

Heart's Baggage. Pilgrim's Progress

6 Iyar, 5772 (28/04/12) *Learning the Packing Process* J. M. Terrett

Tazria/Metzora She Bears Seed/Infected Ones Recovery Time Takes Time
Torah: Lev. 12:1-13:59. 14:1-15:33

(1) **12:4.** Her purification shall occur 33 days after first seven. She shall not touch anything holy and not go to the sanctuary until she is pure (take time to heal, avoid giving or getting infection)

(2) **13:46** As long as he is impure, he shall dwell alone, outside the camp (isolated, not abandoned)

(3) **14:45.** The infected house shall be demolished and all the materials removed (mold is dangerous)

(4) **15:31** You shall remove all of their impurities so they do not soil my tabernacle

Haftarah: 2 Kings 7:3-20

(5) **7:9** let us not keep the good news until morning or chastisement shall come – let us inform the house of the King. The people will find out and punish those who did not tell.

(6) **7:13** let us take five horses and check it out (verify what people say)

Brit Chadashah: Mt. 23:16-24:2; 30, 31

(7) **23:25** You wash the outside of cup but inside it is full of greed and self indulgence. Containment is not the same as crucifixion, deliverance or healing. Inner realities are as important as appearances

Ps. 106/120 Jewish Hero: ***All families of the soldiers who fought in Israel's wars***

One of the mysteries of life is why sometimes **good things** happen to bad people and **bad things** happen to good people. Eccl. 9:11 says that the race is not always won by the **swiftest**, nor the war by the most **valiant** and riches are not always given to the **intelligent**, nor favour to the **wise**. Sometimes all depends on the time and on the circumstance – being in the right place at the **wrong** time or in the wrong place at the **right** time.

However, rather than try and understand all the conditions under which certain principles of the Bible apply and end up **sick** and **confused** like Job, or **judgmental** and **narrow-minded** like his friends, **could we just say that we should always do our best and plan ahead and trust the L-rd for the rest.**

Certainly, we should aim at success, but over and above all of that, we should also come to the place of true spiritual maturity which understands that given all the factors which are beyond our control and understanding, **G-d can do what He wants, when He wants and to whom He wants, whenever He wants.**

Now, this is not an easy place to reach, nor an easy place to remain, but it is the place where we need to learn to live and it is this place, this process which will either enrich our heart baggage and our pilgrimage, or which will prepare us for great loss on the Day where the L-rd checks our **heart homework.**

We can never be fully in control of all that happens to us – **the only real control we can have and for which we will be held responsible is how we relate to all that happens to us.**

We can only be in control of what we treasure and store up in our hearts. How we relate to the things which happen to us will always be more important than the things which happen to us. Because we are just passing through this life and loading up our hearts, **nothing less and nothing more.**

Let's look at some passages:

Phil. 2:13: For it is G-d who is at work in you to give you the **desire** and the **ability** according to His **good pleasure**. Do you understand what is His business and what is yours?

Eph. 2:10: We are His workmanship, created for **good works**, which He has prepared beforehand that we should practice them. Are you practicing the good works He has prepared for you?

Phil. 3:12-16: It is not that I have already won the prize, but I run in such a way that I might take hold of it, because **He has already taken hold of me**. Brethren I do not consider that I have taken hold of it, but this one thing I do, forgetting that which is behind me, and concentrating on that which is before me, I run towards the finish line **in such a way as to win the prize** of the celestial vocation of G-d in Yeshua HaMashiach. All of us who are mature, let us have this attitude and if in anything you have another opinion, G-d will reveal even this unto you, only consider the place we have already reached and **let us learn to walk in step together**. How is your "in such a way" doing? **Are we walking in step or stepping on each other?**

Phil. 1:20, 21. According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in **nothing** I shall be ashamed, but that now, as always, the Messiah shall be glorified in my body, whether it is by my **life** or by my **death**. For me to live is the Messiah, to die is gain (advantageous).

