

Teaching Transcript

Finding the Ancient Path | Life in Desert - Then Jacob Was Left Alone

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Chapter 1: Ministry introduction

Hello and welcome to Finding the Ancient Path. If you are new here, I'm excited to have you. We're grateful that you found us. This ministry is dedicated to helping people who are coming out of Babylon, coming out of the world, coming out of religion, and wondering what to do next. We have been blessed with members from literally all over the world, and we're growing. And to that end, I need your help. This little group started in the living room with just a handful of people, but now we're reaching people, as I said, literally around the world. And the infrastructure

needs to grow a bit. And so, if you feel led to give to this ministry, if you feel blessed by our little group, then I want to give you that opportunity on a monthly basis through being a YouTube member or being a Patreon member or maybe offering a one-time donation on PayPal. Either way, it goes a long way. And even if you don't give, I'm just glad you're here. So, let's get on to today's teaching. God bless. Amen. Thank

Chapter 2: Life in the desert

you, brother Luke, for that prayer. And welcome, guys, to this discussion on um life in the desert. Why am I doing this lesson? Well, you're you're going to notice in the course of the lesson some sim similarities to something that I taught last year. I did a lesson called becoming Israel, leaving Babylon, leaving the church, and feeling alone. It's it's all intentional. It's all part of the plan. And that that's one of my most viral lessons I think because it hit so many people. It addressed so many people and and where they are at in their life. And but what I didn't do in

that lesson is I didn't go into great detail about the things that we're supposed to be learning here in the desert. For the record, what does the desert mean? If you're wondering, well, we all are aware of what we have labeled the awakening going on in the world around us. People turning their attention to the ways of the Lord or uh the law, returning to his ways. It's all happening all by itself. And when I mean that it's cheek and tongue because we know it's the Holy Spirit that's doing it. When I say all by itself, I mean it's not because of one person or one movement or one church

that's bringing this about. It's truly the Holy Spirit that is turning people back to the ways. And so it's a bit of an awakening we call it. But the question arises, what is it for? Okay. So, this awakening that I've had and I've turned my attention to has caused me to embrace things that I never embraced before. Things like the Sabbath, things like food laws, things like the festivals. And in doing so, I've lost my fellowship. I've been kicked out of my church or I decided to leave my church. And in doing that, I've lost my fellowship. And I've lost my friends and in some cases family

members. And here I am like the man in the image standing alone. And of course when we look at the model in scripture of Jacob earning the name Israel then we see the first thing about that story is that he was left alone. Genesis 32 24. And this is something that I wrote as the description in that previous lesson. Many of us

have left Babylon and religion only to find ourselves alone in a desert. No fellowship, no friends, sometimes rejected by our own family members because we refuse to compromise on what we've seen in the scriptures.

You are alone wrestling with God, wrestling with doctrine, and searching for answers in the world. And here's where we are. Some of you just got here. Some of you have been here for years and wondering when it will end. I'm not sure it will end until Yeshua comes back. Nonetheless, we feel things. We feel the confusion, the loss of clarity, the fear, the sense of loss, the frustration, the moments of doubt. And we're all asking this question. What are we supposed to learn here? There is no doubt those who are in the desert who can share a ton of things that they've

learned here. We've heard from you already within the course of our discussions that we have here weekly. Man, I can't believe this or I can't believe that or I've learned this and I've learned that. And that's all part of it, but there's a lot more to it here. And I'm a little afraid that a percentage of us are missing things that we're supposed to be learning here. And that's really the reason why this lesson is here today. And and I hope to have a great discussion afterwards. So Jacob was left alone. And we know this chapter, we know these verses. We've read it before in Genesis 32, the beginning of Jacob's story where he goes

from being called Jacob to being called Israel. So, we're going to read it and we're going to read it in parts. We're going to start here with the verses in blue. Jacob was left alone. Scripture shows often that Yahw brings people into solitude, into the wilderness, into seasons of being alone for very specific reasons. And I want to talk about these reasons here for a moment. First and foremost, to humble us. And we had a great discussion last week about humility. But that's first and foremost the reason that you have been brought into this place of solitude so that the father can humble us.

Deuteronomy 8, you shall remember that Yahweh your Elohim has led you all the way these 40 years in the wilderness to humble you and to test you. Yahw did for Israel what he did for Jacob their father before them. God got Jacob alone and here he got his descendants alone. And what he was doing in that time and I want you to personalize everything that we talk about here is he removed their support systems so that the heart can be exposed. So in the humility process in the humbling process the first thing that happens is that we remove our support systems. What are the support systems that we came from? Well, if you're like me, that was church.

That was a weekly structured system. Sometimes multiple times during the week, I would be meeting with this quote unquote support system, these friends in the church that I had known for many, many years, decades even. Uh people that I would lean on and depend on, friendships that I would depend on. uh was removed and thus the beginning process of the heart being exposed. So what are some of the support systems he removes in your lives in our lives that he's already taken away or he is in the process of taking away? Well, I already talked about relationships.

Sometimes the spouse, many of you have shared how you have been going through an awakening, but your husband isn't or your wife isn't. Family also, brothers, sisters, parents, children, friends, church community, mentors, emotional dependence on people rather than on him. It's difficult for when we experience that. My wife can share and someday maybe I'll have a microphone for her about what she went through in during this initial stage. The sense of loss of so many, you know, family and and friends and the church community. As you know, we've spent 35 years in the church.

And when you spend 35 years amongst the same group of people and then all of a sudden overnight they're lost, that's a hit emotionally. And the mentors, the people that you looked up to, the people that you trusted for spiritual advice and spiritual input are gone. And all those emotional anchors are removed in some case

some cases overnight. Our routine is a loss. A support system that he removes, the schedules that we keep, the plans that we have, the predictability that are that's built into those schedules and plans are gone. Religious identity is lost.

trusting your church involvement, your ministry role, your doctrinal correctness, or your outward obedience that's taken away because he's trying to get you to a place of genuine surrender. We trusted our church involvement. If you were a church person, maybe you were a staff member on staff and you were in the ministry role like brother Loveven, Randy Lyens and his wife, you know, he has a ministry position. And of course, your doctrinal correctness is all being challenged during this time. So, it's a hit. It's a system that he's removed from your life. the approval of others, needing affirmation that hits us all in the forehead.

