

## Transcript – Have You Lost Your First Love?

Shabbat shalom. Alrighty, the message I am going to give today is called *Have You Lost Your First Love? ... Have You Lost Your First Love?* It's not a Harlequin romance. But we will start in Revelation 2. It says:

**Revelation 2:1-5** *To the messenger of the congregation of Ephesus, write: These things say He who holds all things, and the seven stars in His right hand, He walking in the midst of the seven golden menorahs. I know your works, and your labor, and your patience, and that you cannot bear evil ones; and you tried those pretending to be apostles and are not, and found them to be liars. And you have patience and have borne burdens on account of My name and have not wearied. Nevertheless, I have something against you, because you **left** your first love. Then remember from where you are fallen, and repent, and do the first works. And if not, I am coming to you quickly, and will remove your menorah from its place, unless you repent.*

Now, when we look at this, what's a little scary about this is that this isn't written to the Laodicean, or written to the Sardis, when we're looking at it historically. It's written to the Ephesus church, the very first church. So here it is, the very people that lived at the time of Yahshua, that saw Him walk on this water out here, who were with Him in His presence, who were part of His miracles, part of His ministry, that as time went on, and we don't know how many years, but they lost their first love ... they lost the first love. In Proverbs 30 and verse 18 and 19, it says:

**Proverbs 30:18-19** *Three things are too wonderful for me; yea, I do not know the way of four: The way of an eagle in the heavens, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship in the heart of the sea, and the way of a man with a virgin.*

So here it is, the psalmist is saying one of the most wonderful things in the world, something that he can't even describe because it's so beautiful, is somebody's first love. It's one of the four things he puts, and you see the contrast with some of the other things that are amazing, but it's somebody's first love.

So, all of us, or most of us, not everybody comes to truth that way. People come for different reasons. But I think most of us remember the excitement and the zeal when you first heard the truth. Coming to the truth and finding out that, wow, what I thought my life wasn't like this, and the sacrifices even sometimes that people have given up. People have given up families; they've given up jobs; they've given up houses, whatever it might be. **But nothing seemed to matter in those days because you had something that you never had in your life before.**

**You had not only the truth of Yahweh, you had Yahweh. You had the real relationship. For the first time, you're reading the Bible and things are jumping off the pages, and prayers are being answered, and you're feeling Yahweh's presence in your life like you never did.** And it made anything else that happened ... It didn't matter whether friends or family or jobs or anything was going down, because **that joy of getting the truth meant more than anything else.**

I think of the first time coming to Israel. And then, all of a sudden, how the pages of the Bible come alive and as you're seeing different things. And that's why I love, one of the greatest joys I have in my life is every year seeing people come to Israel for the first time. Like it says here, the four things that are too wonderful to show, a man with a virgin, a man with the first time with the wife of his youth; and it's the same way when you see the bride of Messiah, you're seeing people coming back to the Holy Land for the first time. And some of the people, how they got here, you hear the miracles, how they sacrificed everything! They spent every last penny! It didn't matter what it was, they just got here. They got here, and how exciting that was.

I remember years ago, there was a lady, she was an older woman from Tennessee, beautiful, beautiful sister that was here. She was supposed to come to Israel 30 years before, and something didn't work out, and she never got here. For 30 years she waited to come here. And you never know how people are going to react the first time they come here. It hits them, and sometimes it's at the airport; sometimes it's at a certain spot; sometimes it's in the Old City. But this lady, as soon as we got off the bus, we started the pilgrimage up on the Mount of Olives, and as soon as we got off the bus and she saw that Old City she started crying. She fell on her hands and knees. And here it is, our guide at that time, Micha, he wants to

give his little spiel before anything else. So, this lady kept saying, "But you don't understand; I waited 30 years ... I waited 30 years." And he says, "Look, you waited 30 years; you could wait 5 more minutes."

But just to see that, to see the people's love for this Land, and how it must affect Yahweh, when we first come out of this world, and then later you think back, you say, "How did I ever think that way? How could I have ever put things of Satan's society, things of this life, more important than Yahweh?"

But unfortunately, what happens is, as time goes by, ... And I'm going to read the Parable of the Sower here in the middle in a minute that we can see it ... but it's so sad that you see people to different degrees. Some people totally turn back. They come and they're excited for a moment. We get letters every single week of people saying, "Wow, thank you for your ministry, how important it was."

I remember one letter that came in a few years ago, they said, the letter started, "It's official, we're in love with your ministry," and they tell you how they found the truth. People have told me to my face, "I've seen all things in life, but I know this is the truth." And the saddest thing in the world is when people turn back. Sometimes it's completely they turn back to the world and they turn away, and other times it's a slow death ... it's a slow death. That people that started out so zealous, all of a sudden, that zeal just isn't there anymore.

So, I'm going to go through today, **I'm going to go through, first, six different ways you can know if you're losing your first love, and then I'm going to go through the answers, how to help that that won't happen.** So, let's start in Mark 4. That pretty much goes over how this happens or who it happens to. Mark 4 and verse 9. He says:

**Mark 4:9-13** *And He said to them, The one having ears to hear, let him hear. And when He was alone, those around Him, with the Twelve, asked Him as to the parable. And He said to them, To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of YAHWEH. But to these, those outside, all things are being given in parables, that seeing they may see and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand, lest they should be converted, and the sins be forgiven them. And He said to them, Do you not know this parable? And how will you know all parables?*

**Comment:** So, we talked about this before. The Parable of the Sower and the Seed, it's the foundation of all parables because it's giving you the phraseology, the words that are connected with all the parables. And the first thing He says after that is:

**Mark 4:14-15** *The sower sows the Word ... The sower sows the Word. So, we see that the seeds are the Word of Yahweh ... And these are those by the wayside where the Word is sown. And when they hear, Satan comes at once and takes away the Word having been sown in their hearts.*

**Comment:** So, very clearly, these are the people that come very zealous in the beginning, right? But it's on the wayside. They never get planted. So, right away they hear it. It sounds really good, but then anything that comes along, it's going to be taken away.

**Mark 4:16-17** *And likewise, these are the ones having been sown on rocky places, who, when they hear the Word, they immediately receive it with joy, but they have no roots in themselves, rather are of a short time and when affliction happens, or persecution because of the Word, they are quickly offended.*

**Comment:** And it's sad to say, we've seen people like that. Like I said, they're all excited at first. They want to get to Israel. They want to do whatever, but there's no root to them. So as soon as a little bit of persecution comes up, or a trial some way, or a sickness, they turn away and get offended.

**Mark 4:18-19** *And those which were sown into a thorny place are they who hear the Word, and the **cares of the world** and the deception of riches and the rest of the other lusts enter in and choke the Word and it becomes without fruit.*

And I think to most believers, this is probably the main one that we need to focus on, because this is the one probably affecting more believers than the other. Because the other ones come and go too quick. You don't even really have time to help them or work with them. They come; they're excited; but they move.

But this is the ones, where in the world we're living in today, it's like if you owned a house, and you were getting weeds that were growing out there. And you try to catch the weeds when they're only a few inches or centimeters high, it's not so bad. But if you went away for a couple of months and you came back, and those weeds are like a meter or a meter and a half, it's going to be a lot harder. And this is the point. When this is being written, maybe the thorns and the thistles that's being said are about five centimeters. Today, we're living in a time where they're a foot, they're two feet, maybe they're six feet, which makes it very much harder.

