

## Pressing On Towards the Goal

Our Master told the rich young ruler in Mt 19:21 that he had to give up everything if he wanted to be perfect and have “treasure in heaven.” This is the inception of the gospel that we received. Inception means what is first.<sup>1</sup> If we receive it, then we are on the road to the inception of His glory, as so many verses speak about. Our life in the Body was entered through baptism into the church or Edah.

We go from Mt 19:21 to Phil 3:15, from wanting to be perfect to having perfect attitudes in the Body. What we have to do in receiving the gospel is perfectly obey it. If you want to be perfect, then, you must sell all and come and follow Yahshua. That is the only possibility of being baptized into the Body, where we are now on the road to being perfect in all of our ways, and in all of our being.

Let's look at Mt 19:21, Phil 3:15, Jms 1:4, and Col 3:14:

*Yahshua said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” (Mt 19:21)*

If you want to do the complete deed, the complete act of obedience, then sell all that you have, and come, follow Him.

*Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. (Phil 3:15)*

What mind is that? It is speaking of a certain thing.

Chets Barur – We have to forget what lies behind and press on towards what lies ahead.

We have to reach that goal of the upward call in Messiah. We have to strive for it.

Mevaser – This translation says, “Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you.” (NAS)

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<sup>1</sup> *Inception* — an event that is a beginning; a first part or stage of subsequent events.

Let us press towards the goal of the prize of the upward call. As many as are perfect have this attitude. Our Father has to reveal it if we don't have it. All we will do otherwise is just strive in the flesh – without our love for Him motivating us.

*But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful. (Col 3:14-15)*

And Jms 1:4 as we have spoken about before:

*And let endurance have its perfect result, or fruit, that you may be complete, lacking in nothing, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance... (NAS)*

This is speaking of the testing of our faith in verse Jms 1:2. We can't even lack wisdom. We have to grow up in every aspect. If you lack wisdom, what do you have to do? Ask for it. But what if you stop asking for it? Then you start wondering why things go wrong. You start receiving accusations about "the way things are." James says we need to ask our Father, who gives wisdom generously and without reproach (Jms 1:5).

*Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. (Mt 7:7-8)*

We are supposed to cry out for wisdom (Pr 2). It is one of the things we are supposed to do. What happens in a day when we don't have wisdom? Well, we say a lot of things that we shouldn't, and we do a lot of things that we shouldn't, and we might become like a double-minded man, unstable in all of our ways.

## **Stains**

*Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. (Jms 1:21, NAS)*

These are especially the things that make an indelible stain on our garments, as we come to the minchah and the Breaking of Bread with them on our conscience. ha-êmeq had an indelible stain on a garment and there was nothing she could do to make it come out. All she could do is rub and rub until she made a hole in her garment. That is

what Rev 3:4-5 means in the spiritual realm, for only a few in Sardis had not stained their garments.

Mk 7:21-23 — Have you ever been a little reckless or careless on the freeway? And then you feel a little unclean, and you know you have to confess it. If you don't, you are going to go on in the flesh and misjudge things, misjudge your brother, and pretty soon the community will become a torture chamber for your flesh.

*And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man." (Mk 7:20-23)*

For disciples "murders" means not loving your brothers, ignoring them. Yes, we have received the gospel, but there are still a lot of things that remain and that we have to overcome. We have to deal with them, and put them under our Master's feet. If we don't deal with them then we won't be worthy of the Kingdom. Col 1:10 says we must live our life in a manner worthy of Him. Then Rev 3:4 says we must walk with our Master in white, which is what it means to be perfect. You can't walk with Him in a stained garment. You must walk in a manner worthy of Him to please Him in every respect:

*That you may walk worthy of the Sovereign, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. (Col 1:10-12)*

### **Wise or Foolish = Qualified or Unqualified**

We are either qualified or not qualified. Obviously there are going to be five who are qualified and five unqualified. That seems like fifty percent to me. We don't know whether that refers to the first century church as well as us in the last century or not. However, Mt 24:40-41 seems to be speaking about us.