Validation, praise or acceptance to feel stable. And the whole idea of the strength in numbers when you're taken out of all of that and you no longer have the dependence in the strength of your numbers, what does that mean? The people who think like you do, the people who who see scriptures like you do, you find security in that. And it's all been removed during this time. knowledge and intelligence. Test trusting your our ability to reason in certain ways or debate certain things or teach certain things or your understanding rather than com to completely submit and depend on him

during this time. That's removed. That's a system, a support system that's moved. And what about control? You don't have it like you thought you did before in the desert that Yahw has taken you. You're no longer setting the terms. He is. And that's a challenge because it's difficult to trust sometimes that he really is setting these terms and it makes you have questions that you don't have answers to and you spend a great deal of time trying to find those answers. But simple fact of the matter is you don't have that control anymore. So these are some of the support systems

that he removes. And I wanted to share this was one of the very first comments from our discussion on becoming Israel last year or maybe even two years ago. It's been a while. But I thought it encapsulated so much of what we have all felt. It's from a gal named Kimberly. Maybe she's here today. Maybe she's not. I'm laying here in shock. I haven't even heard the message yet. But I opened this because of the title and then reading your preview and I just can't believe it. I feel so seen and I just want to cry because I feel like nobody could possibly understand. I don't even understand.

But here I am continuing to just keep going because I can't do anything else. I can't go back. That's for sure. And the present is lonely. And just this morning, I was telling God through tears that I wish I didn't know what I know now. And I want to be blissfully ignorant again and just sit in those church benches and listen to those tired out sermons. I was happy. I had a routine. I knew all the worship songs. I knew all the folks. I would laugh with the ladies. Go to the daycare and play with the babies. I could teach the elementary school age kids. And after church, I'd help pastor count the tithe, detailed who tithed what for taxes

and get it prepared for the bank. But now I'm by myself. My husband still goes to church on Sunday. I remember the Sabbath by myself. I study Torah by myself. Scripture looks so different to me now. Nothing is the same. Not even my relationship with my father. I don't really want to go back. I'm just frustrated, confused at times, and lonely. But I know I can't go back. Not ever. That comment, she made me tear up and I still tear up when I read comments like this. Let's pause for a moment here and hear from our panel. I'd like to ask Tim, Paul, and Lori if you can relate to some of the things that Kimberly has shared here.

I think we can all relate. Um I think we'd have to be dead if we couldn't relate inside. You know, some of us are are going through this right now. Now I know myself I just actually resigned my position in the church the same movement 3 36 years and but but I voluntarily did it because I brought the word and they weren't

listening. But Yahw tells us to do that right through through crying out. So I feel like for me just crying out is really what I had to do because right now some of us only only thing we have is the word is the spirit.

So that's that's actually been where I've been at depending on the word for every fiber of my being. Uh depending on you the word for my joy. I like God help me find my joy and then that that transitions when we cry out. It's relentless dependence on him. So that's what I was thinking about. Well, everything that I've seen in the last 10 minutes just it's like a mirror of what we have gone through. And um then Lori just said that um we've been in following the Torah for about 10 years now. Uh it's a little less for me because Lori started first and I thought

she was off in some path. I didn't know where she was going. But eventually ancient path. Yeah, ancient path. Um my heart sort of became open to it. I saw what she was studying and all of a sudden the spirit just awakened me to it. But yes, everything that is on there, leaving the churches, we were very involved in churches. I was raised a Roman Catholic and I guess I just went through the pew sitting probably till I went to Lor's church when I was in my early 20s and then I saw what salvation was about. And then when we went into Torah, I saw it was like a third phase of this. All of a sudden, my eyes were opened again to a

deeper meaning of relationship with the father. And yes, you give up your friends, you give up your church, you give up everything that you used to do on the weekends, like all of the activities are on Saturday and Friday night. Those are all gone because it's the Sabbath now. Uh you now have festivals, you now have clean eating. Um you have it's so much different, but you go through such a phase when you're coming into it. Um, I had a lot of anger against the church because of what they were teaching and what they weren't teaching. And it was just it was it was quite a revelation to me. And and of course, we're still learning.

Um, we don't know where we're at. We're out here in the middle of nowhere with no family, no churches, uh, no togetherness except for what we have on Shabbat now. And and it's a struggle. It really is. And uh but like this Kimberly was saying, "But I know I can't go back. Not ever." Once your once your heart has been open to the Torah and what the Holy Spirit has awakened you, you can't close that. You can't go back through that door again. You're you're into a new part of your life. Yeah. So, can I just add something? It seems that we've been hardwired to um be in community and when all of the um components for community are taken

away from you because of belief system um it the only one you can commune with is the father first and foremost and then we search for like-minded believers And um it's it's a it's a tough road. It's a a narrow path for sure because uh it's very um challenging at times, but it's very rewarding just knowing that you're not depending on someone else's um misguided direction. You you go to the word, there it is. It's like following a script. It's all there for you. and our director and producer is perfect. Amen.

Amen. Thank you guys for sharing that. I appreciate it. Let's continue to talk a little bit about this whole dynamic that we're going through. What about the exposure of our hearts? That was the second thing, right, that we were supposed to look at. The exposure of our hearts. When I thought about that and I thought, okay, go Yahw is trying to expose Jacob's heart. I thought to myself, wait a minute, doesn't he already know my heart? So why is he trying to expose my heart? Well, the simple matter is this time is to expose the heart to us, to ourselves, to others that can help, and sometimes

just as legal witness within his judgments. So why why is he doing all of this? Well, here's here's three points that I want us to think about. A man can believe that he trusts Yah until money disappears. Who was I talking to just recently about this? I think I was talking to brother Sean Reno just the other day. We all like to think we have faith. We all like to think that we trust him until something happens in our life like money

disappearing that challenges that. And that's part and parcel what this experience is supposed to bring out in us. A man can believe that he's humble until he's dishonored.