**Mark 4:20** *And these are those being sown on the good ground, who hear and welcome the Word and bring forth fruit, one thirty, one sixty, and one a hundredfold.*

This is what it's about, we said many times, about bearing fruit. But **if we let any of these things we just talked about here from the Parable of the Sower and the Seed affect you, you are not just going to diminish in the fruit you're going to bear, but you're going to lose your first love.**

And like I said, it doesn't happen overnight. It's the same way when two people get married, and they're all zealous, and they're happy; then, all of a sudden down the line, they're getting divorced. It didn't happen one night. You don't go from being happily married one night to wake up the next night and say, "I'm going to get a divorce." It's a process ... it's a process. And I think sometimes, in spiritual life, we don't want to admit that maybe that process is affecting us. Because we know how terrible it would think to lose our first love.

But that's why, like I said, I want to go over six points here to help you think if maybe you are losing your first love, then we'll go over the answer. But very clearly, if you look at the Parable of the Sower and the Seed, **the more your focus is on the world, the more you're going to fall.** That's very basic. **The more you're bearing fruit, the more you're going to grow.** That's the premise or the basis to it. So, here are the six ways to know if you might be losing your first love.

**Number one, you're not getting messages out of the sermons like you used to.**

I've had people that have come to the truth, and they said, "I've never heard messages like this in my life. I can't believe it, and they're affecting me." And then all of a sudden, as somebody is falling away, and they're getting more into the world; and then as they might be going more into the world, and they're falling away, and they're not coming around as much, and you just see ... you see something's wrong. We know it. We all have seen that.

Sometimes, some of that you haven't seen in a while. "What happened to so-and-so?" And you see that they're falling away. Then all of a sudden, they'll start to say, "Yeah, you know, Don, your messages just aren't as good as they used to be," or "I'm not getting as much out of them as I used to be." And they're thinking that I changed. And like I said, you could go back 20 years in ministry, and if anything, definitely my messages have only gotten stronger. And over the last couple of months, I've gotten some people writing to me saying, "Wow, the messages that you've been giving in the last six months, they're really powerful messages. They're really coming ..." But that's what people will say.

So that's the point why I'm trying to give you reasons, that you can think if you're losing your first love. The first thing is, if you're not getting as much out of the messages as you used to, you have to start thinking about it.

**The next thing is, connected with it, your prayer and study life is lacking.**

This is a major one—a major one. I mean, not to say that we have to put, "You must ..." I know when I was in the Church of God, it was "Before you can get baptized, you must be praying a half hour, and you must be studying a half hour." And you're putting your little clock there as you're praying, because, wow, you want to make sure you can get baptized. It's not about that.

But when something is coming from your heart, ... And like I said, your first love, right? Think about it. Think about when you, your husband or your wife, when you first met them. You could spend hours and hours with that person, and it would seem like minutes. And then when it came time that you had to go home, you just didn't want to leave. And then when you went home, you couldn't wait until the next day to see the person again.

**And it's the same way with the truth. When you first come to the truth, you can't put your Bible down. You can't stop thanking Yahweh enough. Once you get this relationship and you're speaking to Him, and He's talking to you, and it's the first time that you've ever had it real, you just love it, and you can't get enough of it.**

I always tell the story when I was first coming to the faith. On Friday nights, many of the brethren would like to get together, and they'd eat, and they'd have different things. But for me, most of the time, Friday night was my date with my Bridegroom Yahshua. So, I'd work hard all week, and as I'm coming home from work I'd always stop at the Chinese restaurant. And I'd get the food; I'd put two plates out; make a nice candle. And that was my time with Yahshua, and I loved it! Because after dinner, I would be reading articles, and I'd be reading my Bible and praying. And it was just, it was unbelievable! And the Sabbath nights would be so unbelievable for that.

So, if you're not praying and you're not studying, there's a problem there. And then what starts to happen if you're not praying and you're not studying? 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 28:6.

**1 Samuel 28:6** *And Saul asked of YAHWEH, but YAHWEH did not answer him, neither by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets.*

So, face it. It's a very, very bad cycle that's going to happen. Because, like we were just talking about in our Torah study, water is life. *The life is in the blood.* Blood is life. You can't survive without water. You can't survive without blood. And then of course, third, you can't survive without food. But you could survive without food much longer than you could survive without water and you could survive without blood. And when you cut your lifeline off, when you cut your prayer and your study off, you're cutting off—you're choking your spiritual lifeline.

And believe me, prayer and study affects how you think. Because remember, we only have a down payment of the Holy Spirit. We don't have 100%. So as whatever you focus on becomes most real to you, and **the more you're reading that Word, that Word is talking to you; the more you're praying to Yahweh, He's talking back to you. And it's going to affect every decision in your life.**

But if you're getting more into the world, and you have very little time for prayer and study, how you're starting to look at things, and you won't even realize it at first, but how you're looking at it, you're not looking at it anymore from the standpoint of Yahweh. You're looking at it more from the standpoint of the world. And remember, *the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked*, so it takes a while before you realize it's happening. And sometimes, once you realize it's happening, it's too late. As we're going to see, it's playing Russian roulette with your spiritual life.

I've said this many times, giving sermons on prayer. There's no man of Yahweh that's ever been that's not a praying man. It just doesn't happen. There's not that exception, "Well, I'm the next Moses, but I don't have to pray." No. The more you're praying to Yahweh, the more you're on your knees and you're humbling yourself before Him, the more you're reading His Word and letting it fill your heart and your soul is the more you're going to be a person of Yahweh, or you're not going to be a person of Yahweh. They're just isn't shortcuts in this regard.

And remember, when Saul didn't hear from Yahweh, where did he go to next? He went to the mediums, right? He went to the fortune tellers. And that's what happens. If you're not praying and studying and getting it from the Word, but you're getting it from the Internet, it's a clear sign you're losing your first love. It's a clear sign. Because you're not going to get from the Internet ... Doesn't mean you can never get information from the Internet about the Bible or something else, but the Internet should not be replacing prayer and study. And if you're finding you're just reading things about whatever on the Internet that you think are related to religion or to something with the end time and you're not praying and studying, you're losing your first love.

**The next thing is, your zeal for Yahweh is gone.** You have no zeal anymore or very little zeal for Yahweh, His Word from Israel, His coming Kingdom. It just doesn't excite you anymore.

And that's why I said, I mean, it's amazing to me. And the people here, you've been here a long time with us, so you know. You're here every year. You see the people coming the first time. And that is such a rush to see people coming. Even sometimes there'll be people who will either read *The Great Falling Away* or maybe come to the Internet, and they'll write urgently, and they'll put on it "Urgent! I have to get in contact with you! I have to come to Israel!" And it's like, I have to slow them down because I want to make sure they understand what they're doing. Some people think you could just come here and live. They don't understand you can only come to Israel for three months at a time. Yahweh hasn't opened up the door yet for us to come permanently. Praise Yahweh, for some of us at least, we've been here for a while. But to see their zeal, it's exciting.