Jms 1:21 — “What remains” means putting aside what makes you unclean, and all of whatever wickedness remains. Wickedness for us is different than wickedness in the world. If we don’t love our brother, we are wicked. If we ignore our brother, we are wicked. We have a higher standard, for we have the Holy Spirit living in us. We have a greater light that we are to live by. Then it says:

*Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. (Jms 1:21-22)*

We are hearing so much more in the last few days. It’s being embellished by what you say.

In Mk 7:19 He did not say, “Thus He made all foods clean.”<sup>2</sup> The NU translators added it. “...foolishness...” or carelessness, or recklessness, however your translation says it, “...these things defile a man.” These are the things that remain. Have you ever fallen into any of them? Or is it far beyond you to have evil thoughts? Whenever anything enters your mind, what do you have to do? You have to take every thought captive (2 Cor 10:4-6), or pretty soon you sense that you are unclean (unless you have become too dull to notice).

### **Signs – The Struggle of Prayer or Prayerlessness**

Col 4:12 speaks about “laboring fervently” in praying. Sometimes it is hard to pray and that could be a sign that you are being opposed and that you are doing well. It is not just in the minchah, but in our private prayers as well. “Laboring fervently” is #75 in the Greek, meaning, “Conflict, struggle, contend with the enemy of your soul; fight, labor, strive, and compete for the prize.”

Paul knew it was very difficult sometimes to pray. I guess prayerlessness is a sign of something. He agonized in prayer, earnestly. Paul struggled. The enemy keeps us from

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<sup>2</sup> The NKJV adds this note: “NU sets off the final phrase as Mark’s comment that Jesus has declared all foods clean.”

praying, but we have to confess that to our Father, telling Him, “I don’t know what to say” and that releases us.

Keli – You can see that our prayer is in the same context that Col 4:12 is speaking of, for our brothers, that they may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. You pray for him for you are allied in the same cause. When you pray for your brother, and he for you, you understand that it is a struggle, a battle that we are in and that we are going to win together.

It is like David said to his son, Solomon:

*As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Sovereign searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever. (1 Chr 28:9)*

He really wants to have fellowship and communion with us, but we have an enemy that contends with us. We have to contend with that and overcome. We might entertain thoughts, just as Paul did. He had all kinds of negative thoughts to contend with as he watched the church decline and fall away. Isaiah saw it prophetically (Isa 49:3), and Paul applied it to himself in Phil 2:16 (Gal 2:2; 1 Ths 3:5). We have to have the *Black Box* to find out what caused them to crash, so that we won’t fall in the same way as old Israel and the first edah fell.

*So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. (Heb 3:19-4:2; and see also Heb 3:6,13, and 4:11)*

That is why we should encourage one another daily, while it is still called *today*.

Chets Barur – I thought about Col 4:12 in light of what you were just reading in Hebrews, that they didn’t enter the Promised Land because of unbelief. They did not unite what they heard with faith. If we are not assured of what we are doing, then we are in unbelief, too. If we are not fully assured, then we don’t have faith. And if we don’t have faith, we have unbelief in us.

Our Father wants us to stand fully assured that we are doing His will, so that we would be confident that if we are absent from the Body we

will be present with our Master (2 Cor 5:8). Sometimes we don't have faith and we lack assurance because there remains sin and filthiness in us and He *can't* give us that confidence. Day by day, all day long we make choices, and our Father wants us to be perfect, mature.

Hayeh – I was thinking about what we heard last night, how fools don't give any thought to what they do and say. They take no thought and that is how they waste their life. They waste the ink that is in them, for they don't really care. They don't really consider what the will of God is. They go through the day without considering whether they have faith or not.

I was also thinking about selfishness. I was convicted by what we said about it last night, and what Mevaser said about it today. Love is the absence of selfishness. Selfishness is just wanting things for yourself, or hanging onto things; it is just not loving. I am thankful that we have it so clear like that, so we can examine ourselves and see what is in us. I don't want to be someone who is foolish and who doesn't give what is on my heart to give (speaking with tears).

That is wonderful.

Mevaser – I was really encouraged by what we read in Col 4:12. I never would have seen it myself, just reading the Bible. We are opposed in praying for one another and even the disciples said, "Teach us how to pray." I felt really opposed to praying today, but I didn't know what else to do, so I kept on praying. I thought of what ha-êmeq said, about giving thanks for the little things you see our Father working on in your life, and in your brother's life.