He can believe he's faithful and obedient until that obedience costs him his comfort or his routine or his daily regimen. And as I said already in the previous slide, all these things are taken out of the way so that these things can be revealed. The wilderness that we're all in is not being done to you. It's being done for you. And that's a paramount perspective that you need to have during this time because when these support systems are removed and when these things are happening in the spirit of testing our hearts and exposing our hearts, we can all like Israel feel like it's happening to us instead of for us. We're there. We're

here in order for us to see what's really in our heart. Israel said they would trust Yahw and obey him. When did they do that at Sinai? Everything that you have said we will do. That was their declaration. But what did the wilderness expose in them? their fear, their rebellion, and their unbelief. And that's what's happening in our life. He is raking our hearts for things to be exposed. Things like, "Have you really given up everything to follow him?" That will be tested. Will you really be faithful when you've lost it all? That will be tested. And will you really trust him? That will be tested. And most of all, will you really seek him?

The scriptures say, it's replete with verses where the father says, "He will be found when you seek him with all of your heart." And this is that time while you're in the desert, while you are alone, that you need to be truly seeking him. Or you're simply going to waste your time mourning for Egypt where you had familiarity, you had security, had comfort, refusing to realize that Yahw removed you from what was comfortable so he could lead you into a way that was holy. So, you're going to do one of the two. Hence one of the reasons why I wanted to do this lesson because I think there's a little bit of both going on with some people.

You're either using this time to allow yourself to be exposed to be comfortable in your skin with what he is exposing or long for the past. Long for the meat that you had in Egypt. Long for the security that you had there. all the things that we mentioned in the past. It's very important that we pay attention to this. And then the second part of that verse says that a man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. How do we know who that man was? Well, we know just by looking at the story, but Hosea also reminds us that the man Jacob wrestled with was Yah.

Now when he saw that he did not prevail against him, he touched his socket. So this wrestling is going on. What's happening to you now is what happened to Jacob then. This is a wrestling time with the father. Why is the wrestling important? The same reason it was important to Jacob. He is becoming Israel in the process. You and I are becoming Israel in the same process of wrestling. We all like to say and claim the name Israel, but that can sometimes just be lip service. We know Genesis 32 tells us that Israel means that we've struggled with God and with men and have prevailed.

So that struggle that you're going through right now, which we're going to detail here in a moment, is a process in which he is changing your identity. Not just with him, but with men. How are we strugg How do we struggle with men, Tim? During this time, I think we beat up uh people verbally or we um we use it as excuse because we can't see y'all. So we and if we haven't fully worked through I think it comes out in a lot of different ways sometimes it comes out with our closest spiritual people like with me with you or you know stuff like that or we we take our frustrations out on people or we work

together to kind of like uh disciple one another and say you know and really have those deep talks that are very uncomfortable. There's a lot of different versions of this but those are the things that come to mind. Yeah, there really is. What about this one? Answer this question. Where do we get our traditions from? Men, I mean, they're [laughter] Yeah, they're passed down. I think our church tradition too as well. Our family

tradition, all the traditions that we've embraced that we now look back at and go, "Oh, those are traditions of men. Where'd they come from? They come from men and women that we trusted to teach us

correctly or to lead us correctly." And now we're in a position where we are at odds with those men because of what they hold to and refuse to give up. And you're at a place where you're being called to give those very things up. So Jacob's name was Yakov, which is connected to Av, which means heel, supplanter, one who grasps the heel. His life was characterized by grasping, obtaining, struggling, contending through human effort. Before this moment, the name Israel does not appear in the biblical text at all. This is the very first time we even see the name. It's a new name given only to Jacob. That sounds familiar, doesn't it?

Revelation 2, to him who overcomes or prevails, I will give some of the hidden manna. He I also give him a white stone and on this stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it. So we can see the pattern that Jacob is going through here is repeating itself. Jacob becoming Israel is a prophetic shadow of the believer's final covenant identity. Jacob was left alone. He wrestled. He overcame by clinging and receive the new name. That pattern reaches its fullness in those whom Messiah calls overcomers in the end.

But what I'm going to say next here is probably going to not sit well with some people. This is just what I am learning. Why do I say that it's a shadow of the believer's quote unquote final covenant identity? Unfortunately, I think there's too many people who simply don't understand the covenant. That's another coming lesson. But B like to claim covenant both in the Christian church and in the Torah observant group. They like to claim that they are in this new covenant or under this new covenant. Not really understanding what it means to be in covenant. Jim, I just talked to

you about this last night. What does the word covenant mean? Contract. Contract. That's a fancy word of saying contract. We claim to be within this contract. Yet so many of us don't realize that there is language in that contract that you and I are supposed to live up to in order for us to truly be in covenant. What do I mean by this? To be in covenant is to belong to Yah. He identifies himself as your God and you as his people. This is the foundational identity of covenant first and foremost. But there's more. To be in covenant is to obey his voice.

Repeated condition is hearing and doing what he says, not merely acknowledging it. And I'm afraid too many just do that. All they do is acknowledge the covenant. without actually doing what the covenant demands. To be in covenant is to keep his commandments, his statutes, and judgments. Scripture defines the covenant itself as what he commanded to be performed. To be in covenant is to walk in his ways. It's a lifestyle expression, not an isolated act. What does that mean? Oh, you think Passover is so cool? Let's celebrate

Passover with so- and so this year, but never do it again because you just thought it was cool. No, no, no. To be in covenant means to walk in his ways. To be in covenant is to love him. Biblically, love is defined by obedience, not emotion. What did Yeshua say? If you love me, obey my commandments. To be in covenant is to fear him. This is a posture of reverence that results in submission to his authority. Why am I reading all these things? I want you to compare these things to where you are at. If you're in the desert right now, you've been called out, these

things matter. If you're not, say you're in the Christian church and you just happened upon this video, these things matter. To be in covenant is to serve him with the whole heart and soul. Partial allegiance is not presented as covenant faithfulness. To be in covenant is to remember and do his words. Forgetting or neglecting his commands is treated as covenant breaking. Do you realize that if you choose not to say observe

Shabbat, you choose not to observe the festivals, if you choose to not eat clean, that's breaking the covenant, which means you're outside of it. To be in covenant is to have his law internalized.