And all of us, all of us came with that zeal. All of us came to want to be part of Yahweh's end-time work. And if it doesn't excite us anymore, if we're just like, "Eh, okay," you're losing your first love. Because it's not the work of Don Esposito. It's not the work of our little congregation here in Israel. It's the work of Yahweh. Praise Yahweh that He's chosen us as weak human vessels that He can even work through us, at least with part of His work. But the bottom line is it's Yahweh's work, and all of us are pieces of that work.

So, if you have no zeal anymore for the work of Yahweh, for His Kingdom coming, "Oh, okay. We know it's coming. But, hey, I still have to pay my rent." If it doesn't excite you, if you're not zealous with it, if you're not praying for Yahweh's work like you used to, you're losing your first love. Revelation 3 ... Revelation 3 and verse 14. He says:

**Revelation 3:14-16** *To the messenger of the congregation of Laodicea, ... And Laodicea is someone also that certainly, I don't know if they ever had a first love, but they certainly don't have a love of Yahweh. Because why? Because they're compromisers. They're weak ... These things says the Amen, the faithful, the true Witness, the Head of the creation of YAHWEH. I know you works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I would that you were cold, nor hot. But because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to vomit you out of My mouth.*

And like we've said before, when it's, like now it's been cold here in Israel. When it's cold, getting a nice hot cup of tea really, really just makes your body feel good. But if it's the summer and it's 100 degrees, or 40 Celsius and you're sweating like anything, to get a nice cold glass of water just feels so good. But there's really no circumstance that anybody would want lukewarm water. Nobody ever says, "Can you give me a nice big glass of lukewarm water," except if you want to vomit, unless you just maybe took some poison by mistake and you're looking to induce vomiting.

Now, what is Yahweh saying? That they're neither hot nor cold. Because there's times in life where hot and cold are both good, but there's never times it's lukewarm. And if you're becoming lukewarm, if you're just becoming indifferent as you hear things about people coming to faith and what Yahweh's doing, if it just doesn't excite you anymore and you're just kind of indifferent, you're losing your first love ... you're losing your first love. If you're not taking a stand, if you're hearing about atrocities and it just doesn't affect you, you're losing your first love.

Remember the ones who are protected in the end, in **Ezekiel 9**? The ones who are *sighing and crying over the abominations done in the earth*. And we need to be making sure that we're doing the same thing. Neutrality is of the devil. And Yahweh says over here, He advises them to buy of gold refined in the fire. Verse 19.

**Revelation 3:19** *"As many as I love, I rebuke and I chasten." Be zealous, then, and repent.*

So, we see a lack of zealousness is definitely a sign that you're losing your first love. Neutrality is of the devil. You have to stand for truth on every circumstance.

**The next thing is number, the next number, whether it's three maybe, things that used to excite you, like coming to Sabbath service or going to the Feast in Israel, now seem like a burden.**

I know that people used to do anything that they can do to come here for the Feast and sometimes come year after year. And of course, we know people can't come every year. Nobody expects them to, because Yahweh just doesn't put that ability there. But if you can come ... There's people that used to do whatever they could do, even if they spent every penny to come here for the Feast. And now they have the money, and they don't want to come. They'd rather hold the money or spend it on something else. And they just feel ... They're just not excited anymore.

Coming to Sabbath service. There's nights, on Thursday nights, that I can't even sleep because I'm so excited that the Sabbath's coming. It's the most exciting day of the week. Because whatever kind of things you're going through or whatever, you could put it all to the side. And now, whatever time during the week I was lacking with Yahweh, or I was missing, or I needed more, now I have 24 hours with Yahweh, with His people, with the brethren. And if that seems like more of a **chore** than a blessing, you're losing your first love ... you're losing your first love. Because even the Sabbath is a commanded assembly.

And again, if we're sick or something else, then of course we're not going to come. We're showing love to our brethren by not. But if we're not, we should try every single thing possible to be there. Because number one, Yahweh commands us to assemble together. And if not, who knows what Yahweh had in our heart to give somebody that they needed, a word of encouragement, to lift up, that we're not going to be able to give if we're not there? So again, like I said, it's not to make people feel bad that for whatever reason have to miss a Sabbath service. But if, like I said, if it's becoming more of a burden for the Sabbath or the Feast, ...

I can't think of a greater joy in my life than being able to spend the Feast in Jerusalem. What a wonderful time it is. And I know in years past where we were really, really to the bone financially. As soon as one Feast ended, the only thing on our mind was trying to collect every penny you find in the street to get there for the next Feast. And it didn't matter what we had to spend, if we can get there, certainly, that is the greatest blessing of the year. Because you're representing Yahweh! And like I said, **it's not you that chooses to be there. Yahweh chooses you to be there. And what an honor!**

Is it a commandment in diaspora? No. It's a punishment—it's a punishment that people can't come to Jerusalem for the Feast. So, I'm not trying to say ... People twist my words sometimes, "Don says you can only keep the Feast in Jerusalem." Never, ever said that. What I said, what it is, the greatest honor in your life if Yahweh chooses you. And we know every year people that want to be there, for some reason they can't. We know at the end people that never were going to be there, and Yahweh puts them there. If we go to the book of Deuteronomy ... the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 12. He says:

**Deuteronomy 12:1** *These are the statutes and the judgments which you shall take heed to do in the land which YAHWEH the Elohim of your fathers has given to you, to possess, all the days that you are on the earth:*

And then verse 5.

**Deuteronomy 12:5-8** *But you shall seek to the place which YAHWEH your Elohim shall choose out of all your tribes; for you shall seek His dwelling, to put His name there. And you shall go there. And you shall bring your burnt offerings, and your tithes, and your sacrifices, ... and verse 7 ... You shall eat before YAHWEH your Elohim, and **you shall rejoice in all that you put your hands to do**, you and your household, with which YAHWEH your Elohim has blessed. You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, each doing all that is right in his own eyes.*

**Comment:** And I'm telling you, sometimes people that have been with us before at the Feast and rejoiced and were happy and saw this blessing, and then because of the cares of the world, all of the sudden, they don't see it as a blessing anymore. They see it as a burden. And then, "Oh, we just can't make it," "Oh, it's too much money," or whatever it is. And like I said, for some that's true, but for others it's not. Verse 12.

**Deuteronomy 12:12-15** *And you shall **rejoice** before YAHWEH your Elohim, you and your sons, and your daughters, and your male slaves, and your female slaves, and the Levite which is within your gate because he has no portion or inheritance*

*with you. Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place you see; but in the place which YAHWEH shall choose, one of the tribes (Jerusalem), you shall there offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all I command. Only **with all the desire of your soul** you shall sacrifice and eat the meat within the gates according to the blessing of YAHWEH has given to you; ...*

So, it's not just, "Okay I'm here." **We're not doing Yahweh a favor by showing up there. He's doing us the honor and the privilege of being able to represent Him.** And He says, *with the desire of our soul*. And believe me, we all know it. I know what it takes. I see it every year, the sacrifice for some people. Not only financially, some people coming from halfway around the world and being sick and this and that.

But like I said, once the sun goes down and we start that first service, there is no greater blessing during the year than to Yahweh have you here. And even miracles we've seen Yahweh bless people with them that have come there. So, a great blessing. Again, if you're not so excited about coming to the Sabbath, coming to the Feast, if it's more of a burden than a blessing, you're losing your first love.

