

Child Training – Bar Mitzvah

This is a continuation of the discussion entitled *Dedicating Our Children* of April 30, 1991. Before we began, Yoneq asked a question, "I wonder if we know who we are?"

Who We Are

How do we see ourselves? Do we know who we are? Do we see ourselves as our Father sees us? In Mt 1 you can see who we are. We have probably never thought of ourselves as our Father sees us. If the people in this town only knew who they lived with. Mt 1:17 – All the generations from Abraham to David are 14, and there are 14 from David to the captivity, but there are only 13 from the captivity to Messiah. Count them – you may have to do it more than once: Messiah is the 13th generation from Jeconiah (verses 12-16; Abraham the first, David the 14th, Solomon the 15th, Jeconiah the 28th, Shealtiel the 29th, Messiah is the 41st – not the 42nd generation).

If you take Mt 1:17 at face value, you would have to say there is a mistake in the Bible. All the translations say there are 14 generations from the exile to Messiah. We are coming to know who we are. Paul wrote that we are the completion of Messiah. He is not complete without us. And we are not complete without Him.

Eph 1:22-23 – We are the fullness of Him, the completion of Him. He had us in mind in Isa 53:10-11. It was Yahweh's will to crush Him and to cause Him to suffer. Verse 11 should read, *He will see the result of the suffering of His soul and be satisfied.* He was looking ahead to His wife that would complete Him and make Him whole – as the one who would rule with Him.

Either this is the right understanding or we see a real mistake in the Bible. This is significant. Eph 1:23 speaks of the church as the fullness of Him, the completion. The Body is married to Him in the sense that the wife completes the man, her husband.

Bar Mitzvah

Whether Bar Mitzvah is in the Scriptures or not, it is common sense. We want to have a celebration where a youth is no longer regarded as a child, at least as far as age is concerned. We need to get a grasp on what we are doing so we won't be outsmarted by the evil one.

Cool Dancing

To help us understand what we're facing, we heard three letters about an incident in Sus. Yoneq read letters from Tamar to her imma, from Tamar to her abba, and from ha-emeq to himself. Here are the basic contents of each:

From Tamar to her Imma

She wrote about when she was eleven and living in Island Pond, she noticed something about how the older girls (12-15 years old) danced, girls like Yohannah and Tsey Tsah. They were dancing in a cool, stiff way, looking at their feet, obviously afraid to make a mistake. (They were self-conscious, thinking about what others thought of them.) They had no life. If someone made a mistake, that was what they talked about, "Did you see what she did?"

At the time, Tamar said she was still dancing in a lively way, not worried about what others thought. One time she encouraged one of the older girls to dance in a livelier way, to be happy. The girl said, "Don't do that to me. I can dance the way I want to. It's fine."

Tamar started to feel bad about the way she danced. Then she stopped being happy so she could fit in. Once she succumbed to that peer pressure and became cool, the comments like, "You dance like your mother" stopped.

Tamar said she was so afraid she would not be accepted by her peers that she stopped dancing in the lively, uninhibited way her mother does.

Tamar saw the boys dancing cool and the girls stiff. They would even improvise to make the steps look even cooler, instead of jumping or hopping as the dances called for. She said they would hold back on the slow dances and the children's dances, then on the fast dances they would get up and go. As time went on she sadly saw the coolness of the older children starting to infect the younger.

When she moved to Sus she didn't notice her cool lifeless, self-conscious dancing. But others did; it stood out against the life and gladness they had. The children there were called out to do a happy dance that the

adults didn't know. Their lifelessness had nothing to do with having a glad heart. Several people were very bothered by it. There was a meeting and as a discipline those children are not allowed to dance until they change. Tamar was asked to write a letter describing her whole history with this.

From Tamar to her Abba:

She wrote him about what she got out of a story that ha-emeq told when King David brought the ark in. She saw that everything King David did came from his heart. He did it with all his heart. He didn't think about himself. Tamar said she was dancing from herself, for the praise of men, not to praise our Master. She said, "I want to be like King David." Our Father wants us to be through with lifeless dancing. "What's the use of dancing without joy? It's just a bunch of steps strung together. It is shameful to dance without life." Tamar told her abba that for a long time she has resisted being a child. She said, "I need to love being like other children." (Yoneq added that the cool way being spiritual is so evil.) She related a dream she had where she had left Sus and was living in the world in America. It made her unhappy. When she awoke, she was so glad she was still in Sus. She said, "I love being here in Sus where I receive so much help and correction. I will change." It moved us to tears.

