



Thoughts in the Midst of the Omer Count

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Introductory Story: Shavuot Hype...my Pastor friend...forced into bystander role...not participant

II. THOUGHTS FOR THE JOURNEY

A. Love & Lovingkindness

The LORD appeared to me (Israel) from ages past, saying, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you and continued My faithfulness to you. Jeremiah 31:3

1. Everlasting love: "Olam" a period of many generations...the time of the present created order...beyond this temporal sphere...in the age to come, there will be no need for the sun or moon, for God Himself will be the everlasting light. Is. 60:19; Rev.22:5.
2. Lovingkindness: "Chesed" The Torah's Highest expression for love...variously called God's election, covenant-keeping love, or steadfast love. It is a love that remains constant regardless of the circumstances.

B. Circumstances: situations that follow as a result of choices, whether good or bad...God's method of exposure.

1. Bring it to the Light: It's alright to bring it to the light ...freedom begins here...1st step
 - a. Our Heavenly Father wants to reveal to us His Compassionate desire for us.
2. He Longs for Connection: God longs for deeper more intimate connection with us...

C. Festival Reflection: "I love the Feast Days because they are times of remembrance and reflection."
Martina

1. Deepest Desire: confessed the following desires to the elders:
 - In this New Biblical New Year, my request of God is: To know His Son beyond anything I have yet to experience...like never before...same desire was resonating in their hearts as well...
 - Greater level of authenticity in our daily walk with Christ...
 - We are recognizing and hitting our limit...
2. Push Past Your Limit: National Guard Advertisement: "*Find your limit and push past it.*"
 - a. Examples
 - Anngelique...Family woes...endless challenges...hit her limit...prayer...understanding her antagonist... other side of our limit...unlimited Christ.
 - Rudy's Dad...picked up in Vegas...in Denver...storyteller...often out of breath...Huh?
 - b. Finding our limit is figuring out where we must decrease so that Christ might increase!
Because where we end is where He will begin. He is a perfect gentleman, and He will not force it.

D. Loving God: after a service at DCJ...several inmates approached...question: How do we know if we love God? Amazing question...because it was honest...Believers should ask themselves this question from time to time...Share my response...

1. Need for Repentance: "We don't fall out of love my friends; we fall out of repentance."
 - a. Level of hunger for Him, reveals our level of love for Him.
2. Moving on Up: Different seasons of intensity...upward trajectory.
3. Getting Egypt Out: God cannot take Egypt out of us; we must reckon Egypt dead..."Stinking, Thinking"
 - a. It is going to take some time to undo what has been stored up in our body/souls.

III. CLOSING

- A. Community Chorus:** *“I can do all things [which He has called me to do] through Him who strengthens and empowers me [to fulfill His purpose-I am self-sufficient in Christ’s sufficiency; I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him who infuses me with inner strength and confident peace.”* Philippians 4:13 AMP
- B. We All Stray:** The sheep in the fold and the sheep outside the fold. Both tend to go astray...we who are in the fold are called out of Christ’ love to go after those who have wandered a bit further than us. *All of us like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s path to follow our own...Is.53:6*
1. Deception is to meander from truth, safety, and /or virtue...that about covers us all.
- C. Back to Basics:** We have some growing up to do in this area.
1. Ask for God’s Heart: Pray and ask the Father to grant you His passion for the lost...ask the Father to open the eyes of your heart to see the opportunities speak His truth in love to those whom you cross paths.
 2. Sharing with Others: Need to get back to the basics of sharing the Gospel message to the lost.
 3. Helping Others: Our problems will grow strangely small when we bring out the bigness of His message to those who are hurting and without answers.
- D. Remember:** We have a love that is Everlasting and that Remains...Hallelujah!!!