**The next one is you're more interested and focused on worldly things and your job in the world and finances than you are in ministry.**

More focused at worldly things, your job, things of the world, maybe the newest electronic that's out, or movie, or whatever. But you have more focus on worldly things than on the things of Yahweh. 1<sup>st</sup> John 2 and verse 15.

**1 John 2:15-17** *Do not love the world nor the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, because all which is in the world: The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and its lust. But the one doing the will of Elohim abides forever.*

Now I say to myself, I'm either really getting old, or maybe I'm growing a little bit in the Spirit. Because as every year is going by, I'm looking at that world and saying, "I don't fit in." I mean, I'm feeling like an alien. I'm really feeling like I don't fit in. And we see where the world is going to. But he says we're not to love the world nor the things in the world.

And again, we all have to work. *He who doesn't work doesn't eat*. So, we're not promoting not working or anything like that. But really, it's where is your interest? Are you more zealous, more excited, more interested in your worldly job? Or is that worldly job simply a way to give you **means** to do your spiritual job? **And that's what it comes down to. Everybody should have a ministry.** And if you don't have a ministry and you're just killing time every week in some worldly institution and your focus is not on the work of Yahweh, there's a problem. You're losing your first love ... you're losing your first love.

**The next one is if you look more at financial aspect of things such as tithing, going to Israel for the Feast ... We talked about that ... than the spiritual, then you're losing your first love.**

So again, one way you can see: If you're starting to look more at the financial things. I remember when I left Church of God, people—to the penny—how much tithe. "Do you know how much I gave them in the last 17 years? I gave them exactly \$23,472.12." And people were angry. And I said, "No. You know what? I am happy for every penny of my tithe and offering I gave because I'm a product, I'm a child of Yahweh because of that organization." Yahweh chose to call me through them. I had no bitterness at the money I gave, because I knew my money helped somebody else come to faith.

But remember, like I said, your first love; and when you first come to faith, money is no object. I know there's new people, that times when I travel in America, that even people that are very poor, they'll travel 12-14 hours. They'll spend the money on the gas because they want to come and they want to meet you. And they want to because they're just coming to faith. They're excited. They'll sacrifice. If they really don't have money, they'll sleep in a car. And the same with the Feast. People that will do **anything** just to get there because they so much want to appear before Yahweh.

And if all of the sudden ... And again, like I said, finances do matter at times. We don't have a money tree, none of us, to pick the money off of them. But if all of a sudden now, you're thinking more of your tithe, you're thinking more of the

money expense to Jerusalem or money in ministry even, you're losing your first love. Because money, everything belongs to Yahweh anyway. And any money He puts in our hands should be money to be working toward His Kingdom and bringing more people to salvation. And if money is the first thing on our mind, or even the second thing on our mind, ... It should be way down the list ... then we're losing our first love ... we're losing our first love.

**And the last one is you're simply not as involved in the work of Yahweh from Jerusalem as you used to be.**

And I always say, how converted you are equals how much involved you are, how much fruit you're bearing. Now, that's why I say this is the core of the ministry, of what we're doing worldwide, but **every person has a spiritual gift. Every person should have an individual ministry.** Whether that's card writing, whether it's encouragement, whether it's ... **Whatever you're doing, everybody should be working on the work of Yahweh.** And without that, you will certainly lose your first love.

Because it's like having a mate that you never see, or maybe you see that mate once a year or three times a year at the Feast. How much are you going to keep your zealousness toward that mate? No, you want every day of your life, there should be zealousness for Yahweh's work, what He's doing, and the fact that we're seeing the fruit of it. We're seeing people come to faith. We're hearing the testimonies as they show up for the Feast every year. We have letters ... I'm going to read you some of the letters later ... just in the last week, of people so excited to get that Bible, so excited to want baptism, to come to faith. Luke 9 and verse 57 ... Luke 9 and verse 57.

**Luke 9:57-62** *And it happened as they were going in the way, one said to Him, I will follow You wherever You go, Master. And Yahshua said to him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere He may lay His head. And [to] another [He] said, Follow Me. But he said, Master, allow me to go first to bury my father. And Yahshua said, Leave the dead to bury their dead, but going, you announce the kingdom of YAHWEH. And another said, I will follow You, Master, but first allow me to take leave of those in my house. But Yahshua said to him, No man places his hand upon the handle of a plough and looks backward and is useful for the kingdom of YAHWEH.*

Because we know if you're plowing and you look back that plow is going to go in every direction. So, **remember, Yahweh is testing us. That's all this is about.** Whether you are in South Sudan right now and suffering persecution or you're a millionaire living in the United States of Babylon, we all have the same test. **The test is to see how faithful we are.** So maybe the millionaire in Babylon, it's how faithful he's going to be with Yahweh's money that Yahweh put in his bank account. And maybe to the suffering brother in South Sudan, it's how faithful he'll be through the suffering and whether he'll compromise.

But it really doesn't make a difference where you are, what your background is, or what your situation in life is, it's a test to all of us. Because at the end of this, which is so close now, ... And now we're not looking anymore into millennia; we're not even looking into centuries, maybe not even decades. But we're looking into a very, very short time, maybe one day, maybe a little more, maybe a little less ... but Yahweh's Kingdom is coming to this earth. And then each of us will be rewarded to how much we've passed the test. And that's what He's looking at. And that's why He wants to see how zealous we are and how much we have that first love for Him.

Because if we can't even be faithful for a few, tiny, little years now, how on earth can He ever give us immortality? Which means not only billions or trillions or zillions or quadrillions, or whatever other number you can come up with, it's endless. How could He give us that unless He sees it's in our heart? And that's why how many times is He saying in the Bible, ... He doesn't just say, "Obey Me." He's not a dictator ... He says to *love Me with your heart, your mind, your soul, and your strength.* The very first commandment, whether it's in the Tanakh or whether they asked Yahshua, what does He say? **We are to love Yahweh with our heart, our mind, our soul, and our strength. It has to be every ounce of our being. That's what the first love is. It's putting your priority as Yahweh.**

**Matthew 22**, I'm not going to go there, but it talks about the invitations going out for the wedding supper. And here it is, we're not called to be slaves in His Kingdom. We're not called just to go out and be donkeys and mules. **We're called to be children of Yahweh. We're called to be the bride of Messiah.** And the wedding invitations have gone out. But like we see



in Matthew 22, as the wedding invitations went out, what happened? One person was going to this; one person was going to his field. Everyone was busy with what? Cares of the world ... the cares of the world, which choke your first love. So, we have to make that conscious choice every day. Luke 10 and verse 22 ... Luke 10 and verse 22 says:

**Luke 10:22-24** *All things were delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father; and who is the Father, except the Son, and he to whom the Son may desire to reveal Him. And having turned to the disciples alone, He said, Blessed are the eyes seeing what you see. For I say to you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see, and hear what you hear, and did not hear.*

Prophets and kings; King David would have given his right arm to be in your position! And yet it wasn't Yahweh's will. But you're here. I told the brethren at the school ... I remember when the first couple days of the school when they were making their legacy. And as they're sitting there and they're all excited and they're writing down what they want to be remembered by, every one of them with great legacies, "I want to be this," "I want to be that in Yahweh's eyes." And in my mind, I'm thinking, ... we're 11 years doing this school ... what are the people from last year doing right now? What are the people from five years ago? What are the people from 10 years ago? Because it's not enough to just write it on a paper. You have to perform it.

