

Travel by the Map

The Straight and Narrow

When we first begin thinking of going on a long trip we decide the destination. Wise planners will take as much time as is necessary to determine what route will be traveled, how much it will cost for the trip and how long it will take to get there. The method of transportation and its safety should be considered, and the possible problems encountered along the way. In other words we will “count the cost” and prepare for whatever it takes to reach our destination successfully.

We as Believers are “travelers”. Our destination is to make it into Yahweh’s kingdom, and if possible, be in the first resurrection to eternal life. Yeshua says that many make a start but few would make it. Matthew 7:14 Because strait (narrow) is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. The apostles questioned, “who then can make it?” Mark 9:23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

Mark 10:27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Why will some reach their destination and other’s (who make a start) will not? Some have been so misled they are confused as to where they will go, and fearful of even making a decision. Others have not decided in what direction to start, or what map to use. The first thing one must decide is where to go and the benefits of going there. If he, or she, believes in the Bible, he would look for directions there. The Bible would become their road map. So many new travelers get confused and have problems reading and understanding the Bible when they first begin to study it. That is expected. Every one that I know had the same problem. The way to understanding it to go to the author of the map in earnest prayer, asking for understanding. He will give you enough direction to get you started if you start knowing where you are going and why you are making the trip. You will not be given all of the directions at one time. And if you fail to go in the right direction from the very start, you will not be given any more instructions until you get back on the right route. In other words, you have to do what He shows you for Him to continue showing you more. That is the secret of understanding the Bible. The more you follow it the more you will understand. A must start is given in Acts. Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. However one would need to know what the meaning of “repent” and “sin” is. So you look up and study these topics. That would be akin to studying a road map. You would find that to repent one would have to change his lifestyle to fit with the teachings of Yeshua. You would discover that sin is the transgression of Yahweh’s laws.

1 John 3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

1 Corinthians 15:56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

Before you embark on this trip Yeshua gave this advice:

Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? After you decide to make the trip, you find and study the right map, (there are many conflicting maps) sit down and seriously decide what your expenses will be. Even though you will receive the highest reward you will ever reach once you reach the end of your journey, it may well be the most expensive trip you will ever take. You can be sure that on this trip there will be many hazards and huge obstacles to misdirect you away from the “straight and narrow” route. Satan and his demons are determined to lead you in the wrong direction. Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Satan will put many huge spiritual boulders in your path. There will be obstacles of doubt, bad habits, discouragement, addictions, weaknesses, discord with loved ones, failures, temptations, pulls of human desires and the world around you, and maybe even diseases. When these things appear in the road you may get sidetracked for awhile, but just as a baby learns to walk, when he falls down, he gets back up and tries again, so should we. That is when we need to go back to the Author of our map for help, and restudy and meditate on it.

Ephesians 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Romans 13:12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. (At the end of the journey?)

2 Corinthians 6:7 By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, Rom. 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

After we overcome some of these obstacles and show Satan we are determined to make it to our goal he will leave us for awhile and wait for our more vulnerable occasion before returning. There will be times when the road will run smooth, other times it will be almost impassable. Whatever the situation, one must always keep his goal as a strong passion. It must be the thing he thinks of more than anything else in his life. The more he dwells on his passion, studies and meditates on it, the farther along he travels and the stronger he becomes. This is called “growing in grace”. He becomes more knowledgeable and closer to the Author of the map, prayers are answered as he learns to follow guidance. He becomes rooted in faith and hope. He has more joy and contentment. In most cases he is blessed with all the comforts in life that he needs for happiness.

Hebrews 13:5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. Philippians 4:11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

Yahweh will not always give you everything you ask for or expect of Him, just as a loving parent will not always give in to every request or desire of his child. He may say, “no” sometimes. We may need to be disciplined, learn a lesson, or repent, before we get a “yes”. Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. However, you can be sure whatever He does it will be for your long term good.

One might offer, “the prophets and apostles didn’t fare so well” and that is a good argument until you understand that the passion of these people were not the comforts of this physical life; their goal was to reach the light at the end of narrow road that leads to eternal life. They were what some might call “obsessed” with their passion, and to them that was all that was worth attaining. They had what it took to do a job and nothing, not even death, was going to prevent them from reaching their goal. Paul explains:

Phil. 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

- 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,
- 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:
- 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;
- 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.
- 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.
- 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,
- 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
- 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.
- 16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

Paul was on that path of “straight and narrow” that Yeshua talked about. One only has to read 2Cor. 5 to grasp the passion he lived. When we decide to travel this straight and narrow road to eternal life, counting the cost, we, too, must be willing to pay for the privilege with our very lives. Because there are many perils along the way we desperately need the guidance of the Author and His map. We must cultivate the seed of determination that Yahweh has planted in our hearts, passionately traveling that narrow road with a burning desire to make it into His glorious family and kingdom.

This life is so short nothing in it is worth giving up the struggle to obtain eternal life.