The new covenant does not remove the law, but places it in our hearts. What else? To be in covenant is to be caused by his spirit to walk in his statutes. The spirit's role is not to replace obedience, but to produce it. Why did I write that? Because there's so many people in the Christian community who think they have his spirit, which then gives them some ticket to not be obedient. To be obedient is to abide in him by continuing in his commandments. You seeing the theme here? The New Testament defines this as the evidence of knowing him. To be in covenant is to act not merely hear. What's the word for that Paul in Hebrew? Do you remember

to act not merely hear? Shama. Remember that? Yeah. Shama. Shama. Scripture explicitly distinguishes between hearers and doers, declaring only the latter justified. Hello. We have to pay attention, especially those of us who are in the desert. The biblical conclusion is a person can only be said to be in covenant if their life is marked by obedience to Yahw's commandments, having faith in Yeshua, which flows from love, fear, and a heart transformed by him, godly fear that is. And it's in the desert where all this is tested. All the above. In as much as your conversion was a crossing over moment, and it was, so is this.

It's here where you truly enter covenant with Yahw. And that's the controversial part. Because people want to say, well, because I believe in Yeshua or I believe in Jesus, I'm in the new covenant. No, not necessarily. You may have started there, but it's the wrestling that has to happen. It's the struggling that has to happen first before you can say I am in covenant with Yahw. I am following the language of the contract.

Chapter 3: The dynamics of wrestling

Okay. So I wanted to detail here for a moment in what ways do we wrestle and kind of um put this in contemporary verbiage that we can all understand. We talked about it a moment ago in the one of the previous slides. some of the things that we feel here. Wanted to flush that out a little bit. In what ways do we struggle? Well, confusion. What's happening to my life here? Why is this all happening? Why am I suddenly losing friends and family just because I want to obey Yahw? That's that's one of those things that we could probably all share. Tim just said it a moment ago. You're you're

bringing these so-called new insights, new revelations in scripture that you're so fired up about, you bring them to your church friends and they look at you like you're speaking a different language and it's like why why is this happening? Cognitive dissonance. You've escaped or were forced out of your religion and now you're wrestling with your doctrines. This was huge for me when I was going through it. There's two things happening in your life, especially if you're just entering into the desert. You're your first weeks, months, or years. You're learning to embrace what's actually written while coming to grips with the

falsehoods. you embraced for so long and you have one foot in and one foot out. That's co cognitive dissonance. You're living two lives at the same time, struggling to find balance between what you used to think you knew with what you know now. And when that happens, there's a reality check. Jeremiah 16, the Gentiles shall come to you from the ends of the earth. That's happening right now, right? And what are they saying? Surely our fathers have inherited lies, worthless things, unprofitable things. You're coming to grips with that. You're having a reality check that the things that you were taught

before are lies, worthless, and unprofitable, which just feeds into your cognitive dissonance, which just feeds into your confusion. That's wrestling with God and man. And you must do it. And you feel what? I can't tell you how many times this has been expressed to me, Ed. I feel like I knew nothing. You wonder if you really knew anything at all. And you're struggling to accept that you missed so much for so long. wondering if these

things that you see really are the truth or you're just being misled by the evil one. I can't tell you how many people have come to me and said, "Man, all this stuff I'm seeing, all this stuff I'm learning, I

can't it's like I'm back in kindergarten biblically." And I've heard this from learned men, men who have been trained biblically in seminary, who have spent years in the pulpit saying, "Ed, I feel like I'm a babe here." And what I've always said to people like that is, "Good, you need to hang on to that feeling. The moment you lose that sense of awe, that moment you lose that sense of I don't know, squat is the moment that you feel like you've arrived at your understanding. And as soon as you take that stand, there is someone who will humble you. We always need to

have a heart of I'm in elementary school here. I'm just I'm just scratching the surface. His word is too vast. The understanding and the wisdom that comes from his word, you will never be able to embrace. And the moment we start putting him in boxes is when we're humbled. And part of what we're going through right now during the desert is coming to grips with just how far outside the box he really is. And that's an amazing thing. Ed, can I say something? Yes, please. I wanted to talk about something that's really real about what what happens with us when we're wrestling. It's and it's what I believe

that Yahw is doing with us with it's the bristling inside. When when we have the tension inside um even if someone says something that's not perfect, but there's one thing I believe that Yahw is going to use that one thing to really work on our hearts. even if that person's example is not great or whatever, but there's this bristling process, this tension process that I feel like we just or I'm just going to speak person. I have I had to just get comfortable with the tension. Just let myself be disciplined by by him. Let myself be humbled and let that bristling happen and not start fighting everything. I'm so prideful that I just

fight everything. And I just think this bristling process is is a real deal. That's all. No. Amen. Thank you. That's very true. So, in what what other ways do we wrestle the identity crisis? If the system you came, this is a question that you ask. If the system you came from shaped your entire spiritual identity, then leaving it feels like losing yourself and you're no longer sure who you are, where you belong, or what to call yourself, right? Right, babe. Don't be afraid to speak up. What What do we call ourselves?

I don't feel like a Christian anymore. I feel like I left that behind because there were so many things wrong with that. But that was how I identified myself all my life. And when you walk away from that, you are struggling with what do I even who am I? And we're going to get to that in a moment. on a on a much deeper scale. But we go through this delay. You expected quick answers. And isn't that so true? When we get into tough times, man, we want a fast answer right now. I don't want to be here very long. But instead, God gives us silence sometimes. He wants you to wallow in that s silence a bit

and wonder. He wants you to wait. He wants to get you to embrace the process and you wrestle with that timing because our flesh wants immediate clarity and it doesn't always come. They always say hindsight is 20/20. And in submission, knowing truth and surrendering to it are not the same. And that's true for every single one of us. We can all say that we understand this truth or that truth, but surrendering to it is a whole new ball of wax. Wrestling begins when obedience demands actual change and not just intellectual agreement.

what we're going through, what we should be going through right now, wherever you are, the Father is taking your spinning rubber and he's trying to force it to the ground where the rubber meets the road to get you out of your head and into actual living the walk. Fear of provision. If obedience affects your job, and it does, your finances, and it does, your church, your community, you begin to ask whether Yahw will truly

sustain you outside the systems that you depended on. Read that again. I have to honor Shabbat. Well, I work on Saturdays, right?