From ha-emeq to Yoneq:

In the child training teaching distributed several years ago (36 pages long, distributed to all the parents in the Edah) we made a distinction between children and youth. A youth is a well-trained child who has come to understand his parent's reasoning. It was not meant to be a term like teenager where they can no longer be treated as a child. But that is certainly what Tamar thinks.

Savav: The youth think that when you get to be an adult, people will stop telling you what to do.

Kharash: Tamar (and others) see youth as a shield to guard her sovereignty. Others see and accept the truth that as youths they are now more responsible. Some see being a youth as a place of less accountability and others see that they now have greater opportunities to give themselves.

Tamar thinks she is so big. She has mentioned several times that in Island Pond it is not like here in Sus. She's younger but taller than some of the children here, but she is so proud, she doesn't want to be included with them. The children this age, eleven to thirteen, do not think they are children anymore. They are proud. Their dancing is proud, bored, self-conscious.

Proud children despise slow or borderline dances. They will only dance fast, adult, harder dances. Tamar will very bossily organize the two and three year olds, but she won't dance with the eight to ten year old children who know the dances as well as she does. This is pride; she doesn't want to be thought of as a child. At a celebration to say good-bye to N'su, the children were called to do Sher Sameach, a dance the adults didn't know. They were reluctant to do it. They seemed so unjoyful. When one boy dances, his face is sad, his lack of control of his body declares he couldn't care less but his feet move just right. After a governmental meeting we told them they could no longer dance until their attitude changes, until they see the joy of dancing in Israel.

Dancing is a spiritual thing and it is detestable if it is done in the flesh. Little children dance because it makes them happy. It is the same with disciples. They are happy because their sins are forgiven. Psalm 30:11 and Lam 5:15,16 are for those who dance in a cool and lifeless way. Because of their sin they can have no joy. The fruit of the Spirit is joy. The sins of the older children cause other children to be like them.

We must be like little children to enter the Kingdom. This was put to the children at the meeting seriously. They didn't want to be like children. If a child makes fun of another child, he should be disciplined. Discipline changes people even in the world. A television show interviewed black and white families in the world. The white children were on drugs, hiding them in their rooms. Their parents respected their right to privacy. These black children weren't on drugs. The mother said, "This child's mine. If she doesn't do what's right, I beat the living daylights out of her." The reporter asked, "What about her right to privacy?" The mother replied, "She has no right! She's my child." The child said, "I love my parents. I respect them. I don't want to do anything that would hurt them."

ha-emeq's Letter, Continued

The Tsey Tsah/Tamar incident was misjudged. Tamar wanted Tsey Tsah to dance livelier. When Tamar started being lifeless, she got praised by the other girls. It is very important to get to the root of praising one another for this lifeless dancing. The Island Pond underground was the serpent trying to destroy the first generation. (He will come again, more subtly next time.) Tamar was even called the "Queen of Island Pond."

This dance spirit was being passed on. When Tamar got to Sus she was amazed first at how the children gave themselves in dancing and then amazed at how they changed. Tamar danced the way Ahavah and Leshem used to, with such a stiff look on their faces, always looking at their feet. This stiffness is contagious.

Our children are laying a foundation for how Israel will dance at the festivals. Do our children dance humbly with great joy? Are they happy to be children? Or are they cool and proud? Do our children dance in the spirit of joy in the Holy Spirit? David was wholehearted. Michel was a man-pleaser like her father Shaul. She wondered what the people would think. She had other gods like the idol she put in David's bed. She despised David in her heart because of her sin. Those children despised Yacheved who dances with all her heart. They would despise our Master who was despised by the proud.

When our children do want to be saved, don't hem and haw with them.

Where it is talking about our children twelve and up in the child training teaching, put *youth*. When do our children become youths? Physically at least when the girls start having their period and the boys enter puberty. The outward sign of that is pubic hair.