Today I realized I was being opposed. This event in DC is so important, and I thought, probably everyone involved in it is being opposed. It made me want to pray for them. Somehow, there is a connection between wrestling in prayer for one another and being perfect.

We have to struggle to be connected to one another. Our Master prayed all night long, not knowing which way to go, and in the morning, He chose His twelve apostles. The other day I was talking to Yoneq a little bit about the event and he said, "I just want to be led by the Holy Spirit."

That is what I want, too. Our Father knows we're groping. He appreciates our struggle to hear and obey Him.

Jesse – I was thinking about the parable where our Master went away and He gave talents to His servants. The one who buried his talents was called a wicked and lazy servant. That parable is all about reaching our goal. That slave obviously never reached the goal his Master had for him, but the

other two did. He came back and found them faithful. They were full of faith.

I was thinking of what we heard tonight about putting away all that remains of wickedness and filthiness. We are weighed down by all the thoughts that come into our mind. Then they develop into the filthiness that defiles us and we don't end up reaching the goal because we don't cast them out. I don't want to be called a wicked slave because I didn't get rid of the wickedness in me. We can learn to number our days, and reach the goal our Father has for each one of us.

Keli – When he said that about the slave burying his talents, it reminded me of what Yoneq said about praying. You bury something so that you don't have to think about it anymore. You know where it is. You can go on then and do your own business. The other two servants, the one with five and the other with ten, remained engaged in their Master's business.

I see in my own life that so much I don't pray. I put aside the business of my Father. If I were engaged in it, I would be praying. His will is that we would all grow up to be perfect and mature servants. It is always so hard for me to know, to realize the importance of prayer. I should be praying about the will He wants to accomplish on this earth. It is so hard for me to understand the importance of prayer.

If we don't pray, we are off doing our own thing, and it is all in our own abilities and strength. You might have natural wisdom and strength, but it is not coming from our Father. How much prayer has to be in our lives. We have to take the time to understand each other's struggle and the struggle all the earth is in and the struggle that our Father is in to preserve life.

Natan – I read a little further down in Colossians and Paul said, "Take heed that you may fulfill your ministry in the Sovereign." That is what I am hearing tonight, that we are to be faithful and complete and finish, arrive at the goal. In the physical realm, it is easy to start something and hard to finish it. It is the same in the spiritual realm. I am thankful for the things Paul wrote. I just picture him praying, even in prison. I have been praying for He'emin a lot. We are all in such a struggle. I don't want to be wicked and not love my brothers.

Huldah – Just the other day I was reading Mt 7, and a few verses really stood out to me, "Ask and it shall be given to you..." (Mt 7:7-8) and I thought, "How often I don't pray."

So often we don't pray because we are like the world, wanting a quick fix. They run to the drug store for the pill that fixes them for the moment but kills them in the end. Then there is the next verse: *"Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?"*

He is not going to let us find Him unless we seek for Him. Every step that I take is so important. Someone along the way is going to see me. When you go somewhere your head can spin because everyone is going and going and going. He is going to save me so I can face what comes up in me. He desires to save us from the filth that remains in us. He needs us to do something greater. I don't want to forget who I am. People notice us when we are out and I want to be everything He wants me to be.

Chanan – Right before the gathering Shem and I were talking and we realized that you can come to the end of the day and realize that everything you said didn't matter. Then you realize that all that you got done didn't matter, either. But when you take the time to pray, and you don't contend with your brothers, you feel rewarded. It will be the same way at the end of the age.

If we don't have a lot, we can still be thankful, whether we have a lot or a little. I had been talking to Chets Barur and I had kind of lost vision because we didn't have any money for the work we were doing around the house. I told him, "Maybe we can go out and get a job." ha-êmeq heard me talking and she came out and said, "If you realized who you were and what our Father can do, then you would just pray, and He would provide everything you need."

I don't want to come to the end of the age and have regret because I didn't ask our Father for the things I needed to do His will. I want to be one who'll be rewarded.

You can't imagine the potential (speaking especially of Chanan ben Keli) that each one of us has. It shows something going on there, as we fully develop and reach the goal. Even Our Master grew in knowledge and understanding. He grew and grew and grew and then our Father said, "This is my Son in whom I am well pleased."