That's going to affect your job, which affects your finances. I've been going to church on Sunday my entire life. And then you start struggling with if you if I make these changes, which hopefully we all have, at least those of us on in this group, how is that going to affect my life, my career, my job, my money, my bank account, my retirement, my you name it. We we struggle with this. But what is the father trying to do? He's trying to get you to stop trusting the systems and start trusting in him. And sometimes that if you ever watch the movie The Matrix with Neo jumping off that building

across the way to the top of the other building, that's what it feels like. You know, he says, "Okay, I'm going to die." [laughter] We That's what it feels like for us. That's the that's the same jump that Yahw is trying to get from you in in your faith. But you have to allow it. And then I put this one in red because this is very important. During

Chapter 4: Counting the cost

this time, the dragon will war against you. He will try to take you out. Someday I might share with you how he tried to take me out in the beginning of my journey. But it will come if it hasn't already come. Revelation 21 tells us that the dragon wars against those who do what? Keep the commandments of God and has to have the testimony of Christ. Who is that? Is that the church? No. Is that the Christian church? No. They have half of that, right? part partly. No, it's it's the eklesia that he wars against and he will try to remove you during this time that you're in the desert.

This will be the moment that you draw the attention of the enemy more than any other time in your life. And you have to be ready for it. When that day comes, if it hasn't already come, needs to be the time that you put your faith and trust in him more than ever to get you through it. But you will be tested. He will try to destroy you, to take you out, to confuse you, and to war against you. You must prevail. Abraham, as we know, had to leave everything. Jacob had to leave everything. Yeshua had to leave everything. And so will you. We know this verse. We've looked at it before. Counting the cost in Luke 14.

The whole story starts off with what? Great multitudes. To me, this is a picture of modern-day Christianity or evangelicalism at large. Great multitudes of people trying to say they follow Jesus or wanting to follow Jesus. Well, we have to ask the question, why were why were these great multitudes with him? Why do we ask that question at all? Well, because we know from the book of Acts that when all said and was was said and done, there was about 120 people that really considered themselves to be following Yeshua. 120 people is not great multitudes. Great multitudes is thousands of people.

We know that he fed 5,000 people. And the scriptures say he turned to them. He turned back to them. Imagine this moment. And he started laying out these incredible challenges. Look at all the does notss [laughter] in blue. All those does notss. If he if he or she does not A, B or C, then look at the words in red. Can't be my disciple. Starts off by talking about hating mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters. Why? Because it's during this time in the desert that those people are going to get you to change your mind or try. Paul already said it.

He said when Lori first started studying this stuff, he was concerned that she was following something weird. You're going to get that from your family, your primary family. Notice there's no uncles, aunts, or nephews and nieces in this list. Nope, it's mom, dad, wife, children, brothers and sisters. The people closest to you are going to question your conviction. And if you give in, the verses in red apply. You cannot be my disciple if

you're not willing to die. And we talked about this last week. The constant dying, the death that we're always going through and denying ourselves. Can't be my disciple. If you don't count the

cost, the rest of that verse almost says it's all talking about counting the cost. If you don't count this cost, you you can't be my disciple. And then finally, if he does not forsake everything he has, you you can't be Yeshua's disciple. Those are hard words. And it's in this area that this life in the desert is meant to test. How did Yeshua find the quote unquote sheep among the great multitudes? Because in these multitudes of people, there were sheep. They weren't all sheep. Some were goats. How did he find them? By speaking hard words. that separated true disciples from casual followers.

And we have verses like John 6 that says people started to stop following him. Why? Because it was too tough. It was getting too hard. It was fun when he was feeding his fish. It was fun when he was feeding his bread. It was fun when he was healing this disease or that disease. but now it's getting too hard and I'm out. That's how you're going to be tested during this time. And then Jacob was left with a limp for the rest of his life as a reminder. And when you make these kinds of decisions, you will also be equally injured in one way or the other.

But that injury was a reminder for Jacob and for us of what it cost for us to receive the blessing. When multitudes came to Yeshua, he turned and spoke of hatred toward father and mother, bearing the cross, counting the cost, giving up everything. And these weren't the normal recruiting words that somebody would use. No, they were separating words. He came to bring a sword. The goats wanted miracles, bread, healing, and excitement. The sheep wanted truth, even when the truth cost them everything. And there is pain in making these decisions. In some cases, lifelong

pain. And then he asked this question another time in the scripture where you go, does the father not know Jacob's name? Why would he ask him this question? Because he was forcing Jacob to confess who he had been. Remember what the name Jacob means. To say, "I am Jacob," wasn't just stating a label. It was an acknowledgment of the meaning attached to that name. Heelgrasper, suppler, one who strives by his own cunning and strength. Jacob's entire life, as we know, reflected that name. So why is he asking him his name?

The question for Jacob wasn't really, what do people call you? The question was, who are you? Remember my point earlier about identity crisis. Here Jacob is facing an identity crisis. When the father said, "Who are you?" by asking him his name. Before y'all could give him that new name, Jacob must first own the old one. We have to own who we were. It's a consistent biblical pattern. Confession always comes before transformation. Jacob could not become Israel until he admitted that he was Jacob. So the question was one of exposure and it brought Jacob face to face with himself and that's what the desert does.

