ego and insecurity.

"It's About Time!"



By **Hannah Tekle**

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens." (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

This morning I stood in line with my 11-year-old son for over two hours waiting for an antigen test so that he can go back to school tomorrow, after being quarantined from exposure to a Corona patient last week.

In the line with us were other parents with children of all ages. Parents chatted with each other or conducted work calls from their cell phones while the line crept forward. The teenagers rolled their eyes at the queue when they looked up from their screens. The small to mid-size children bounced about, some fighting with their siblings or pulling on their parents arms, others whining "I'm so boooored, hungry, tired, etc." "How much longer do we have to stand here?!"

I found myself thinking about how funny time is. When I joined the line, I was frustrated and irritated. As the line grew, seeing that I was closer to the front of the line and many more people were behind me, my frustration lessened.

"At least I am closer to the front of the line than they are. I have much less time to wait than they do."

Knowing that I was in a better state than others helped me bear my reality. This was silly, yet if there had been no one else behind me and I had to wait the same amount of time, somehow it would have felt longer.

The Hebrew word for "time" in the scripture verse quoted above is *et*. This word can mean 'moment in time' as well as 'a season in time' and it also contains the connotation of the 'right time.'

Another word for time in both Biblical and modern Hebrew is *z'man*. Some of our words in Modern Hebrew are different than Biblical Hebrew, but these words carry the same meaning now as they did in the original Hebrew. Two Biblical characters, who heard the voice of God and were available to answer His call and be in the right place at the right time, were Esther and Nehemiah.

For if you remain silent at this time (et), relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time (et) as this? (Esther 4:14)

Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, "How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?" It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time (z'man). (Nehemiah 2:6)

Between the two words, *z'man* is the more common. *Et* is a bit more sophisticated and comes later in the learning process whether for an adult newbie to the language or as a child acquiring her native tongue. But the word *z'man* is also the root of a whole family of words that have the use of time at their core: *zeemen* (summon), *heezmeen* (invite), *heezdamen* (to happen to), *heezdamnut* (opportunity), and more.

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Decisions, Choices and Fruit



By **Guy Cohen**

Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 speak volumes about blessings and curses: our *decisions* always have consequences. When I look back at bad things that happened in my life, I need to ask what decisions I made and why.

Throughout the book of Proverbs we see that God says in effect, “My child, choose to obey my word and you will be protected.” What I realize is that my flesh and spirit are always fighting against each other. My flesh is drawn toward the things of this world, while my spirit is drawn toward God. The *choice* is before me.

In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul admits his weaknesses concerning the matters of the flesh. God’s response to Paul’s multiple requests for the thorn in his flesh to be removed was: **“My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness”** (2 Corinthians 12:7-9 NIV). Paul also said it this way, “When I am weak then I am strong,” referring to his challenges in the flesh – which included his thoughts, emotions and desires. Only when you and I realize how much we need help with our emotions, thoughts and desires, only then can we really allow God to be strong in us.

When I as a believer in Yeshua make a *decision*, I need to submit my total thought process to God and allow Him to guide me. Then I will be able to trust Him regarding the fruit of the decision. However, when I try to make decisions *by my own flesh and mind*, I have come to realize it’s like taking a disobedient bite from the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Those decisions lead to death.

Therefore, when I allow God to breathe in and through me, I see victory together with Him. I give the glory to Him – the One who overcomes the battles of my thoughts and gives me His thoughts.

It is written in Matthew 11:12 that the Kingdom of Heaven is taken by force. I see that this applies to the tough decisions for overcoming in our life. We face many powerful temptations; there are many instances when “candy” is dangled in front of us. It looks good and is sweet but in the end it doesn’t last and only brings decay.

We must allow the Spirit of God to move in us and give us discernment in all decisions. Whether it is making a purchase, changing jobs, moving to a new house, getting married, serving in the congregation, and on and on.