Ha-Emeq's Letter, Continued:

She read from the child training teaching about the two facets of child training – control and teaching, pages 9, 18, and 19. From birth to thirteen they learn what to do; from thirteen to nineteen they learn why they do it. The youth needs teaching (why he does things) or he will forsake these standards as he gets older. Without teaching he can't internalize – make his own – the standards. The Bible speaks of the kidneys as the inner emotional self. The standards have to be rooted way down there or he will be talked out of them. Control is the use of force to ensure compliance to your will. The boundaries you establish fence out danger, thereby making the enclosed area safe.

Youth

Did the children's idea of graduation come from the term *youth*? We must keep a tight rein on our tongues and our children's tongues. If we don't control our children, they will be too big to handle when they are youths. The mother of a stubborn child must realize what is happening. She must change the child's opinion of her and show him that she is not intimidated.

The final goal of child training is not control but teaching so they will control themselves. Teaching provides reasons for morality. Reason is logical thinking. Our reason must be based on faith and righteousness. Faith is walking across the lake when there is a sign that says the ice is safe. Faith does not walk when the sign says, "Thin Ice – Danger." Faith walks when the sign says *walk*, faith is responding to the command.

Most lessons need to be taught through reason. If the right seed has been planted, then patient communication to their newly-formed thinking processes will produce the desired fruit of teaching. The child training teaching says we must know the word and always have something fresh on our lips to pass on to the children. Go out and look at a river – you'll never see the same water twice. We must have a river of living water flowing from our innermost being. This doesn't mean we'll never say the same thing more than once, but it does mean it always has to be fresh.

We ourselves must receive the apostolic teaching with our logical thinking processes so that we understand and can pass it on. Deprogramming removes all unfounded standards from a person's mind. After one brother was deprogrammed he felt like he had lost his mind, but he hadn't lost his conviction. Yoneq asked, how does all that we are hearing relate?

Savav: The twelve year olds are asking for baptism. To be able to be saved they have to be able to make and be mature enough to keep the vow of baptism. To be baptized you have to first be accountab

le.

Kharash: The youth stage is not the lifting of responsiveness to authority. Instead it is a greater responsiveness to the truth and a greater responsibility for one's actions. They should have fewer disciplines and those should be right to the heart. When they have brought themselves under control, their desire for Messiah can come from their will and not their emotions. So when they say, "I want Yahshua as my Sovereign" they will have credibility. The consistency of their lives would confirm their ability to make and keep the covenant.

Timshal: The youth here are just like the youth in Sus. They love to come to dance practice. I sense things but there are so many and I can only do so much. Sometimes it's like putting a bandage on a gaping chest wound. Our youth want help because they belong to our Father.

Savav: On our youth night the Body responded to our children – they were roaring and clapping. The children finished with *Debka Oud*. I don't know how many times they did it, five or six. They didn't want to stop because they were being appreciated. One of the youths told me, "I've heard that approval before, but it was not ever for me." Our children sense their self-consciousness but they want the way out.

Almah: I have a lot in me about this. Once I lived at the Timothy's House with the Nelsons. Their daughter Sharon had to write a paper about their favorite person besides their parents. Someone they looked up to and wanted to be like. I was really suffering at the time. She read her paper at the table and it was about me. It was two pages long and said all these things. It was so hard to receive. I never knew I'd meant anything to her. Looking back on it, how I wish that I had reached out to her more. The little bit I did had meant so much.

Later at the Arbor I noticed the lifeless dancing. I remember thinking that I didn't want it to affect the younger children. So I'd go out and dance with them. I'd take their hands and try to pull them along, trying to get life in their steps, but they continued to trudge along. I even told them to sit down. Eventually I gave up. At first I had gotten indignant, then I doubted myself. I got self-conscious, thinking I was asking something they couldn't do.

Tamar's desperation at wanting to change touched me. Our children need that same special something that we do. They need someone to have hope for them that they *can and will change!* We must deal with or discipline our children at an early age, starting when they refuse to let another child in when they are dancing. Children who make fun of another child should be disciplined. But our tendency is to get wishy-washy. We have to draw the line with these things and then take action. Child training is not just total encouragement.

As children the word of God came to us as mere tradition and it repulsed us. Our children are attracted to the proverbs as examples for what they do. The proverbs explain their actions to them. Their social life apart from our life won't cut it. They need to come into our life.