And I'm telling you, in the years I've been doing this with the legacy, not once has anybody ever said a legacy that I thought in my mind, "Well, he can't do that." They're valid legacies, and what people want to be reminded by, but it just doesn't happen. You have to make a plan, and then you have to enact it. So, here it is. What an opportunity Yahweh's put us at, that He's called us in these last times. We have to internalize it, how blessed we are. And then we have to act on it. You have to go out and you have to act on it.

So, what is the answer? What is the answer of not losing your first love? Because remember, in the time we're living in, more people will fall away than any other time in the history of the congregation. And we're seeing it. We're seeing it in action, unfortunately. So, **how can we in our own personal life make sure that we're not going to wane in our love or our zeal to Yahweh?**

And **the first thing is getting your priorities straight.** That's at the end of the day. If your priorities are not straight, you will lose your first love. Like we said, **prayer and study, no matter what, it has to be an eternal part of your life. You have to have Yahweh there every day of your life.** 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5 and verse 16 says:

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** *Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything gives thanks, for this is the will of YAHWEH in Messiah Yahshua toward you.*

So, remember the Parable of the Sower and the Seed. The one that was getting choked by the thorns was why? Because of the cares of the world and other things. And face it, we all live. We're in the world, but not of the world. So, every one of us every week are going to go through trials; trials maybe within family, or trials with at work, or trials with sickness, or trials with other people in our neighborhood. Whatever it is, every one of us will go through trials. That's a guarantee. **John 16:33.** *In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.* So, that's the point. How you look at those trials is how much you're in the Word.

And I was thinking about this recently, like I said with King David, they're wondering if he even existed. And everyone goes wild because they found one little stone that says "Beit David" that's hundreds of years after David. And here we have in our Bible, we have like a hundred psalms, or 80 psalms, whatever it is, I didn't count them, that David wrote with his own hands. So, that's so much more. All you have to do is believe the Bible. Things that he was meditating on, thinking, and he's writing it down. **What gold we have in those psalms that come from David himself,** who will be third in the Kingdom. So, **everything is there that will touch our heart and keep our love fervent for Yahweh, but you have to use it ...** you have to use it.

And that's why I'm so happy we have the Bible on tape. Because like this week, I have to go to Jerusalem to a meeting. I get three hours there, three hours back, and I get to hear all the Bible on tape. I kind of like that English chap's voice. "In

the beginning, Yahweh our Elohim ..." But I love it. Because in even listening, you can hear what you don't read. You know, you're reading is different than you're hearing. So, but we have to be excited about it. And so many times it's like hearing it the first time. And as you're listening, you're waiting for the Holy Spirit to open up a word that you didn't think of before. And then you're trying to make notes because you don't have your concordance. "Ooh, let me go home and look this word up." It has to be exciting. **Pray without ceasing, studying daily, because whatever you focus on becomes most real to you.**

Psalm 119 ... Psalm 119. One of the most longest and most amazing psalms in the Bible. Psalm 19 [should be 119]. I'm going to skip around. I won't read the whole psalm, but verse 9:

**Psalm 119:9-16** *By what shall a man purify his path? To keep it according to Your Word. I have sought You **with my whole heart**; do not let me wander from Your Commandments. I have hidden Your Word **in my heart**, that I might not sin against You. Blessed are You, O YAHWEH; teach me Your Statutes. I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth with my lips; I have rejoiced in the way of Your Testimonies as over all riches. I will meditate in Your Precepts and I will regard Your paths. **I will delight myself in Your Statutes. I will not forget Your Word.***

Drop down to verse 105.

**Psalm 119:105-106** *Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I have sworn and I will rise to it, to keep Your righteous judgments.*

Drop down to verse 145.

**Psalm 119:145-148** *I cried with my whole heart; O YAHWEH, answer me; I will keep Your Statutes. I cried to you; save me, and I will keep Your Testimonies. I go down before the dawn of day and cry; I hope in Your Word. My eyes go before the night watches, to meditate on Your Word.*

This is somebody who loves Yahweh, who has emotion and feeling, and he can't wait to study Yahweh's Word every day. So again, **if you don't want to lose your first love, then you have to love the Word of Yahweh. Because the Word is His character, everything that's enabled in Him.** And like we talked about last week, there wasn't always writing like this. And even when there was writing, before the printing press people didn't have Bibles.

And that's why if there's only one Bible in the synagogue, you don't go and choose what you want to read and when. You have to just go and be happy. "Wow! This week the Torah study was this, and I got to hear Genesis again." You might hear it once a year, that particular verse. Today we have a Bible that you can go any day of your life, any time and day, and you could read whatever you want to read. And we need to love it. We need to appreciate it. We need to be zealous. Revelation 8 and verse 3 and 4.

**Revelation 8:3-4** *Another cherub came and stood on the altar, having a golden censer. And many types of incense were given to him that he should give them with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne. And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the cherub before YAHWEH.*

Like I said, when you're immersed in the name of Yahshua and have hands laid on you by an ordained elder and you receive His Spirit, you become a child of Yahweh ... you become a child of Yahweh. And **we have a blessing that He gives us as children, that we can get on our hands and knees and close our eyes and we go up to His throne; and never neglect it ... never neglect it.**

Can you imagine with your spouse, going a week without talking to your spouse or even a day without talking to your spouse? We need to have the same way with Yahweh. How can we go a day without speaking to Yahweh in prayer? How can we neglect that? And of course, we do need that formal prayer on our hands and knees and praying. But you could pray while you're in the car. You could pray anywhere. Prayer is simply speaking to Yahweh. We should be doing that continuously. And that's what's going to build a relationship.

And as you're building your relationship, that's what's going to stop you from losing your first love. Because you can't love someone you don't know. You can't love somebody that's far away in the heavens and you have no idea. And that's why Yahshua came to this earth as a human being for 32-33 years; so that we can know Him, that we can know His personality, we can get to know Him, and then we can love Him on a one-on-one level for that. 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:15 ... 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:15 says:

**2 Timothy 2:15** *And study to present yourself approved to YAHWEH, a workman unashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.*

*And study to present yourself approved to Yahweh, a workman unashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.* So again, if you want to be zealous, if you want to have that relationship, if you want to have your first love, you have to be studying His Word. You have to be studying the Word of Yahweh in order to do that. Romans 12:1 and 2 says:

**Romans 12:1-2** *Therefore, brethren, I call on you through the compassion of YAHWEH to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to YAHWEH, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, in order to prove to you what is good and pleasing and the perfect will of YAHWEH.*

Like we said, we have to get our priorities straight. You know, Yahshua, yes, He's loving and He's caring and He died to pay the penalty of our sins. But also, **He bought us.** 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18 [should be verse 20]. *We are bought with a price.* Never forget that. You do not belong to yourself! And if you think of a master and you think of a slave, right? When the master gets up in the morning and he's going to look in his field, is the slave out there working in his master's field, or is the slave in town working somewhere else? Your priorities are what you get done. And who is our first Master? Remember, *you can't serve two masters. You'll either love the one and hate the other, or you'll despise the one and cleave to the other.*

And that's why I see people who come into the truth so zealous and so excited. And like we said, like the Parable of the Sower and the Seed, within a short time they're hating it ... they're hating it. They turn back. You never hear from them again. Because their conscience is burning in them, because they love money more than Yahweh, and they don't want to give up that \$150,000 job because of the Sabbath. They don't want to tithe 10% of their money because they feel they're making too much; whatever it is. *But where your heart is, there your treasure lies also.* So, you're not going to have Yahweh as your first love. No, we have to get our priorities straight. Luke 17 and verse 7.