My prayers for 2022 are that it will be a year in which you and your household will choose His way in all things. May you know deep within that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). May you commit your way and your *decisions* to Him and may He make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5).



Testimonies from our Humanitarian Aid Project



By **Leon Mazin**

Shalom dear brothers and sisters in Messiah!

We truly can't thank you enough for your most generous partnership towards our vision of the restoration of Zion! Your support allows us to continue providing resources to the people who need them most.

People like you truly make a difference, and we are incredibly grateful!

Below are just a few of the many grateful recipients who would like to express their appreciation.

Testimonies from our Humanitarian Aid Ministry:

After immigrating to Israel in January 2020 it was quite difficult for us to settle in a new country, especially not of our mother tongue.

In September of that same year, my husband passed away; I became widowed with two children, one 6 years old and the other 9 years old.

It was a very difficult time for all of us, I later found myself in a very bad financial situation, amongst many other difficulties. When I heard of the organization "Return to Zion," I applied for help and was immediately accepted. They have been supporting me and the children tremendously ever since!

We receive large food packages, blankets, cooking pans/pots/utensils, clothing for the children, and many basic accessories for us to have a warm home! We would like to express our deep gratitude to all the partners of the "Return to Zion Ministry!"

THANK YOU!

Mary Petrov

Hello! My family and I flew from Ukraine, the city of Dnepropetrovsk.

When we arrived, we did not know and did not understand anything. We heard from others about Return to Zion, and when we came, we were greeted warmly. They immediately explained everything. They said that we could contact them with any questions. We received pots, pans, and many other kitchen utensils, as well as warm blankets and food packages. We were very happy to receive such support. It was a huge help!

Thank you for being there!

Yulia

For already two and half years I have been receiving help from Return to Zion. I am a cancer patient; therefore I cannot work, and the money that I receive from the state is not enough to support me.

Ever since I turned to this organization, I've been receiving a huge amount of help! I recently received new blankets, a set of kitchen utensils, and a holiday gift set. Once every two weeks I receive food packages. I am very happy and grateful to those people who help us new immigrants in Israel.

I would like to thank those who care for us and let us live with dignity.

Elena Bykov

"Restoring and proclaiming faith in Yeshua in Israel!"





As a person who immigrated to a country with a vastly different culture than my birth country, and as someone who then married into a third culture, and as someone who is also a member of a multicultural community – I can testify that people relate very differently to the concept of time.

For some cultures, **punctuality** is a critical value. For other cultures, **propriety** (the right behaviour/response in the right moment) is a critical value. For yet others, **preparation** or **process** are the critical elements. Besides culture, personality, family culture and sub-cultures all play into one's mentality regarding time. On occasions where there is a clash between what one person values about time and what another person values about time, the conflict is inevitable and often complicated. This I know firsthand.

From those famous words in Ecclesiastes, we know that God also values time; although, I would venture to claim, not necessarily in the same way that WE do.

Yeshua himself sometimes did the “wrong” thing at the right time, and the Sadducees and Pharisees were examples of people doing the “right” thing at the wrong time.

If we want to be a people who do the right thing at the right time, we need to align ourselves with God and listen to the Holy Spirit for direction as to what to do, as well as when and where to do it.

In this first season of 2022, we need to know the important things for us to be doing at this time. The funny and encouraging thing is that it can be different for each of us. Some of us are building. Some of us are tearing down. Some of us are learning to hold back and rest, while others are learning to move forward in action.

The first century believers must have thought it was “high time” for deliverance from Roman occupation and must have been certain that Yeshua had come to deliver them. The disciples must have thought that “the end of the world” was in sight – in their lifetime or in the next generation at the latest. Yeshua must have felt compassion on His disciples, knowing that the Roman occupation would only end far in the distant future after vast national suffering.

Like our predecessors of two thousand years ago, we feel the crazy upheaval in the world means we are in the “end-times.” We may be getting very close, but I would propose that whether or not we are actually experiencing THE end-times, is beside the point. We need to be plugged into the *Holy Spirit* whose job it is to *direct and guide us regarding the right thing at the right time*, whether it is word or deed, confrontation or compassion, action or inaction.