Phil. 4:12, 13 I have learned what it is to be in **need** and I have learned what it is to have **plenty**. I have learned **the secret of being content in every situation**, whether I am well fed or whether I am hungry, for I can endure everything through Him who give me strength.

Learning the **packing process** means knowing that it is **what is in our hearts that is more real and spiritually significant than that which is in our lives**. Now this does not mean that our initial responses to everything should be: Praise G-d, thank you G-d for what You have allowed into my life. What it does mean is that we need to understand that our reactions need to go through a **digestion process** (and **integration process**) where we take the pain, the joy, the loss, the success and work it through until we reach a point where we can genuinely thank Him for His final control in our lives.

How do we do that?

First we **surrender to His sovereignty** which means we do the best we can, but where we also understand that He never loses control, even when we do.

Second we seek Him for a **personal, spiritual understanding** of what has happened to us, from a sound biblical perspective (Deut. 29:29, Rom. 8:18 and even Rom. 8:28) and learn to adopt the reaction He wants us to have – **so that it is His Word that becomes the key to the situation and not the situation itself**.

Third we survive with whatever means of escape He provides and chew things over later (I Cor. 10:13). I think I've just described the Psalms.

Fourth, we understand that His Kingdom and His final purposes will overcome all and any resistance until that glorious day when his kingdom is established over all the generations and nations of mankind and **we make sure that neither our attitudes, nor our habits are part of that resistance**.

Fifth, we trust Him with all the unfinished, incomprehensible business of our lives and of life and we trust Him to trace a specific path for us to follow, **so that our journey is successful** and

Sixth we learn to mind our own business and do not try and explain how everything and anything correlates with our unflinching trust in His grace.

In other words we retreat into His bigger picture and know that all things will eventually work out and we learn to go about our business at every stage of our lives and leave the rest to Him.

How are you doing with your **packing process**? What is your **heart** filling up with?

Are you letting Him teach you how to **respond** and how to live under His **control**?

Sometimes it will take time – **even a lifetime**, but if we understand that our entire duty is to have **faith** and to learn **obedience** – to adopt the **attitudes** and **habits** of His word, then instead allowing our spirituality to be determined by the circumstances of our lives – be they ever so good or ever so sad, we allow our hearts to fill up the reactions that He wishes us to adopt, **however long that takes**.

You see, instead of trying to make sure we have **ideal situations** and **feeling lost** when things happen to us that we cannot explain (or accept), we begin to see that **it is our duty to respond to the control He most certainly has over our lives**. As long as we can acknowledge this control and allow it to have control of our hearts, then our lives will **eventually** follow suit, **either in this life or in the next**.

Every day and at every stage of our lives, we are **packing our hearts for the day of the L-rd**, not with what is happening (the good, the bad and even the ugly), but with the reactions we take with us in how we react each situation in our lives. **Our heart homework is the most important thing we have to finish in this life**.

We may not get it all finished, but if we focus on our **inner lives**, and on our **heart baggage**, then the peace which **passes all understanding will be the place where we dwell** – and we will learn not to let any **moths** or **thieves** break in and steal it from us.

Sometimes things in our hearts take time to be **digested** and it is likely that all of us will have unfinished business to contend with when we stand before the King. But if we understand **which business** it is for which we will stand before the King (our heart business), then we can work on making the **attitudes** and the **habits** of our hearts a suitable dwelling place for His presence as we progress through this life towards our final, real home, to the Jew first and also to the gentile.

In conclusion, as we go through this series: **Heart's Baggage, Pilgrims' Progress**, I will be saying a lot of things which will not always apply equally to everyone and I would encourage each of you to listen to what the L-rd is saying to you and to store up the rest for a later date.

I spoke to you about the **packing process**. What have you packed? How are you packing? Do you need to repack, unpack or just let go. If you can keep sight of His final purposes and if you can make sure you are building up the reactions and habits His word requires from disciples of the King, then everything else will fall into place, **whether in this fleeting life or in the one which will last forever**.

Let's pray.