It helps you to get in touch with who you really are, who you really were, what your tendencies really can be, how dark your darkness really is. Whatever it be and you have to face this question in your wrestling coming in for a landing here. Pineal scripture said he called this name pineal. Why? Because I've seen y'all face to face and my life was preserved. And that's the end goal here, brothers and sisters. During this time of wrestling in the desert, we are wrestling with him face to face. No friends, no family, no church, no previous doctrines. We're overcoming those. And we're dealing with him face to face.

And like Jacob, you will remember this time of wrestling. It will be etched in your heart and mind. as the time you had to face him and redefine everything you thought you believed. It's in the process of wrestling and overcoming that you not only secure your place in covenant, but you earn the right, just as Jacob did, to bear the name Israel. Ezekiel 20, one of my favorite verses in all the Bible. As I live, says Yhovah, surely with

a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. Praise Yah. I will bring you out from the peoples.

That's what he's doing. And gather you from the countries where you are scattered with a mighty hand, with an outstretched h arm. That's the awakening. And with fury poured out, I will bring you into what? The desert, the wilderness of the peoples to do what? To wrestle. And there I will plead my case with you face to face. Just as I pleaded my case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead my case with you face to face. If you have any question about what's happening in the desert with you right now, whether it's been a year, 5 years, 10 years, does not matter.

The father is pleading his case with you face to face. This wrestling in is the moment when Yahw brings you out from the noise, the structural systems, the distractions, causes you to stand alone before him so he may contend with you directly. He's not speaking to you through others anymore, but face to face, pressing his case against everything you ever thought you believed, everything you trusted, everything you have justified. In that place, there's no hiding behind tradition, no leaning on inherited doctrine, no escape into the crowd. It's a personal confrontation where Yahw exposes the heart, tests your allegiance,

and forces a decision between truth and everything else. We must persevere. We must hang on. Like Jacob, we must not let go. We must endure until we have received the blessing. What is the blessing we're we're searching for? Not only to be given the new name, to become part of the Israel of God. Galatians 6:16. But to hear those words, the one statement that a true believer longs to hear. Well done, good and faithful servant. To the faithful ecclesia, Yeshua wrote, "I know you have little strength. You've kept my word. You've not denied my name. And because you have kept my command to persevere,

I will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly. Hold fast. Don't let go that no one may take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God.

Chapter 5: Discussion and reflection

That is my discussion, my thoughts, my encouragements, my corrections, whatever you want to call them. Um, thank you for playing along, Tim and Paul and Lori. Your comments are wonderful as always. But now I'm gonna shut up and I want to hear from you and your stories and your thoughts and your question. Looks like Jeff Miller is up first. Go ahead, brother. Good morning and thank you so much for this lesson. Uh, couple things I one of the things that I wrestle with, especially lately is physicality, my own physical being. When I'm physically not

right, I'm not mentally right. I'm not spiritually right. If I'm sick some way, and it's frustrating. I don't know if if you felt this way, but I used to be very active in the church. I used to sing, play the guitar, the bass. I used to preach and teach. And one of the most frustrating things is that's what's getting taken away from me. Um, Parkinson's takes away a lot of your voice. That's why sing like Neil Diamond, Benny Mardona's Can't sing. Well, one of them's dead. But anyway, it also the shaking. You can't play the guitar. You can't even hold the freedded

finger down. I I'm not crying. I'm trying to let you know this was my identity. I would study with books open and be writing notes left and right. I can't write my name now legibly. So, I can't do that. And it's one after the other that I'm I'm asking God, well, I you know, I'm doing all this stuff for you. what's going on is so frustrating and that puts me in a bad mood toward him automatically. So, I'm not learning anything. I'm not

hearing him. Um, that's my story. That's where I'm at at this moment. But there's one other thing I'd like to let some of you know

that seemed like um seemed like if you're not obedient, you're going to get smacked or something like that. I was reintroduced to Naan or non as you might know him the leper uh that went to Elisha for healing and I was reminded throughout that story two things. The first one was he asked Elisha he said uh after he was healed he said now when I go back home I have to help the king bow down and worship. Does Yahweh know what's in my heart that I'm not doing that is part of my job? He was going back into his environment, into his church, into his thing. And Elisha said, "No, that's cool." He also asked if he could take some dirt back

with him. What for? Because it's Yahweh's dirt. He knew Yahweh was the king of all. As a matter of fact, Jesus brought him up as an example of faith. So, we don't need to beat ourselves up so much. I'm sure he kept no feast. I don't think he could speak Hebrew, but he did have a Hebrew slave. I don't think he did a lot of those things. And I'm not telling us not to strive for more obedience. I'm just saying God knows what's in your heart. To keep the commandments is to

secure them. They are the most important things to you. Whether you can obediently walk each one of them out, that's the struggle we all have. But don't beat yourself up over the fact that you're not perfectly keeping Passover or you don't know how to say Yeshua. You know, it's just give yourself some slack. All I'm saying, I'm sorry for rambling. That's okay, brother Miller. I appreciate that. That's all good stuff. Now, real quick and I'll let Luke here, Sher, he's up next. Um, we got both Luke's. Oh, Samuel made it.

Glad to have you here, Samuel. I want to I want to look I'm looking at the gallery now. I'm seeing all of your faces. Um, what I want to do and I'm going to lower your hand for you, Jeff, since you just shared. What I want to do is I want to ask you guys, how many of you by show of hands feel like there's things you want to share, but for some reason you're afraid to. You're not an eloquent speaker like Moses. You nervous. You're afraid.

And you just don't feel like something that you want to do. Show me your Show me your hands. Okay, I see three, four, who else? Five. Okay, six, seven. Okay, a lot of you guys. Let me encourage you. It seems like every week we have some of the same people sharing those responses. And I'm grateful for that. Don't get me wrong. I want you to continue to do so. But I really want to hear from the rest of you.