Elizabeth: It affects our youth when they see the effect they have on our children. It seems like we adults are self-conscious too. I want to dance like Yacheved.

Hadashah: When Magdalene was baptized she said she wanted to be changed from being foolish and from being cool. She expresses herself with a joyful freedom. I don't want her to be pulled down by others like lobsters in a trap are.

When we pass on life to our children they become attentive to us – when we have that stream of living water flowing from us. We need to open things up that are going on in our children's lives and just be prepared for a big ordeal if that's what comes. We need to deal with it for their sakes, not back away from it. We need to not just rely on the professionals who come in to save our youth. We need to get involved, the whole household.

Cephas: To me this goes back to the question you [Yoneq] asked us at the beginning – Mt 1:17, *I wonder how we see ourselves*. We must know who we are and our children must know who they are. If they see themselves as our Father sees them, they will be able to take a stand. How is peer pressure going to be stopped? By someone standing right up to it and saying *No!* And they must

know how they will be in the future.

If we know who we are, they will know who they are. Our children must see they are setting the pace for our festivals. They need to see that as their responsibility. If they dance with all their hearts for our Father, standing for Him and His purpose, then that's what our festivals will be like as well. That's what our Father has wanted for thousands of years – a people who will stand this way. A people who will stand with His burden upon them. Our Master said, *Come to me, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light*. We bear our own burden when we are worrying about ourselves. When we have something that is more important than ourselves then we can be beside ourselves and His kingdom can come. Our children need vision for being beside themselves.

Sameach: Many times we don't notice that our children have the right steps but the wrong spirit. Someone who has peace can judge clamor. Someone who doesn't can't. If we have the right spirit and the right mind we can judge the wrong spirit.

Ha-emeq noticed what was wrong. She presented the truth to them. Tamar was like Shaul's daughter but now she wants to be like King David. It is wonderful how Yacheved is, obviously full of joy. We should be able to say that of many of us. This is very important for the adults. We need more examples of wholehearted participation. The children need us. They need our attention if we expect them to change and be different.

It's normal that we'd love our Father and dance. It's normal that we'd dance with small children. The children need all of us. Tamar wants to change because someone noticed. If we are dancing with the right spirit we can detect when others aren't. Don't be so concerned about knowing the right steps, but be concerned about knowing our Master. That's something we've said from the beginning. If we know that we can all be dancers.

There should be a recognition of entering into *youth*. Our child should know what is expected of him as a youth.

We must use Bible stories as word pictures in their minds to show our children how they are. David dancing communicated to Tamar. Nathan made up a little story to reach David's heart. We have to develop this ability and progress in it. We can even tell two-minute stories. We don't have to be "gifted" to do this but we do have to be inspired.

[break for lunch]

Goddard College

We have been talking about Goddard College in Plainfield for years. What is it going to take to get it, lots of money? It's going to take prayer. We could have Goddard College if we prayed for it.

Who is it that goes to college? The lazy and self-centered do.

We heard a letter from Hannah Beukers expressing much vision for having a little store and restaurant in Plainfield. She also has vision for the college being a crafts center for the tribe where not only could we learn and teach skills but people could come and watch us make things.

Tight Reins – Loose Reins

Jms 1:26,27 tells us what true religion is. It is to keep a tight rein on your tongue, for otherwise your religion is worthless. True discipline or religion is to care for others. Your reins, where are your reins? Psalm 7:9 (NASB says literally *kidneys*, but the true sense of the word is *reins*). Reins are how you control a horse. The KJV says *reins*.

God tries the reins – the inner emotional self, the inmost emotions, the heart. The righteous God tries the inner emotional self of the righteous. Reins are lines attached to an animal's head to steer its course. He steers our course by our reins. Our children are under our reins. We maintain a tight rein on our children. They are trained under tight control. We are to train our children up to have a tight rein on their tongues. As they grow up to be youths, we loosen the reins. Eventually they will leave our control to establish another household.