The Apostle Paul prayed it this way over Timothy – that he may be “*filled with the knowledge of His will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives*” (Colossians 1:9).

May God show us His plan for this time and season, whether it be to deliver us from the present darkness we face or to give us Faith and Patience to withstand our current trials until the time is full for His deliverance.

What House will You Build for Me?



By **Tal Haroni**

Thus says the LORD, “The heavens are my throne, and the earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, and what will be my resting place. For my hand has made all these things and caused them to be. Yet I will look upon him who is humble and contrite in spirit and who trembles at my word.” (Isaiah 6:1-2)

God created each and every one of us. He knew us even before the universe was formed. He knew our weaknesses, strengths, and difficulties. He knew the color of our eyes and the date of our birth. He also knows when our soul will return to Him. Nothing can surprise him. He already knows everything, because in fact, everything is His, including you and me.

And yet...

God wants to build a house within us. He wants us to prepare a place for Himself in our lives. There is one thing that God has placed in our possession, our free will. We can choose to give Him the place He deserves and allow Him to be our “landlord” – to let Him find a resting place among us and turn our bodies and lives into a temple for Him.

Or we can keep our lives to ourselves.

God invites us to let Him dwell among us. **“Do you who think that the scripture says in vain: ‘God longs with jealousy for the spirit which he made to dwell in us’”** (James 4:5).

He wants to fill us. He longs to be an integral part of our lives – to be more than a guest who is occasionally invited to visit. He won’t even be satisfied to be a long term “renter.” God invites us to let Him be the owner of the house – by way of parable, to be the one who decides how to “remodel” the house, which wall is to come down and which is to stay.

I myself am renting an apartment now, and I have a good landlord. He owns the house, even though I brought my own furniture, and I tend to the yard and house cleaning. However, since the house does not belong to me, I cannot get up one morning and decide to knock down one of the walls without consulting my landlord. I cannot simply do whatever I want.

A few days ago my rental had an electrical problem. I called the landlord. He told me to try a few things myself to solve the problem, and said that if necessary he would hire a professional to do the repair.

This is how it is with God as our landlord. When we have a problem we turn to Him, and ask for help. He may point to things we ourselves can repair. He may tell us to get help from someone more experienced. He may come Himself and fix whatever needs fixing.

God invites us to surrender our free will to Him, to learn from the life of Yeshua, who said in Gethsemane, **“Father, if it is possible, please cause this cup to pass from me, yet not my will, but your will be done”** (Matthew 26:39).

This verse always challenges and surprises me. Yeshua was fully human. He did not want to go to the cross. But of His own free will He surrendered to the will of God. He knew the suffering that awaited Him in the last day of His life, but was also confident in the goodness of God. And He chose to go with God’s plan to the uttermost.

When we believe and know that God is good and there is no shifting shadow in Him, we surrender our lives willingly; confident that He knows what is good and right for us. We invite Him to be our landlord, and we know that whatever He chooses and gives us will be for the best. Our lives are much better when we are submitted to His will, of our own free will.



The Medical Side of Feed Tel Aviv



By **Motti Cohen**

Recently Tiferet Yeshua hosted a first aid certification course for the volunteers of *Feed Tel Aviv* and other outreaches in the area. You may be asking, “Why would volunteers in a food outreach program need to be first aid certified?”

Good question.

The homeless we serve in south Tel Aviv **living on the streets are more than hungry, they are extremely vulnerable to violence, sickness and disease.** Because the need for physical assistance is so great among the homeless, one of our volunteers always focuses solely on first aid each time we go out to serve food.