And I don't care how good of a speaker you think you are or how little you think you may know. I don't care about any of that. I want to just hear your voices and your thoughts and your responses, good, bad, or ugly. You're there's no judgment here. And I hope that you've learned that by now that no one's here to judge you or judge anything that you have to say. I just want to hear your thoughts. Um, one of the things I used to do when I was a preacher after the lesson

is so many people would come up to me and say, "Man, good job, Ed. Great lesson. Great lesson." And they're just, you know, they're just they're just being people. But I never let them get away from saying that. By saying that, I would say, "What what did you learn? What was so good about it? How did it hit you?" And of course, that question always put them back on their heels because they weren't prepared to answer that question. But there's a reason for that, right? I want to hear what's going on in your heart as a result of some of the

things that we looked at today. So, having said that, I think um Luke had his hand up. Let's have Luke Kendrick go first, and then I want to encourage the rest of you, don't be afraid to raise your hand and and share. Go ahead. Shabbat shalom. Yeah, listen. I want other people to go also and father knows I speak way too much. So, yeah, I'd love to hear from everybody else. So, I'll pass.

Okay. Well, amen, brother. Thanks for that. Listen, what I said was not meant to shut down our regular sharers by any stretch of imagination. I wanted to encourage everybody else. You're right to encourage others who who don't share as much. And I would encourage others to share. Amen. Let's pick on someone who hasn't shared. Instead of going in order, let's pick on someone who hasn't shared very often. I see Sandra there. Sandra, go ahead. Make sure your microphone's on, dear.

This was a really good good program, Ed. I've just been struggling a lot. Can you share how you've been struggling? Well, I have kidney disease and I've had it all my life, but now I'm at stage four. And I'm taking a trip to Israel in a few weeks to see my son and [snorts] family um to help. My daughter-in-law is having a baby, so um I'm going to help with the rest of the kids and just help them out. and my husband will be alone and he's kind of um I've been his caregiver the

last couple of years since co and I've hit most of the bases that he's going to need while I'm gone but there's still a couple of things I need arrange And as far as uh what the talk was about, you know, I had a big struggle at my church when I left. Um, I had shared in my ladies group in the book of Galatians that I was now following the feast days and I believed what God said in the

Bible and and I got attacked badly and I've gotten over that. But some of those women have reached out to me in the last year and brought up questions like Sabbath which has been good because I needed those time that time to you know learn more and I've been able to share with them but you know after I share I never hear from them again but God's given me the answers and I I haven't backed down and one in particular killer. She was close friend. Um, so I'm still in the desert, still walking alone.

Um, and it it gets hard sometimes. Well, thank you, sister. I appreciate I'm done. Thank you. I'm I'm grateful that you shared. Grateful that you were honest and real with us. Um your stories like yours are why this lesson is being taught. On one hand, I want you to be encouraged. The father is not blind to what you're going through. You're carrying a lot on your shoulders.

And I want to be able for this group to do whatever we can to support you, even if it's from a distance, whatever that means. You just have to let me know what that means or let us know what that means. But before we continue, I think it's appropriate for us to go to the father right now and just pray. Holy father Yhovah, we want to come to you right now on behalf of our sister Sandra and pray that you would hold her up, remind her who you are.

Yes, she's dealing with all of these issues and these struggles and these trips and her husband and her ailment, her disease, but more than any of that, Father, you're bigger. You're bigger and greater than all of that. And it's nothing to you. And we just pray that you would give her strength, give her peace of mind, give her determination, give her resolve. remind her whom she is serving, remind her of her future. And Father, we pray with outstretched hands

that to show your power in her life and in the eyes of and ears of everyone here. that she would heal what's going on in her body. Yes, Father, we're asking you to reveal yourself in her healing for her, for her husband who is sanctified through her faith as Paul teaches, but for this group to see your power. That's what we ask for, Father, in the name of your son. And we just pray, Father, that you would carry her. And in the weeks and months to follow,

we would hear great stories about how you showed yourself, who showed your power, as we learned last week, in the lives of those who fear you. We love you, Father. And we pray these things in the name of your holy son, Yeshua. Amen. Amen. Thank you. Thank you all. We want to hear. We want to hear you follow up,

Sandra. Come back, tell us, email us, call us, text us, whatever. You're not alone. Yes, we're in a million different parts of the world, but you're not alone. You have an audience here of people that love you.

Thank you. Julia, you're up next, Julia Ker. Thank you. Uh, Shabbat Shalom. And I appreciate your encouragement to speak, Brother Ed, because I feel like I'm a little late to the party. I've only been pursuing the Torah for a little over a year now and so I'm much very much obeyed. This teaching spoke very deeply to my heart. Uh it describes where I'm at perfectly. My conundrum right now is u my husband is not on the same path and I'm

wrestling with how to honor him. He's still very much involved in the Sunday church and how not to compromise my new understanding of what it means to obey the commandments. So, I would appreciate any advice on how to deal with that in a sensitive way, respectful way. I I no longer serve in the Sunday church. I was a deaconist there for many, many years. I no longer serve there. I no longer tithe to that church. Um, but if I wrestle with whether I should attend in addition to everything I do on the Sabbath, should I also attend with my

husband just to honor his position? Well, I I can I can definitely answer to that, but I I would like to instead open that up to other people in the group who might be able to give her some advice and thoughts on that. Um, just show me your hand if you want to share and we'll we can we can Thank you. We can do that. Go ahead, Luke. Shabbat shalom. Um, I'm new to the faith also. I've only uh come to Torah in the last four years and I've been walking it out for the last two and a half.

Um [clears throat] I belonged to church of god 7th day. They were sabbathke keepers. They keep the food laws etc. But that is where we separated and I had to separate myself from the church because of their teachings and their doctrine. [clears throat] um to honor someone else in their walking down with someone down the wrong path leading to a cliff will only encourage that person to walk down the wrong path.

So what I encourage you to do is stand your ground. say I love you, which I'm sure you do, married many years. Um, but stand your ground and say, I I cannot forsake my own beliefs and my own path. When we stand our ground is where people either let go of our hand or they don't. So I encourage you to hold on to the hand of the father, hold on to the hand of your husband, but if he chooses to let go, then no more needs to be said.