Free rein is the release of control. It is obvious in society that tight reins or control of children has given way to a free rein. Parents now have no control, for children have their rights. It is like the process that

has transformed television to where it now openly propagates the destruction of all moral values. When Elvis Presley first appeared on the very popular Ed Sullivan Show in 1956, they would only show him from the waist up. His nickname was Elvis the Pelvis. Now television shows everything. We are going to do a paper about Elvis Presley, how he knew he was going to die and how he couldn't find forgiveness even though he begged for it. Over and over he had gone against his conscience until he *knew* what awaited him in death. He was terrified to die. We are going to use this to speak of the nations to people.

We're also going to write about the gay 90's. The first ones were a hundred years ago, what is coming today is the total equality of homosexuals, even their exultation. But some will be saved, as we see from the response we're getting from *Back to the Garden*.

Red Flags

Chuck Smith was a leader in the Jesus Movement in its very beginnings, 1969 – 1972. He has got 30,000 people wrapped up from Costa Mesa, California to Applegate Valley, Oregon. Some of the things he says are good but the error is lethal. He is a sorcerer and a compromiser. The only hope from his people is for him to go into moral error or for our gospel to be so clear it penetrates that darkness. Only the Word of God can expose this. He has things so well wrapped up. If you leave his church you are not leaving the Body of Messiah.

We must be able to convince them of the sin in their life and of not being forgiven. If we go to California, we'll have to contend with this because they are a remnant of the Jesus People. His red flags prepare his people perfectly against us. You can't tell them the simple gospel because they've already heard it. If we see our brother in need and don't meet that need, how can the love of God be in us? This applies to us, not them – living in the world like the Gentiles. They are engaged in loving the world, but they don't see it. They are out making it on their own. The word of God will penetrate their hearts.

Children/Youth

If we have some sort of acknowledgment for our children as youths, will it puff them up? Will it be something good?

Ehud: If they have input they will define themselves according to that input. If not, they are going to form some idea of who they are by themselves and form their own warped views, just like we did. Will our acknowledgment be chronological or by maturity? Why do we have to face this anyway? We must deal with this because the wonderful community in Rome had to and they ended up with confirmation. We must come to the place of true confirmation or we aren't true and we will fall away too. We'll end up just like them if the Holy Spirit doesn't add people to our number who are convicted and not coming over the wall. Where they fell away we can't fall.

Confirmation, like purgatory, is a carryover from the first church, although it too has been perverted.

Malachi: In the Catholic Church today you take on a new name at confirmation. They once knew that confirmation had something to do with who you are as a person because that's what a name does, it tells who you are.

Ehud: This is taking us into the realm of a nation with a heritage. The confirmation has two goals: 1) it establishes who they are socially; 2) it prepares them for the spiritual work of service.

Acts 16:29-34 – After they heard the many words, verse 32, they were baptized. It might have been that the children were so close to their parents back then that they clung to whatever the parents said. Yoneq asked, "What did it mean, he and all his household in verse 33?" Some of the answers were:

They were sanctified by their parent's faith.

It meant those of his household who were accountable and needed forgiveness.

They all heard the good news and received the message. In Abraham's case, the children *were* brought into the covenant.

Yoneq asked, "Are our children part of the covenant?"

Yonah: Our children were created to be a part of that covenant. Even if we fail, there is still the Body to help us. Even if we were to completely fall away, our children are still His. Look at Hannah Newsong's

children. We don't want to be saved alone. We want our children to be saved with us.

The jailer's household was truly under the authority of the father.

Isaac: The whole household, including the children, were saved at the Passover and in the Red Sea. The blood was over the door post for all who were in the house. All of Rahab's family was saved. Those children at that first Passover did enter into the Promised Land as long as they were under twenty. If the child had been rebellious and walked out of the house they would have died.

Who are we? I'm just learning to see myself as part of a people. In Achan's case it worked the other way, his whole family was destroyed because of the sin of the father. My son in the Edah came out of me in the Edah. We are the progenitors of a whole new race of people.

We must know these things in order to pray for our children with authority.

Hannah Newsong: When my children were taken from me I was told that if they were of Israel they would be back.

We have to know that our children are ours. We can pray for them and hold our Father to it and He will save His seed. He will save His people's children. He will save His children. I believe that anyone motivated by the Holy Spirit when they dedicate their child, committing them to our Father and the Body and knowing that He hears us, can pray with that confidence for their child. This is the assurance of our faith to pray for them, the assurance of what our Father will do with them.