**Luke 17:7-10** *But which of you having a servant plowing or tending a flock will immediately say to him coming out of the field, Come, recline? But will he not say to him, Prepare something that I may eat, and having girded yourself, serve me while I eat and drink, and after these things you shall eat and drink? What thanks does he receive, that servant, because he did what was commanded him? I think not so! Likewise even you, when you have done all things that are commanded, you say that we are idle servants because we have done only what we ought to.*

And I know early on coming in through the Church and God, they thought just because they kept the Sabbath and they didn't eat pork and they went to the Feast that, somehow, they were righteous before Yahweh and they didn't have to be a living sacrifice daily. It's the absolute opposite of what the truth is. The truth is we are the servants of what we obey. And is Yahweh really our Master? Is our master some worldly job? Is our master our house if we have a big mortgage on? Is our master our money? What is it ... what is it?

Because at the end of the day, like I said, **priority by definition is what you get done.** And if you're getting done the worldly things and you're not getting done the things of Yahweh, He is not your priority and you're losing—or lost—your first love. Because like I said, in those early days and when you think of a human being, when you first fall in love, you can't spend enough time with that person. The hours go by like minutes and the days go by like seconds. And it's the same. Is Yahweh our priority, or is Yahweh not our priority? Luke 12 and verse 21. He says:

**Luke 12:21-26** *Such is he who lays up treasures for himself, and does not abound in Elohim. And He said to His disciples, Because of this I say to you, Do not be anxious for your life, what you should eat; or your body, what you should put on. The life is more than food and the body is more than clothing. Consider the ravens, for they do not sow, nor do they reap;*

*to which there is no storehouse or barn, and YAHWEH feeds them. How much rather you differ than the birds! And who of you being anxious is able to add one cubit to his stature? Then if you are not able to do even the least, why are you anxious about the rest?*

**Luke 12:27-32** *Consider the lilies, how they grow, they do not labor, nor do they spin, but I say to you, Not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed as one of these. But if Elohim so dresses the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown in the oven, how much rather you, of little-faith? And you, do not seek what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, or let your mind be disturbed by these things. For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need these. But seek the kingdom of YAHWEH and all these things will be added to you. Stop being afraid little flock, because your Father was pleased to give you the kingdom.*

**Luke 12:33-36** *Sell your possessions and give alms. Make for yourselves purses that do not grow old, an unfailing treasure in Heaven, where a thief cannot come nor a moth corrupt. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Let your loins be girded, and your lamps burning, and you be like men awaiting their Master when He returns from the wedding supper, so that coming and knocking, he will at once open to Him.*

**Luke 12:37-40** *Blessed are those slaves whom the Master will find when He comes awake. Truly I say to you that He will gird Himself and will make them recline, and coming up He will serve them. And if He comes in the second watch, or He comes in the third, and finds so, blessed are those slaves. But know this, that if the housemaster had known the hour the thief was coming, he would have watched and would not have allowed his house to be dug through. And you, then, be ready; for in the moment you do not expect it, the Son of Man comes.*

And that's what happens as we lose our first love and our focus gets off Yahweh, we also start to think, "Oh, there's a lot of time left," "Oh, I don't see this happening." Your prophecy perspective will be greatly skewed by it when you're starting to lose your first love.

Like I said, I know everybody has to work. Everybody has to earn money. But the thing is in the society we live in today, commercial Babylon of the world, what happens? They make people become slaves of the system. They use greed and covetousness to make people get cars and houses and things they can't afford. And then people are tied into those things. And then people have to work 40 and 50 and 60 hours. And then they make the job market where if you lose one job, you're afraid you can't get another job. And literally, that's becoming your master through that. And because the system is that way people say, "Well, what else can I do?"

But you know, it's a very dangerous thing. Somebody wrote me recently about the divorce and remarriage. And face it, when you're an American, divorce and remarriage is 60%. And the person said, "So, you're saying everybody's lost who's divorced and remarried?" And they're giving all the reasons why divorce and remarriage can't be bad. "Because society accepts it, and everybody's divorced and remarried." But I look and I say, "Well, 100 years ago, divorce and remarriage was only 1% or 2%. So, the fact that it's 60%, that doesn't make it right." Now look where we're going, right? Now homosexuality is becoming normal.

So, let's say time went on for another 100 years and half the society were homosexuals. And now, half of those homosexuals become believers in Yahshua. And now someone's going to come and say, "No, you can't be a believer in Yahshua and a homosexual." And they're going to say the same thing. "But everybody's one! What are you saying? All these people are going to be lost?" Yeah ... yeah, that's what we're saying. Unless you repent. Yes. Yahweh's Word doesn't change with society. So, whether it's divorce and remarriage, homosexuality, or the work situation, we have a Master who has to come first.

And people can say, "Well, in those times everyone had their own field, and they had their own cows." Well, maybe it's time we get our own fields and our own cows. You can't use the world around us and use it as an excuse not to serve Yahweh, because you're going to fall and you're going to lose your first love. And **there's a reason why only in this society, only in the last one, never any other society, did Yahweh say unless you come out of that completely, you'll lose your salvation.** If you take that mark of the beast and the image of the beast and you're part of it in that end time, you're going

to lose your salvation. He never said that before. And we have to take it serious because we're living in it right now. We're living in it.

So, we have to get zealous for the Kingdom. And the more you're into the world, the more that you're trapped and chained by anything worldly, whether it's family, whether it's responsibility to relatives, unconverted relatives, or it's a worldly job. Whatever you're chaining yourself to, you're becoming the servant to. And it will take your first love away, without a shadow of a doubt. And through time, it will destroy it. 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 9. Paul talking to the Corinthians, look what he says. He says:

**2 Corinthians 9:1-3** *For indeed concerning the ministry to the saints, it is beyond measure for me to write to you. For I know your **eagerness**, of which I boast to Macedonia on your behalf, that Achaia has made ready from last year, and **your zeal has stirred up a great many people**. But I sent the brothers that our boasting which is on your behalf should not be in vain in this respect, so that I said, you were ready;*

These people were zealous, and it was going around the congregations, and it was bringing more people to faith by their zealousness. You want to be the same way. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 14 and verse 12 says:

**1 Corinthians 14:12** *So also you, since you are zealots of spiritual things, seek to build up the Congregation that you may abound.*

And that's something, either you have zeal or you don't. It's not something you can really hide. But we need it. Because it should be a natural overflowing in our soul when the Spirit of Yahweh is inspiring us of what He's doing, of our relationship with Him, of His soon coming Kingdom, of all this horror being stopped and Yahweh intervening, whether it's in Iraq, or Syria, or even here in Israel.