That's all. Can you help me? Can you help me understand how it how it's compromising by going on Sunday? It it's all right. It's not if you're ready to share your faith with others and stand your ground. Okay. And and have scripture in hand and being only in this for a year. Mhm. I mean even Paul went away for three years when he after he came to understand Yeshua, he went away for three years and delved into scripture

to come back and then say this is where I stand. Unless you can stand your ground through scripture, then I would say you're only going there to appease him to to appease others. And the only person we are to appease is the father. That's why Thank you. Yeah. Let me jump in here real quick if you don't mind. That's that's that's just my opinion and That's where I've landed

in in my faith. I I used to call, you know, other Christians brother, which I don't do anymore because I don't even count myself as a Christian. I count myself a follower of the way. So, I I have to say that, you know, I don't know. It it it's really up it's up to you and on your knees and prayer and what the father guides you to do. Okay. So, let let me just toss a couple other thoughts in here for you here, Julie.

This is the way I see it. We eat clean, right? As believers, we try to follow the food laws. There's many restaurants around me that sell pig to do what you're asking. [clears throat] And I know you're not asking,

you're asking for input. But should I look at that restaurant and go, I'm not going in there. They sell pig. Even though they also make a salad. Should I not go into that restaurant? Where did Paul spend most of his time?

In the synagogues. Were the synagogues teaching truth or were they teaching Talmud? They were teaching Talmud. They were teaching their traditions. Where did Yeshua spend most of his time teaching? Well, not most of his time, but where was he at? He was in the synagogues. Who did he hang out with? tax collectors and sinners. [laughter] True. So, is it wrong for you to join your husband at Sunday church? I don't think it's wrong.

Well, like Luke said, you go in there solid in your convictions, solid in your beliefs, knowing it's not going to move you, but you're there to love him, and you're there to serve them and to show them what it looks like to walk in the way. So, don't be afraid of doing that. That's just my two cents. Thank you. Yeah. Oh, you're welcome. Let's see now. Let me go back to my gallery screen because there was one sister that I wanted to

hear from that we don't normally hear from. And where did she go? Did she raise She put her hand down. Who Who was that? Who was that? Who was that? Well, Michelle. What say? Oh, was it is it was it Celestina? Celestina. So, is that how you say that name? Oh, it was Michelle Leonardo. She put her hand down. But let's hear from Chris from Celestina. Make sure your mic's on, dear. Your mic, you're still muted.

Looks like she had a poor connection, too. So, we'll come back to you, solicitor. Oh, there you are. Go ahead. You're kind of you're kind of breaking up, but we'll give you a shot. Okay. We'll we'll come back to you, uh, Celestina, because your your connection is really bad. Um, Michelle, did you have something to say or did it get covered already? You had your hand up. I did. Um, I struggled very much when um, Yah showed me the way. I was in Bible college actually [clears throat] and um

coming away from the four-wall church or C31, however you want to call it, you know, um was very difficult for me because of my family and all that stuff. And my daughter was also very she was young and she was very involved in the church herself. she served and stuff. And um I found that Roy Yas showed me um because I was resistant. I was fighting. I was in that uh in that uh that wrestle [clears throat] and church is strange. Sunday church is strange fire

because even though we are in strong conviction, if we're if we're going there and we're preaching like Yeshua and the disciples did, that's one thing. But I think to sit there and to hear that and to um mix with them, that's that's mixture, that strange fire. And it's very dangerous because it does attach itself to you. You know, it does um it does uh what we see, what we hear, what we read, what we do affects us. So if we're mingling and we're mixing mixing in that, it does

affect us. And I found that it was really affecting my daughter. And Yah said to me, "Hello, what does set apart mean? You're, you know, you're every Sunday you're coming home and you're having to redirect her and rechange what the pastor is saying and say, you know, the pastor is wrong." And finally, I'm like, "Why am I doing this?" Like, you're right, God. [laughter] Why am I continuing to go having to rehash everything with my kid on Sunday?

And I noticed and I saw that it's when when I finally um left the four-wall church um the revelations and the my relationship with Yah grew stronger myself because I was able that mixture was gone. with that struggle of what is right, what is wrong, you know, and having to unlearn all of that doctrine was easier not listening to it every week. So, that's just my two cents. Um, I really we're of course very grateful for your

two cents and thank you so much for sharing. Okay, guys, we're running out of time here. what I want to do. I apologize to some of you regulars who normally share. Uh don't take it personally. I'm just trying to get the rest of the people here to engage a little bit. And aren't we glad that we did otherwise we wouldn't have been able to hear from Sister Sandra um who shared everything that she shared. And so I apologize to the rest of you who didn't really get a chance to um to talk. it was a weighty lesson and

um sometimes those thing you know we need to talk about those things. So I think it was important that we we had a chance to do that. Um what else before we cut things loose here guys? Um next week we're talking about the women who carried the promise. That'll be a fun uh time together. I've asked or I will ask I will tap some of your shoulders ladies to uh to share some things on that day um because it's a great story to share and we don't talk enough about the great women in

scripture that that we need to and so I'm grateful that Tim encouraged me to do it. My wife has encouraged me to do it and we are going to do it. Uh, having said all that, guys, I'm so grateful that you're here. Thank you for coming. Thank you for listening. Thank you for sharing your hearts. Please have people like Sandra uh on your hearts and in your prayers and as well as the others here in this group who we all know from afar. Um, one of our members who comes

when he can, his name is Dusty. Recently had to have some serious surgery. He's he he got through it. Um, you can be praying for him and anybody else that you can think of. I'm I can't think of everybody at the same time, but you know who they are, but I hope that you have a fantastic Shabbat. Welcome back to the States to David and Christine Baronson from their long journeys abroad. Yay. We'll get to hear from him maybe next week's a bit. And so, um, guys, I love you. Have a great Shabbat, a great

weekend, and we'll talk to you soon. Everybody, be blessed to all of you. David, good to see you, Emily. Hello. Hi, Daria. Shalom everyone. Shalom. David, I'll try and message you later. [clears throat] Shabbat shalom. You're on my new prayer list. On my prayer list, so thank you. Shabbat shalom. Thank you. Bye everyone.