However we've dedicated our children in the past our Father will honor the faith we had in our infancy. We believe our Father will save our children. They are being saved. He is proving Himself faithful.

Lev: Isn't it when our children are baptized that they are confirming the covenant their parents already made at their baptism?

We are going to decide that.

Savav: Are our children coming out from under the authority of their parents at baptism?

Derush: No, that happens at marriage when they make a new social unit.

The Scripture say children are to obey their parents in all things; to obey them is the same as obeying the Lord.

Savav: Our children have always believed.

Our children believe He exists, but they haven't come to the point of reliance on Him. They haven't come to the place of trust where He is their Sovereign. They know of the sacrifice, but they haven't laid hands on it. Belief is trust. The word is number 4100 in the concordance (Greek section): to trust, to have a quiet resolve, it is established, verified. Abraham believed God existed before he left Ur, but he did not rely on Him personally yet. He trusted in Genesis 15 and that is when he was justified. Samuel didn't know the Lord until He spoke to him – that is the quiet resolve.

Kharash: It could be two different processes. The first would be acknowledging that our children are now youths and acknowledging what they do see – that they do believe in Him but do not yet rely on Him. The second would be when they rely on Him in baptism.

Qatan: This would end our children wanting to get baptized to be a part of something (for all would become youths and be publicly acknowledged, and then when each individually trusts, he would be baptized).

Believe means credence, to rely on for salvation. If someone fails to believe, there is no salvation. The Greek says *believe into*. If one falls short of believing into Him, one falls short of salvation. We are baptized into the name of Yahshua (Gal 3:27). Someone who doesn't believe in this way doesn't trust in Him, leaning the weight of his entire personality upon Him in absolute trust and confidence. It is like the wheelbarrow example in the Freepaper. Such people do not trust God. You can tell by talking to them. When they don't trust God, they are saying He is not trustworthy.

Should our children believe already before we accept and confirm them?

Yachin: If we do, then we'll see a lot of performance.

That's true, but we can expect to see them obeying. There will be a time when the child sees his utter sinfulness and that he can't change.

Adam: We will not treat our children one way until we confirm them and then totally change how we treat them. Our children will be increasing in self-control to the point our Master can speak to them and save them. Becoming a youth is acknowledging they are coming into a place where they can control themselves. This is what we are confirming.

Will we have a lot of children at one time, or will it be an individual thing? Let's consider one clan, how many would be at an age to confirm at one time? (We should spontaneously baptize anyone who comes to true belief.) Would it be the same time as celebration? Would the whole clan attend? Yes, let's make it a big deal, everyone should know.

Ehud: This stirs something up in me. There is something about the brothers I was baptized with. Our common commitment has helped us to stand and remain. The same thing that happened to us could happen to them in a much greater degree than it happened to us.

Someone said we want them to pass out of *childhood* into *youthhood* and know who they are and where they are going. Yoneq said, "Let's not call it confirmation; it will lose its meaning."

Reya: When our children come to an age of accountability after having heard the Law and the Prophets we shouldn't be surprised that they all want to be baptized at the same time. Our responsibility is that we have to be led by the Holy Spirit.

Isaac: There's a mark there you can notice. It would be difficult for me to confirm someone as a youth who refuses to admit he's a child. Paul said when he was a child, he thought, spoke, and acted like a child, but as he got older he put away childish things.

It all needs to go together: 1) puberty; 2) having parents' mind and the mind of Messiah, around the same time. We're looking to the future in this. We don't want to reproduce our aberrations.

Kharash: We can reason with them as youths because they have a conscience that can readily be appealed to and a commitment that can easily be reached.

In the Roman Catholic Church you have confirmation. Bar Mitzvah is very different. It means *son of good deeds*. They come before the congregation, read from the Law, and express something. It means they are now committed and accountable.

We can use 1 Cor 13:11 and tell our children, "You are a youth now. You need to put away childish things, foolishness, etc. We expect you to grow up and go on and be done with foolish things." They will live that way if we expect them to live that way. They will live up to our expectations. If they know the standard is rising they will rise.