Zeal keeps you humble, focused, serving and unswerving in the congregation. A lack of zeal leads to heresy, doubt, indifference and self-focus. So, that's normal. When you lack zeal, it's normal that you're going to be led into heresy, doubt, indifference and self-focus. Psalm 69 and verse 9 says:

**Psalm 69:9** *For **the zeal of Your house has consumed Me**; ... The zeal of Your house has consumed Me ... and the reproaches of the ones who reproach Me have fallen on You.*

And interesting enough, where is this quoted in the Brit Chadashah? It's in the book of John. John 2 and verse 13. I'll read it to you.

**John 2:13-17** *And the Passover of the Jews was near. And Yahshua went up to Jerusalem. And He found those selling oxen and sheep and doves in the sanctuary, and the money changers sitting. And making a whip out of ropes, He threw all out of the sanctuary, both the sheep, and the oxen, and the money changers, pouring out the money and overturning the tables. And to the ones selling the doves, He said, Take these things from here! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise. And His disciples remembered that it is written, "The zeal of Your house has consumed Me."*

**The house is the body of Messiah. We are His house. And has the zeal of His house consumed us?** Does it offend us, does it bother us to see these merchants, these charlatans out there, ... And I have a good message I'll be giving on that soon ... that are selling the Word of Yahweh and are literally taking people's salvation away by the false things that they're doing? And here's Yahshua, a mild-mannered, loving person, and wow, He's over here turning over tables; and really, really the zeal had come to Him. Now what about Yahweh's zeal? Look in the end, Ezekiel 5 ... Ezekiel 5 and verse 12 and 13. He says:

**Ezekiel 5:12-13** *A third part of you shall die by the plague and shall be consumed by the famine in your midst. And a third part shall fall by the sword all around you. And a third part I will scatter into every wind, and I will draw out a sword after them. And My anger shall be spent, and I will make My fury rest on them, and I will be eased. And they shall know that I, YAHWEH, have spoken in **My zeal**, in My fulfilling My fury against them.*

So, Yahweh doesn't like what's going on in this world, and His zeal is to destroy it. Is our zeal for the love of Yahweh, our first love? Is our zeal for the world? That's something that we have free will and free choice, and we have to make a conscious decision on it. But everything in our life now and everything of our eternal life will depend on that decision. 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 18 ... 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 18 and verse 36. Because one of the greatest prophets, Eliyahu, comes; he's fighting the priests of Baal; he's winning the battle. And then in verse 36:

**1 Kings 18:36-39** *And it happened at the offering of the sacrifice, that Eliyahu the prophet came near and said, O YAHWEH, the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known today that You are Elohim in Israel, and I am Your servant, that by Your Word I have done all these things. Answer me, O YAHWEH, answer me; and this people shall know that You are YAHWEH Elohim; and You shall turn their hearts back again ... Bringing them back to their first love, turning their hearts back again ... And fire fell from Yahweh and consumed the burnt offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and the water that was in the trench and licked it up. And all the people saw, and fell on their faces, and said, YAHWEH, He is Elohim; YAHWEH, He is Elohim!*

**Comment:** So here it is, just like us. We come to faith; Yahweh gives us gifts; we go out and we use them; we're starting to bear fruit. And then what do we do when the fruit is being born? Do we run in the other direction and say, "I have something else to do"? Do we fear the New World Order? Or do we finish with the job that Yahweh gave each of us? Or maybe we never started with the job, and we need to get on the road. Whatever it is, we need to follow through with it. Because let's look at what happened by, now, Eliyahu not following through with what was told to him. We get to chapter 19.

**1 Kings 19:1-3** *And Ahab told Jezebel all the things Eliyahu did, and all, that he killed all the prophets by the sword. And Jezebel sent a messenger to Eliyahu, saying, So let the gods do more, and more so, if at this time tomorrow I will not cause your life to be as one and them. And he saw, and he rose up and went for his life, and he came to Beer-Sheba of Judah, and left his young man there;*

**Comment:** He went for his life. *He who tries to save his life will lose it, but he who loses his life for My sake will save it.* Was his priorities wrong? You better believe it. Yahweh gave him a position. Yahweh did a miracle. Yahweh set him there. And now he's trying to save the flesh. Something changed. Maybe he lost his first love.

**1 Kings 19:4-6** *and he himself went into the wilderness a day's journey, and came and sat under a broom tree. And he begged for his life, and that he might die, and said, Enough, now, O YAHWEH; take my life, for I am no better than my fathers. And he lay down and slept under a certain broom tree; and behold, a Messenger from YAHWEH touched him and said, Get up, eat! And he looked, and behold, at his head was a cake on burning stones, and a jar of water; and he ate and he drank, and he turned and lay down.*

**1 Kings 19:7-9** *And the Messenger of YAHWEH turned a second time, and touched him, and said, Get up, eat, for the way is too great for you. And he rose up and ate and drank, and went in the power of that food forty days and forty nights to the mount of The Elohim, Horeb. And he came there to the cave, and lodged there; and behold, the Word of YAHWEH came to him, and said to him, What are you doing here, Eliyahu?*

**Comment:** Or He could say the same to us. When we're out in somebody else's field except our Master's, when we're doing the world's bidding, when we're simply just staying in maybe on the internet or television, whatever it is, He's saying to us, "What are you doing here so-and-so? I called you for something! Where's your zeal for Me? Don't you love Me?"

**1 Kings 19:10** *And he said, zealously, I have been zealous for YAHWEH ... Oh, really? ... Elohim of Hosts, for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant; they have thrown down Your altars; they killed Your prophets with the sword, and I am left, I alone, and they seek to take my life.*

**Comment:** What happened to the other people that were all saying, "Yahweh is Elohim"? And sometimes when we play the victim, right, ... And this is what I say, the cares of life and other things; that we start saying, "Woe is me. This is too hard," instead of looking at the blessing we have of being one in 5 million that's a child of Yahweh ... we lose our perspective.

We lose our perspective when we start thinking, “Hey, I’m a Sabbath keeper,” “Hey, I don’t eat pork,” “I should be getting better than this,” just like Eliyahu here.

**1 Kings 19:11-12** *And he said, Go and stand on the mountain before YAHWEH. And, behold, YAHWEH passed by, and a great and strong wind tearing the mountains and breaking the rocks in bits before YAHWEH! YAHWEH was not in the wind. And after the wind was an earthquake, but YAHWEH was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake was a fire, but YAHWEH was not in the fire; and after the fire came a voice which was a small whisper.*

**Comment:** And to hear a small whisper, you need silence, not clutter in your life. You need to be in your prayer closet. You need to hear it. And you need to follow it.