Afraid to seek professional medical care:

The people we are trying to help have often been involved in crime and prostitution to fund their addiction. That’s why they are afraid of going to the hospital for fear that the police will be called to deal with them. That’s also why they are usually unwilling to let us call an ambulance or bring them to the ER. In serious cases, where we see that professional medical care is needed, we always try to get them to a hospital. Sometimes we succeed. However, many times we do not. **This means that, very often, the help we offer is the only help they are willing to accept.**

Violence at the hands of powerful drug dealers:

Some of the worst wounds we see in the homeless are from violence at the hands of drug dealers. Many of the homeless drug addicts become “cups”, or middlemen, for the drug dealers who collect money owed them. If the “cups” don’t come up with the money, for whatever reason, the drug dealers will make a point to leave people with horrific scars, often on their faces, to send a message to the others on the street.

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Bodies weakened by drug use and attack:

The most common first aid that we give is disinfecting wounds. Because people’s bodies are so weakened by drug use and because they are living in unsanitary conditions, festering wounds become a persistent problem. The homeless also suffer wounds from animals, be it rats, dogs or cats.

Over time hearts are opened:

Our motto at *Feed Tel Aviv* is: “Share the love of God, hope, and the gospel of salvation with the homeless in our city.”

Firstly, meeting people’s immediate physical needs in a caring and compassionate way is sharing the love of God. We tell them about drug rehabilitation centers run by believers and actively connect any who are interested, giving them hope. When serving the homeless, we always ask if they would like prayer, opening the door to share who we are and in whose name we pray. Some want prayer, and some don’t.

However, I don’t lose hope for those who refuse prayer at first. Over time, seeing us return month after month, year after year, many begin to open up to us. They often point out that they received food and first aid from us for a long time before they felt comfortable sharing their stories and being willing to hear about what brings us to the streets to serve them – the love of God and the message of salvation!





IAM WITH
ISRAEL

Unemployed Tour Guides

Jerusalem's tourist "shuk" alleyways are almost empty.

Shalom Dear Friends,

Imagine not working for two years; not being able to do the thing you trained for; not being able to provide for your family! That is the situation for Messianic tour guides throughout the country. Let me explain...

Forgive us for mentioning the word we are all so tired of hearing – COVID, but it has devastated the most widespread profession of Israeli Messianic believers – Israeli tourism. Serving the millions of Christians who tour Israel has been a unique niche in which the local believers had natural employment opportunities. (Christian tourists often prefer to learn from Messianic Jewish guides, who share a common faith as well as a deep connection to the land of Israel.)

Dozens and dozens of believing Israelis working as tour guides and in related jobs have been left without employment due to the effects of the virus on the tourism industry. Foreign tourism is a major sector of Israel's economy that came to a screeching halt when COVID came on the scene. The airports were closed to travelers and incoming tourism fell to zero.

In the beginning of the pandemic, the Israeli government provided many months of unemployment stipends to tourism workers. Unfortunately, those subsidies are no longer available while at the same time a true recovery of the incoming Christian tourism is nowhere in sight – with vaccination regulations and new virus strains alarming the authorities every few months.

In the Tikkun Israel congregations, we have numerous tour guides and others who worked in the tourism industry. Pastor Guy Cohen from Akko tells of enterprising young people in his congregation whose Christian tourism business was just starting to flourish when COVID drastically changed the picture. Their small company had to cancel all scheduled tours and since then has had no tour groups/clients. As you can imagine, that would be a staggering blow for any business.

For many months, all of these skilled and hospitable people have been **working odd jobs, doing an occasional virtual tour or considering a new line of work. They need our help right now.**

Please consider a gift this month to #IamWithIsrael, so we can stand with these precious believers trying to stay afloat amidst this crisis. It is not unlike Paul who collected aid in Romans 15 for the Jewish believers in Jerusalem during the famine. For them, this is a famine!

Let's stand together and provide for them. Let them know that they are not forgotten. Your generous donation right now will assist them greatly!

We so appreciate your strong connection with Israel and with the "Revive Israel-Tikkun Global" family of congregations and ministries in Israel.

Your help is critical at this time. Thank you!

Ron Cantor

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