Hannah Newsong: The children don't know what is expected of them. They don't understand that what is now expected of them is greater than what was before. We can't be looking for a performance; some of them can perform and some can't. We should just say, *This is it – your body is changing and this is what is expected of you*. We'll also tell them, *It's time to start seeking God because you're going to come out of your parents' covering and become accountable for your own sin*.

Yacheved: We don't want to baptize our children on performance or some need they have to be a part of the club. This is just what some of the 11 – 12 year olds need, this expectation on their lives. They have more to come into before they are baptized.

Deshe: My daughter Abigail is at this age. As she's getting older she's developing physically as well and starting to see self-consciousness in herself too. She's coming to more self-judgment. The other day she came home all excited about learning the ten commandments. They are learning the full commands, not abbreviations. They weren't learning it in rote. They had vision from an inspired teacher (Boaz).

We don't want to downplay the bodily change in the person. We are speaking of the whole personality. It's becoming of our children in their youthhood to act in a certain way.

Yemimah Ryland: We need to give them an identity or they will have a void. Even the children who wanted to be cool were trying to take an identity.

At this age we need to tell them personally (and in groups, teaching about *Joe's Body*) about the changes going on in their bodies and sexual things. They should understand their bodies are developing for a

purpose – to prepare them for marriage. Ha-emeq talked to the children in Sus about this. They had such a healthy, normal way of expressing their sexual feelings. They know even these feelings are preparing them for marriage. It was clean and wonderful.

There was discussion about the manner and timing of publicly acknowledging our children's development. Yoneq added that maybe Israel did it on the same day once a year. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could do it for all the twelve-year-olds.

Hannah Newsong: It would be hard to judge by maturity. This gives me a handle; I can think, my child is nearing the age of twelve and I know what's coming and what will be expected of her. If we have this for all of them they will rise to the occasion.

Oseh Shalom: Everyone will get there. This will eliminate strife if all twelve-year-olds are together.

Yacheved: This will be confirmation of what our children are expected to do and of where they will end up – totally relying on our Master. Our children can see they are not where they want to be. They need this confirmation.

Kharash: They will stand up and proclaim who they are and what is expected of them and we WILL AMEN IT. It will be tested in the twelfth year if we trained them to speak with a loud voice.

Sameach: This will end strife and will put a good motivation in them. They can look at themselves and say, *I'm nine. I'm coming before the Body in three years. I'm going to get ready.*

We wanted to draw out the essence of what was said:

Yachin: This increases the urgency of the parents and their awareness that soon their children will be accountable.

Yacheved: Confirmation puts it in the positive realm – you're accountable – now you can come out of death into life. We can tell them, *We expect that you are now heading towards salvation.* Our children hear the Good News a lot.

The child must hear the Good News (stop saying *gospel*) to pass out of the stage of death into the stage of life.

Ehud: It would put the parent in a dangerous, arrogant place to decide which children were ready and which weren't (ready to be confirmed). Inevitably some would think their children were ready and others weren't. This would create factions and divisions in our midst.

Sameach: Knowing the time frame involved – when it will happen – will increase our involvement with our children. If we are led by the Spirit, this will be a tool for the application of concerns our Father has given us for them. This will enhance our relationships with them.

Reya: Get rid of peer pressure and bring in parent pressure.

Caleb: This has everything to do with a nation coming about. They are in the process of becoming men and women, responsible members of society. It goes back to the first question of the day – do we know who we are? Western man has no idea of rites of passage. We have pressure on us to bring the child to the place where they are to be. This is one of the restorations of all things that must take place. It is the beginning of the birth of the Holy Nation – the set-apart nation. There must be zeal in us to make them desire what we have.

Yahnathan: The rite of passage is that of a child coming into a nation. Now their actions are accountable also to the body for their actions now have a greater effect on the Body. This rite of passage brings them into the concern of the whole nation. We will lose them to the Holy Nation. This will prepare them to give their sovereignty over to our Master. They are old enough to be changing physically so they can go on spiritually.

We're not saying that if they die one day past age twelve they will go to the Lake of Fire. We will bring them into looking at Messiah in a loving way, they way we do.

Kharash: I want my son to know that *yes* and *no* have eternal consequences.

We need to have a tight rein over our tongue or we'll perish, we'll experience death.