**1 Kings 19:13** *And it happened when Eliyahu heard, he wrapped his face in the robe and went out and stood at the cave opening; and, behold, a voice came to him, and said, What are you doing here, Eliyahu?*

**Comment:** Yahweh has called us each to bear fruit. He’s given us position. He’s given us power. He’s given us gifts. But He’s saying, **what are we doing with it?**

**1 Kings 19:14** *And he said, zealously, I have been zealous for YAHWEH, Elohim of Hosts for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant; they’ve thrown down Your altars; they’ve slain Your prophets; and I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.*

**Comment:** And then Yahweh goes on to tell him, “Okay, you don’t want the job I gave you. Here’s what you’re going to do: You’re going to go to Damascus, and you’re going to make Hazael king. You’re going to go to Israel, and you’re going to anoint Jehu as king. Oh, and by the way, since you don’t want to do the position I’ve given you, you go to Elisha, and Elisha will take over for you.” And then in verse 18, He says:

**1 Kings 19:18** *And I have left in Israel seven thousand, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.*

**Comment:** So, we can’t self-righteously ... And this is what happens, like I said, when you lose your first love, when you’re not reading your Scriptures, when you’re not praying every day, you kind of get this focus of playing the victim sometimes. And never forget Yahweh has 7,000 other who can take our position any day. **If we don’t love Him with all our heart, if we’re not filled with zeal and so excited for what He’s doing and that He’s allowing us to be part of it, very easily, He could say, “There’s the door! I have 7,000 others who could take your place.” Do we care? Do we care about it?**

**1 Kings 19:19** *And he left there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, plowing; ... Okay, I think I’m going to stop there.*

He lost his position because he lost his focus. And like I said, many times we lose our focus when we’re losing our first love. Yahweh has to be the priority in our life—He has to be the priority.

Hebrews 6 ... Hebrews. 6. We’ll be done here in a couple of minutes. Because this is extremely dangerous. It’s not about, “Well, I’ll be a little less fruit-borne or a little more fruit.” Because like I said, it may not happen overnight, but it’s a slow death. And I’ve seen it. I’ve seen it over 32 years, far too many times. People that seem to be so filled with the truth, that seem to be so excited about serving, little by little by little until they’re gone. So, it’s not even that they’re just serving less. They wind up leaving the congregation. They wind up going back to the world. They wind up losing their salvation. And in Hebrew 6 and verse 4, it says:

**Hebrews 6:4-6** *For it is impossible for those who have been once descended to immersion, and having tasted of the heavenly gift, and becoming sharers of the Holy Spirit, and tasting the good Word of Elohim, and **the works of power** of the world to come, and having fallen away, it is impossible for them again to renew to repentance, for they crucify the Son of YAHWEH a second time, and put Him to open shame.*

**Comment:** If you completely fall away, that's it. You're gone. It's impossible ... Because remember, like I said, whatever you focus on becomes most real to you. And it's not that Yahweh wouldn't forgive you. You go so far you don't want to be forgiven. And like I said, we've all seen it. We've seen people that were so caring and seemed so loving and wanted to serve Yahweh. And all of a sudden, now, they're out there and they're even evil, and they're even trying to hurt you.

And you wonder ... And that's why I say you're playing with Russian roulette not to put Yahweh first in your life. Because **if you don't have your first love, you don't have any love**. As we saw in that sermon, **all love comes from Yahweh**. What is human love? Human love is abortion is a woman's right to choose. Homosexuality is a lifestyle. That's human love. That's sick. That's not love. That's exactly where Satan wants people. **The only true love can only come from the love of Yahweh, which has to be the stem of it**. He says:

**Hebrews 6:7-8** *For the earth that drinks in the rain which comes often upon it, and produces herbs that are useful to those [for] whom it [is] cultivated, receives blessing from Elohim. "But if it should bear thorns and thistles," ... Remember what we said? The thorns and thistles, the cares of life, is going to take someone away from their first love ... **it is rejected and near a curse, and in the end will be burned up.***

**Hebrews 6:9-12** *But, in regards to you, my brethren, we are persuaded better things, and things pertaining to life, even though we speak in this manner. For Elohim is not unjust, to forget your work and the labor of love which you showed to His name, ministering to the saints, and now are ministering. But we desire each of you to show that same **eagerness**, to the full assurance of the hope **to the end; that you not become slothful**, but imitators of those who through faith and long-suffering are inheriting the promises.*

We don't want to become slothful. We don't want to get down a little bit. We don't want to say, "I know I'm slacking a little bit on my prayer and Bible study, but next month when I'm not doing so much, I'll get back to it." No. You're playing with Russian roulette. **Start today! Get back to Yahweh. Make Him your priority, no matter what happens. No matter what else happens in life, He has to be the first priority.**

Hebrews 10. Last scripture I'm going to go into here. Hebrews 10 and verse 30. Because Paul hits this subject exactly in this book. A couple chapters over. Hebrews 10 and verse 30. He says:

**Hebrews 10:30-32** *For we know Him who said, "Vengeance belongs to Me; I will repay," says YAHWEH. And again, "YAHWEH will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living Elohim ... Like I said, we're playing with Russian roulette. We don't want that to happen ... Therefore, remember the former days, ...*

**Comment:** Like I said, **remember your first love. Remember when you were first coming to the truth. Remember how zealous you were, and nothing else mattered but Yahweh opening your mind.**

**Hebrews 10:32-34** *Remember the former days, those in which you had received baptism, and you endured much tribulation; indeed being exposed both to trouble and reproach you became an object of ridicule; ... We've all had it; everyone laughing at us, mocking us ... and you have become companions of those men who have endured these things. For also you had pity on those in prison; and you accepted the seizure of your possessions with joy, knowing yourselves to have a better and abiding possession in Heaven.*

**Hebrews 10:35-39** *Then do not throw away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of patience, that having done the will of Elohim you may obtain the promise. For, the time is very short and He who is to come, will come, "and will not delay." "But the righteous shall live by faith;" "yet if he draws back," "My soul is not pleased with him." But, we do not belong to those drawing back, which leads to perdition; but to the faith which restores our soul.*

So, he's saying exactly this to these people. And all it is, is sometimes you lose your focus a little bit. But again, if you don't catch it and you keep going, going, going, you can wind up, like in Hebrews, totally falling away, having your mind perverted by Satan, by the world, by the prince of the power of the air, and you just have no desire. You have no desire to do it, like we said.



Are you losing your first love? Are you lacking in your prayer and study life? Are the messages just not hitting your heart like a two-edged sword like they used to? Are you lost your zeal for Yahweh's work and His Kingdom? Are things like coming to the Sabbath and the Feast that used to excite you, now seem more like a burden? Are you more focused on worldly things, job, finances, and these things? Do you look more at the financial aspect of things like tithing and going to the Feast in Israel like before? And are you simply not involved in the work of Yahweh like you used to? And like we said, how converted you are is how involved you are.

When you came to the truth, you suffered such things and loss for you. But now it's much bigger than **you**. You need to lose you and grow in the Spirit of Yahweh, be totally immersed in Him every day in prayer, study, meditation, and ministry. Your job as an ambassador must come before your worldly job and desires. Yes, you must make a living, but your focus has to be the work of Yahweh and your ministry. Remember the Parable of the Sower and the Seed? The ones who fell away were the ones who had no relationship with Yahweh. They had no deep root. You have to have a real loving relationship with Yahweh and Yahshua. You need to speak to Them daily and hear their Words in your life daily. Be zealous, remember from where you came, as the Kingdom of Yahweh is at hand.

So yes, there's nothing in life like our first love. But yet, as you grow, just like in a marriage, down the line, that love, although it's not the way it was when you first met, when you were immature and whatnot, it should grow in maturity and it should be stronger. So that first love, far from waning, it should have greater root than ever, and certainly be bearing more fruit. Have you lost your first love? I hope not. Yahweh bless. Shabbat shalom.